

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

'Cuba is only country where blacks have government as ally'
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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N.Y. budget cuts target transport, education

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

New York governor David Paterson announced December 13 that he is withholding \$750 million this month in state payments for schools, local governments, and health-care coverage for state workers. At the same time the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) is planning a new round of cuts in train and bus service affecting millions of working people throughout New York City.

The MTA says it faces a "sudden financial shortfall of more than \$400 million," according to the *New York Times*. It unanimously approved December 16 a plan to phase out discounted or free MetroCards that go to about 550,000 students, reduce or eliminate service on dozens of bus routes, shut down two subway lines and shorten two others, and run fewer subway trains in the middle of the day and at night. Access-a-Ride services for the disabled would be cut back. The plan would eliminate 700 jobs and reduce wages of nonunion workers by 10 percent. Public hearings must be held on these cuts, which would not go into effect until June.

Subway fares were increased this summer to \$2.25 a ride, with bridge and tunnel tolls rising by about 10
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California: ICE agents arrest 286 immigrants

BY SETH GALINSKY

In what U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) called its "largest ever enforcement surge" targeting "criminal" immigrants, 286 undocumented workers were arrested in California December 8–10. In fiscal year 2009, the U.S. government deported more immigrants than ever before.

More than 400 ICE agents, U.S. marshals, and local cops joined the three-day sweep in California. ICE said that more than 80 percent of those arrested had "prior convictions for serious or violent crimes" but did not release a list of those detained or what they were charged with. Nor did it give out any information on the other 20 percent of those who were picked up.

At least 17 of those caught up in the sweep have been charged with "illegal reentry" into the United States after a formal deportation, a felony that carries a penalty of up to 20 years in prison.

ICE chief John Morton claimed that "these are not people we want walking our streets." Most of those arrested are from Mexico and Central America.

The Barack Obama administration
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U.S. general: Afghan war to get more violent

Will use more drones, special forces



AP Photo/Rahmat Gul

Villagers shout anti-U.S. and anti-Afghan government slogans during funeral for people killed in December 7 attack by U.S. soldiers in Mehtar Lam, Afghanistan.

BY SETH GALINSKY

December 16—The eight-year U.S.-led imperialist war in Afghanistan will become "more violent than has been the case in the past," said Washington's top general in the Middle East and Central Asia, Gen. David Petraeus, while defending President Barack Obama's decision to send at least 30,000 more U.S. troops there.

Petraeus heads the U.S. military's

Central Command and oversees the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. He led the U.S. and other imperialist forces when the George W. Bush administration bolstered U.S. forces in Baghdad and western Iraq in what has become known as the surge. "This will be a longer and harder fight" than in Iraq, Petraeus told the *Wall Street Journal* December 10.

Petraeus, like other White House
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Hundreds march to protest killing by Philadelphia cop

BY OSBORNE HART

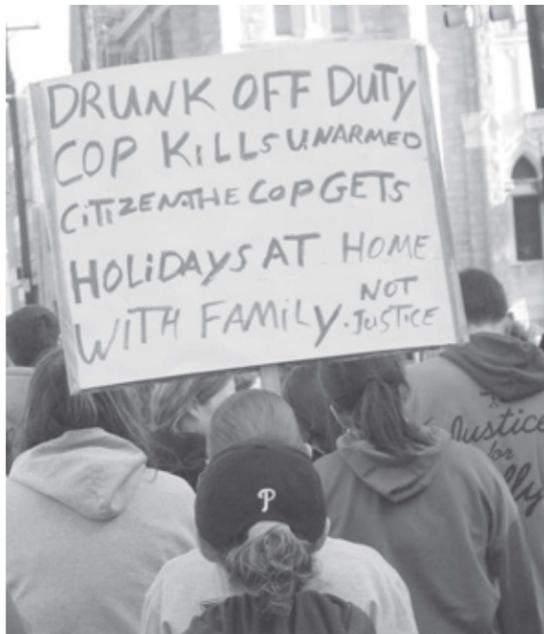
PHILADELPHIA—Hundreds jammed the streets here December 6 in the working-class neighborhood of Port Richmond to demand justice for an unarmed 21-year-old man shot to death by a city cop.

While attempting to break up a brawl in front of a house opposite a community playground, William "Billy" Panas, Jr., was gunned down by Frank Tepper, an out-of-uniform and off-duty cop. The fight began in Tepper's home, spilling out onto the street as Panas walked by. Panas was shot in full view of witnesses. Some reported the cop appeared to be intoxicated and pointed his gun at everyone before shooting Panas.

The "Justice for Billy" neighborhood march, organized by the Panas family, friends, and residents, is part of the campaign calling for the cop's arrest and prosecution.

Appealing for broad support for their demands, the family encourages wearing orange ribbons or T-shirts. The majority of 200 marchers wore

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Militant/John Staggs

March in Philadelphia to demand justice for William "Billy" Panas, gunned down by off-duty cop.

Greek government on edge of default due to deficit, debt

BY BOBBIS MISAILIDES AND GEORGES MEHRABIAN

ATHENS, Greece—Tens of thousands of workers here face loss of jobs as the economy continues to contract. Capitalist investors are also concerned over the possibility of a government default as a result of its ballooning budget deficit and public debt.

The recently elected social-democratic government of the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) has vowed to take measures that will deepen the attacks on workers as bosses seek to make them pay for the sharpening financial crisis.

At the beginning of December, the Fitch ratings service downgraded the Greek government's credit, making it more difficult to sell its bonds. The agency pointed to fears that the government's deficit might lead to default on its debt. Standard & Poor's had already cut Greece's rating to the lowest in the euro zone.

Seeking to ease those fears Greece's finance minister George Papaconstantinou told the *New York Times*, "We will reduce the deficit, we will control the debt, and there will be no need for a bailout. We are not Iceland, we are not Dubai." Iceland's govern-

ment resigned in January in face of an economic collapse. At the end of November Dubai was rocked with fears of default after its six-year real estate bubble burst.

The Greek government has announced that it expects the budget deficit to climb above 12 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), substantially over the 3 percent limit set for countries in the European Union (EU). Greece's national debt is projected to rise to 135.4 percent of the GDP from 112.6 percent this year, the

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N.Y. cuts target services

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percent. According to MTA chairman Jay Walder, further fare increases are already planned for 2011 and 2013.

Unions are blamed

"Sacrificing for the unions" headlined a December 15 *New York Post* editorial as the capitalist media seeks to place the blame for these cutbacks on the transit workers.

On December 11 a New York State Supreme Court judge ruled that an arbitrators' ruling giving transit workers a small wage increase averaging about 3.7 percent for each of the next three years should go into effect. The Transport Workers Union had agreed to binding arbitration with the MTA after its contract expired last January. The MTA refused to implement the arbitrators' ruling, but the court has now upheld it.

Claiming the state now faces a \$3.2 billion deficit in this year's budget, Paterson demanded the state legislature slash this amount from already approved allocations, including more than \$1 billion in school aid and health care. In response, the legislature earlier this month cut social programs by \$2.7 billion. This included eliminating \$140 million from the MTA, cuts of \$58 million from the City University of New York and its community colleges, and reduced pensions for many new government workers.

But when the legislators didn't cut as much as he wanted, Paterson unilaterally implemented an additional \$750 million in cuts. This includes a 10 percent cut in school aid, \$146 million; a 19 percent cut, \$47 million, in payments to insurance companies for state workers' health care; and a 19 percent cut, \$76

million, in "human services" payments to county governments.

The governor's move was sharply criticized by some legislators. "He already knows that any attempt to single-handedly impound money that has been allocated by the legislature is unconstitutional," Senate finance chairman Carl Kruger, a Democrat, told the *New York Post*.

Paterson has said deeper cuts are to come over the next several years to make up a projected deficit of nearly \$50 billion through March 2013.

As capitalist politicians deepen their drive to cut social programs and services, top priority is given to maintaining payments to the wealthy bondholders of the state's debt. This year these payments come to \$5.9 billion for New York State, up by nearly 50 percent from a decade ago.



Passengers ride 2 train in New York. Authorities are cutting back subway services.

Stockholm rally says 'Free Cuban Five!'



Militant/Dag Tirsén

STOCKHOLM, Sweden—A spirited protest here December 5 outside the U.S. Embassy called for the release of five Cuban revolutionaries unjustly held in U.S. jails for more than 11 years. The protest took place a few days before the resentencing of two of the Cubans, Ramón Labañino and Fernando González, on December 8. Slogans like "Obama, yes you can, free the Cuban Five" were shouted by the 30 participants. Banners were carried that read "No more injustice to the Cuban Five."

The protest was organized by the Committee to Free the Cuban Five in Stockholm. Members of "Cubans for Cuba" and others also took part. At the December 8 hearing Labañino's life plus 18 years sentence was reduced to 30 years. González's 19-year sentence was reduced to 17 years and 9 months. On October 13 Antonio Guerrero's life plus 10 years sentence had been reduced to 21 years and 10 months.

Along with Gerardo Hernández and René González, Labañino, Guerrero, and Fernando González were arrested in 1998 and convicted in a 2001 frame-up trial on various charges of "conspiracy." The five were in the United States monitoring Cuban counterrevolutionary groups that have carried out violent attacks against Cuba from south Florida.

—DAG TIRSÉN

200 Steelworkers on strike at Quebec cable plant

BY BEVERLY BERNARDO

ST-JEAN-SUR-RICHELIEU, Quebec—Two hundred members of the United Steelworkers (USW) have been on strike since April 1 against

Prysmian, a company that provides electrical cables for Hydro Quebec. Workers on the picket line say the key issues in the strike are maintaining seniority rights and preventing the company from implementing its demand for 12-hour rotating shifts, including working one weekend out of two.

In August Prysmian threatened to close the factory in two months if no agreement with the union was reached. Despite such pressure workers said 98 percent of workers in production and 93 percent in administration voted October 24 to reject the company's latest offer. It included more concessions on top of those originally demanded and a return-to-work protocol that included only 37 of the 200 workers, union

officials said.

Workers on the picket line December 5 told the *Militant* that they have received their severance notices from the company. They noted that for many of them as many as three generations of their families have worked for the company during its 60 years of operation here.

Bosses at General Cable in La Malbaie are also using the threat of a plant closure to demand 10 percent to 20 percent wage cuts, reduced vacation time, and important cuts to the pension plan. Workers gave the USW negotiating committee a strike mandate in August. General Cable has announced a temporary closure of its plant that employs 100 workers in Saint-Jerome, Quebec.

THE MILITANT

U.S. out of Afghanistan and Pakistan!

To complement Washington's 30,000-troop increase in Afghanistan, the White House has authorized an expansion of aerial drone strikes in Pakistan. Keep up with news of the U.S. war drive in the pages of 'Militant.'



Pakistani villagers prepare to bury victim of U.S. drone attack November 19.

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U.S. gov't seeks expansion of war by Pakistani army

BY DOUG NELSON

The Barack Obama administration is mounting pressure on the Pakistani government to help in combating the main Taliban factions fighting U.S.-led forces in Afghanistan. While the Pakistani government is embroiled in a military conflict with the Taliban Movement of Pakistan, it has shown no inclination to expand its war to other groups in Pakistan that have not challenged the Pakistani government.

At the top of Washington's list are the Afghan Taliban, led by Mullah Mohammad Omar, former head of the Taliban government in Afghanistan, and forces led by Siraj Haqqani. Both groups continue to operate from bases in Pakistan, command thousands of Islamist combatants, have ties to al-Qaeda, and were Islamabad's "strategic assets" in its contest with India over influence in Afghanistan in the 1990s.

The CIA has been working with Pakistani and Saudi spy agencies to win defectors from among the Afghan Taliban leadership, reports the *Los Angeles Times*. But Washington wants Islamabad to do much more to disrupt Omar's leadership council, referred to as the Quetta Shura. U.S. officials claim the council is based in Quetta, the capital of Pakistan's Balochistan Province in the southwest.

For some time the Pakistani government had denied any knowledge of the Quetta Shura. In the first public acknowledgement of its existence, Pakistan's *Dawn* newspaper reported December 11 that "Defence Minister Ahmad Mukhtar said Pakistani security forces have taken on the Quetta Shura and have damaged it to such an extent that it no longer poses any threat." The following day, Mukhtar complained that Washington was not paying enough to operate its aerial drones from Pakistan's Shamsi Airbase in Balochistan.

Newsweek magazine reported November 28 that some Taliban leaders from Balochistan and other parts of Pakistan have moved to Karachi, a major port city in the south.

Washington is considering extending U.S. aerial drone strikes to Taliban targets in Quetta, a city of 850,000, adding pressure on Islamabad to go after the Afghan Taliban. Except for a couple strikes in an area of the North West Frontier Province, the U.S. drone attacks have thus far been confined to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas north of Balochistan.

Pakistani officials have opposed U.S. aerial strikes in Balochistan. A top Pakistani official involved in discussions with the White House told the *Los Angeles Times* that if Washington takes action there "this might be the end of the road."

The Pakistani army is engaged in a major offensive against the Taliban Movement of Pakistan centered in the Mehsud tribal area in South Waziristan that is spreading into other parts of the tribal areas. It is also coordinating with U.S. forces to prevent an influx of Taliban fleeing Washington's Afghan offensive into Pakistan. Excluded from Pakistan's military operations, however, are North Waziristan and a section of South Waziristan,

which provide bases for Haqqani and two other Taliban factions that have agreements with Islamabad.

The Pakistani government has responded negatively to a formal request from Washington that Islamabad should go after Haqqani, the *New York Times* reports. The request was followed up with a visit to Islamabad December 14 by Gen. David Petraeus, the head of U.S. Central Command, to meet with Pakistan's prime minister and top general.

The U.S. appeals, according to the *Times*, "have been accompanied by strong suggestions that if the Pakistanis cannot take care of the problem



MQ-9 Reaper aerial drone firing Hellfire missile. The U.S. military first deployed this upgraded model in Afghanistan in 2007. Washington seeks to expand drone strikes in Pakistan.

... then the Americans will by resorting to broader and more frequent drone strikes in Pakistan."

A Pakistani official told the *Times* that Haqqani is considered an essen-

tial asset in what the Pakistani government sees as a pending contest with India and other regional powers for influence in Afghanistan after the U.S.-led war is over.

Laundry workers in Boston win pay raise

BY TED LEONARD

SOMERVILLE, Massachusetts—Laundry workers at Angelica Textile Services approved a new contract December 15 that includes a pay raise higher than what the company initially offered and better terms in health-care coverage and pensions, said Fernando Lemus of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW). The unionists voted 231 to 3 to accept the company's offer and end the five-day strike.

Angelica is a national corporation that provides laundry and linen services to area hospitals and health-care facilities. Its Somerville facility is organized by UFCW Local 1445. There are 450 people working in the plant, which operates seven days a week with two shifts.

On December 10 at 11:00 am the 180 day-shift workers walked off the job and set up a picket line. When workers on the second shift came in they joined the picket line. The current contract expired December 1 and at that time workers voted unanimously to authorize a strike.

Drivers in the plant are organized by the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, who honored the picket line. Some joined it.

Mirian Alvarez, who has worked at Angelica for 15 years, told the *Militant* that she walked out "for my coworkers, for a fair contract, and for better benefits."

Fito Dely, who has been at Angelica for three years and works in the Soil Department, said, "My job is a dirty, hard job. The company has money to buy new computers with flat screens and other equipment, but they don't care about us."

The union had asked for a \$1-an-hour immediate increase in pay and a larger company contribution to the health-care and pension plans. Workers whose starting wage is a little over \$8 an hour had to pay \$90 a week for medical coverage for their family. In Massachusetts having medical insurance is mandatory. Those without it face fines.

Lemus told the *Boston Globe* online edition that under the new contract workers will get a raise of about 45 cents the first year and 40 cents in 2011 and 2012. The company raised the portion it pays for family health insurance to 80 percent and for pension plans to 20 cents an hour in 2010 and 30 cents an hour in 2012. The company had been paying 10 cents.

A noontime rally December 11 drew 150 union members and their supporters.

Unionists from the Teamsters, Painters, and Operating Engineers participated as well as members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, American Federation of Government Employees, and UNITE HERE.

Angelica has a plant in Worcester, Massachusetts, which is organized by UNITE HERE. Union officials report that some work from the Somerville plant was sent there.

Centro Presente, an immigrant rights organization, has an office across the street from the plant here. Staff members of the group joined the picket line and the organization made its office available to the strikers to warm up from the frigid New England winter. The office also extended its hours from 6:00 a.m. to mid-



Militant/Ted Leonard

Workers on strike against Angelica Textile Services in Somerville, Massachusetts, December 12. After five-day strike, members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1445 won contract with concessions from company.

night to correspond with the times the picket line was up.

Kevin Dwire and Sarah Ullman contributed to this article.

Killing by cop in Philadelphia

Continued from front page

the color. Many of the porches and windows displayed orange ribbons as the demonstration passed by.

"I will get justice for my boy. I will not stop," William Panas, Sr., told the crowd as he led the procession. "Thank you for your support."

Drivers blew their horns and waved as the chanting demonstrators demanded: "We want justice!"; "Jail Tepper!"; and "Lock him up!"

District Attorney Lynne Abraham and chief cop Charles Ramsey refuse to charge Tepper, who claims he was threatened. The cop has been reassigned to a desk job pending an internal and special grand jury investigation. His regular duty is on the Civil Affairs Unit, a squad that polices demonstrations and labor disputes, among other tasks.

Many in the neighborhood have filed complaints about Tepper's behavior for years. According to the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, these include the cop macing a group of youth he believed had harassed his son. An Internal Affairs report said the boys had not teased his son. In 1995 Tepper chased two men down with his car after he had been drinking in a bar. The complaint to Internal Affairs said he reached into the men's car and beat one of them with his pistol. Tepper has been cleared of charges in most cases,

reported the *Inquirer*.

Supporters of the Panas family set up a memorial at the site of the crime. A 24-hour police car is stationed in front of the cop's house for his "protection."

Participants in the march told the *Militant* that some of the young witnesses are being escorted during their daily routines in response to reports of intimidation by Tepper's friends.

"Since we were 12 years old," David Florek explained, "He [Tepper] threatened kids" in the playground opposite his house. Florek, a Community College of Philadelphia student, was with Panas moments before he was killed. He vowed to "keep coming out 'til the cop is in jail."

Panas's death adds to a history of police brutality and killings. In May last year, 15 cops were caught by TV news cameras beating three Black men as their captain watched.

In July a homeless man was killed during an early morning roundup near City Hall by two cops claiming he threatened them with a box cutter. Another homeless victim was shot to death in a city park.

The cops have killed more than 13 people during this year.

Brian Nevins contributed to this article.

'Our party is built on correct ideas, comradeship'

Printed below is an excerpt from *Speeches for Socialism*, by James P. Cannon, one of *Pathfinder's Books of the Month* for December. Cannon was a founding leader of the Communist Party in the United States and was the principal leader in that party in the fight against its Stalinist degeneration in the late 1920s. He was a founding leader of the Socialist Workers Party, serving as its national secretary from 1938 to 1953. The excerpt is from a speech delivered in 1943 just before Cannon went to prison after the U.S. government convicted him and 17 other unionists and SWP leaders under the witch-hunt Smith Act for their opposition to the second imperialist world war. Copyright © 1969 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



Federal Marshals with 15 of 18 leaders of Minneapolis Teamsters Local 544 and Socialist Workers Party on way to prison after 1943 decision by federal court to jail them for opposing second imperialist world war under Washington's witch-hunt Smith Act.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY JAMES P. CANNON

It is always the most important thing in a new situation to understand what it is, to know exactly what has happened and why. Trotsky taught us that, among so many other things. He frequently repeated his favorite motto, from Spinoza: "Neither to weep nor to laugh, but to understand. . . ."

We are not criminals, as you know, and as all of the others know. We are not

going to prison for any fault or injury committed against unoffending people. We didn't kill, we didn't steal, and we didn't lie. On the contrary, we have been just and truthful. All the criminals are on the other side. And all the liars are on the other side, beginning with the judge and prosecutor in Minneapolis and ending with the highest court in the land. That is where the criminals are. I say that those nine black-gowned justices of the Supreme Court in Washington are just as criminal as any of them. They are on a level with Roosevelt and Biddle, who started the prosecution, and the lesser figures who carried it through. The august court did not pass judgment upon us. They played the ignominious role of Pontius Pilate, who washed his hands. . . .

But how do matters stand with us? Are we consistent too? Yes, indeed. Everything is in order on our side. We neither laugh nor weep; we understand. We have understood from the beginning what might be the consequences of our undertaking. All people pay for their ideas what they think the ideas are worth. If some men are not prepared to pay with the sacrifice of one day's liberty or the missing of one meal or a little inconvenience for the sake of their ideas, they are only saying thereby that they set no serious value upon them. But

we think our ideas are the most important thing in this world, that they represent the whole future of mankind. That is why, if we have to pay even a high price for the sake of those ideas, we pay it without whimpering. We are Trotskyists, you remember, and that means we are political people of a different breed.

The Trotskyist party is not like the other parties. It is a different kind of a party, different not in degree, but in kind, in quality. Other parties and other politicians set limits to what they will do. But the Trotskyists set no limit on what they will do for their ideas and, in the last analysis, they set no limits on the price they are prepared to pay for them. The others play for pennies, but the Trotskyist stakes his head. Therein is the difference. Therein is the chasm that separates the vanguard of the coming proletarian revolution from all politicians and parties who merely dabble with the idea. . . .

Ben Hanford, one of the best loved of all the early socialist agitators in this country, once objected to a comrade's statement that he had made great sacrifices for the movement. He said he had received from the socialist movement something far greater and far better than he had ever been able to contribute to it. He had only been able to give time, effort and material

means, but the socialist movement had given him a cause that was bigger than self. Therefore, he had a warrant for living in a world of poverty, hardship, discrimination and injustice. "So please don't speak of my sacrifices," said Ben Hanford. "Socialism made a man of me, and I can never repay the movement for that. . . ."

We go to prison confident that we are leaving behind us capable men and women who are qualified to take our places in the leadership of the party. They have not been selected in a hurry. When the decision of the Supreme Court was announced, we did not need an emergency meeting and a hurried search for comrades to take our places in the leading positions. That had already been decided by the fifteenth anniversary plenum of our party. But even the plenum decision was only a formality. In reality, the substitute leadership had been decided by the fifteen years of work and struggle in which certain individual comrades had been sifted out. They had shown their caliber. They had come forward, and by common consent they were designated to step into the places vacated by the eighteen.

Our party is built on correct ideas and therefore is indestructible. But, in addition to that, I believe there is in this party of ours an intangible power which reinforces the power of its ideas. That is the spirit of the party—its comradeship, its solidarity. You know the word comrade has been so long abused and so badly defiled by self-seekers and pretenders that honest people sometimes shrink from using the word any more. But in the movement that has been created under the inspiration of Trotsky, with his example always before us, the word comrade has acquired a new, fresh meaning that animates the members of our movement not only in their political work in the class struggle, but also in all their daily lives and associations with each other. It is not anymore, not with us, a formal and conventional word, but a bond of unity and solidarity. Our comrades are devoted to each other and trust each other. That is an intangible source of power that will yield great results in the days to come.

December

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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'Climate' talks marked by capitalist rivalries

BY BEN JOYCE

Representatives from underdeveloped nations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America staged a walkout for several hours December 14 at the UN-sponsored summit talks on climate. The action by the nations, known as the Group of 77, highlights the real purpose of the meeting in Copenhagen—rivalry between the imperialist powers and their economic dominance of the so-called developing nations.

The stated aim of the talks is to adopt an international treaty that would mandate countries to reduce levels of greenhouse gas emissions, a byproduct of burning fossil fuels like oil, gas, and coal.

Europe vs. America

Some capitalist rulers, in the United States in particular, have opposed such regulations, saying the added costs of investment in technology and equipment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions would cut into their profits. They also argue that they would be at an unfair disadvantage without imposition of stringent regulations on the industries of semicolonial nations.

Western European delegations, on the other hand, are pushing for the most restrictive emissions guidelines. Capitalist industries in Europe are less dependent on fossil fuels since they have turned substantially to nuclear power as a source of energy. Nuclear power accounts for 76 percent of the energy needs of French industries, 53 percent in Belgium, 42 percent in Sweden, and 28 percent in Germany.

The European Union will likely commit to a 30 percent reduction in emissions, according to the London *Guardian*. The *New York Times* reports that many European governments support an enforcement mechanism in the treaty that penalizes countries that fail to comply.

One draft document calls for “developing” countries to reduce their emissions by 15 to 30 percent by 2020.

Semicolonial countries are home to 76 percent of the world’s population, while they account for only 42 percent of greenhouse gas emissions and 19 percent of the world’s gross domestic product. The group of most developed countries makes up 19 percent of the population, while producing 51 percent of emissions and holding 75 percent of the GDP. The United States has 5 percent of the population with 20 percent of emissions and 30 percent of the GDP.

A major component of the conference has been a U.S.-led campaign against

China and its ability to compete in international trade. The delegation from Washington said December 14 that it would not support any deal that did not include a verification mechanism for China’s emissions levels, which Beijing has rejected. Being able to compete with Chinese industry is a major concern for the U.S. rulers and the so-called climate debate is one place this becomes sharpest.

In June the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill on climate and energy policy that “allows for the imposition of tariffs on goods from countries that do not constrain their carbon output,” according to the *New York Times*. A group of 10 senators wrote to President Barack Obama warning that the Senate would not ratify any treaty that did not “protect American industry from foreign competitors who do not have to meet global warming emissions limits,” said the *Times*.

Washington’s actions are similar to the stance it took around the 1997 Kyoto treaty. That treaty imposed goals for emissions reductions for the developed countries but was optional for underdeveloped nations. The U.S. government refused to sign because the added costs to accommodate these changes by U.S.



Danish police confront protesters in Copenhagen December 14. Government passed law granting sweeping powers to make “preemptive” arrests. Nearly 1,000 were arrested at demonstration December 12.

companies, they argued, would make underdeveloped countries more competitive in the world market.

During the Copenhagen conference several protest actions have taken place, the largest drawing tens of thousands of activists. Some of the actions have been organized to press for strong regulations, while others have sought to prevent the conference from taking place as planned. A rally held December 12 attracted 40,000 according to police accounts, or nearly 100,000 according to organizers.

Police told the Associated Press that they had arrested 968 people in a

“preventive action” at the demonstration. Leading up to the conference, the Danish government passed a law granting police sweeping powers to make “preemptive” arrests. According to the *Guardian*, “the new powers of ‘preemptive’ detention would increase from 6 to 12 hours and apply to international activists. If protesters are charged with hindering the police, the penalty will increase from a fine to 40 days in prison. Protesters can also be fined an increased amount of 5,000 krona (US\$978) for breach of the peace, disorderly behaviour, and remaining after the police have broken up a demonstration.”

ICE agents arrest 286 immigrant workers

Continued from front page

has stepped up enforcement of immigration laws while downplaying the use of high-profile factory raids, which have often been met by protests. Many working people hate the way immigration cops have raided factories and don’t see working without proper papers as a crime. By going after alleged criminals, ICE hopes to undercut opposition to deportations.

At a December 9 Senate Judiciary Committee hearing, Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano boasted about the 387,000 undocumented workers deported this year. Some 359,000 were deported in 2008.

The biggest part of the increase is from the deportation of undocumented workers who finished serving prison time or are accused of criminal offenses: 136,000 in 2009, up from 97,000 in 2008. Until 2006, many workers without papers in federal prisons were released after serving time. Now virtually all are automatically deported when their sentences end.

Napolitano also said that E-Verify, a program that allows bosses to check on the immigration and work status of potential and current employees through the Internet, is expanding by leaps and bounds. More than 175,000 companies

at 600,000 work sites now use the system and thousands more companies continue to join every week.

The stepped-up government attacks on undocumented workers are putting wind in the sails of anti-immigrant groups.

Ultrarightist Patrick Buchanan wants Washington to go even further. In a December 8 column titled “Why import workers now?” Buchanan scapegoats immigrants for high unemployment in the United States. He calls on Congress to impose a moratorium on legal immigration and on the Obama administration to resume factory raids.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



December 28, 1984

MANAGUA, Nicaragua—More than 70 civilians—in their majority volunteer coffee harvesters—were murdered by CIA-organized mercenaries in Nicaragua in the first two weeks of December alone.

According to a December 15 communiqué by the Nicaraguan Ministry of Defense, the worst massacre was the December 6 ambushing of a truck full of coffee pickers between the towns of Telpaneca and San Juan del Río Coco in the mountainous north-central part of the country known as Las Segovias. Of the 33 civilians on the truck, 29 were killed, many of them burned alive when the mercenaries set fire to the truck after having stolen provisions and identification papers from the passengers.

Jorge Luis Briones—one of four who survived—explained that the U.S.-sponsored counterrevolutionaries attacked the truck using rockets, grenades, and rifle fire.



December 28, 1959

MINNEAPOLIS, December 20—The National Guard is riding herd on some 200 scabs in the struck Wilson packinghouse plant at Albert Lea, about 100 miles south of here. The object at present is to prevent the union from closing down the plant and to gain time for the scab operation.

The plant was at first shut down by the troops December 11 under a declaration of martial law issued by Gov. Freeman after a thousand striking members of the United Packinghouse Workers, Local 6, had engaged in a pitched battle against scabs armed with guns, knives, and blackjacks. Wilson had locked its workers out November 1 and refused to negotiate a new contract.

Major General Cook then authorized a “partial” and “temporary” reopening of the plant. Meanwhile the company is continuing its campaign to pressure the governor into permitting full-scale scab operation of the plant.



December 29, 1934

One of the most vicious anti-labor trials in years is now in full swing in Sacramento, California. The District Attorney, on behalf of the Industrial Association, is trying to send 18 militant workers to the State Penitentiary at San Quentin for the “crime” of organizing to get higher wages, an activity described by the capitalist legal system of California as “Criminal Syndicalism.”

The defendants were the leaders and active militants of the Agricultural and Cannery Workers’ Union. Masked as an “anti-red” crusade, the trial is aimed primarily at this organization, the most active and effective of any of the unions under Communist Party leadership in California.

At this writing, the jury is being picked which will be asked to convict these workers, some of them members of the Communist Party, and others without political affiliation.

For further reading

New International, issue 14:



Includes: “The stewardship of nature also falls to the working class: In defense of land and labor”
—Statement by Socialist Workers Party

\$14

Available online or from a distributor listed on page 4

PathfinderPress.com

Pathfinder Press sales high at Venezuela fair

BY PETER PIERCE

CARACAS, Venezuela—A near-constant stream of readers visited the Pathfinder Press bookstand during the 10-day Venezuela International Book Fair November 13–22. More than 2,000 books were sold—a nearly 37 percent increase from the previous year.

The increase in sales is one example of a deeper thirst for a revolutionary working-class answer to unemployment, mounting assaults on living standards, and growing uncertainty working people worldwide are facing as the deepest capitalist economic crisis since the Great Depression unfolds.

Fairgoers were drawn to the Pathfinder Press booth, above all, by the broad range of books that present the working-class road to political power and the continuity of the revolutionary communist movement. Among the most popular titles were the *Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels; writings of central leaders of the Russian Revolution, V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky; and books that record the work of building the world communist movement today.

Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible? was the top-selling book. The title—and the cover photo showing a mass demonstration by immigrant workers on May Day 2006 for legalization—provoked much discussion and interest.

The centerpiece of the book is two

speeches presented by Mary-Alice Waters, a central leader of the Socialist Workers Party, as part of a wide-ranging debate at the 2007 and 2008 Venezuela book fairs. The theme of the fair in 2007 was “The United States: a possible revolution.”

Waters explains in the 2007 talk that she is speaking as part of the small minority that answers the question “yes, revolution *is* possible in the United States. Socialist revolution. To put it in class terms, a proletarian revolution—the broadest, most inclusive social upheaval of the oppressed and exploited imaginable.”

Among those answering no—arguing that working people in the United States were either too privileged or bought off—were Venezuelan-American lawyer and author Eva Golinger and Amiri Baraka, a U.S. writer who has been active in Black nationalist, Maoist, and Democratic Party politics since the 1960s.

Many were attracted to the book’s explanation of the important place of workers who are immigrants as part of an emerging vanguard of the working class, and the ongoing weight of workers who are Black.

Some came by the Pathfinder booth asking for books by U.S. authors they have heard of, including Noam Chomsky and James Petras. The volunteers staffing the booth said Pathfinder doesn’t carry those books. They would explain that Chomsky doesn’t see the working class as capable of resolving the problems facing us either in the United States or Latin America, in contrast to the perspective offered by Waters in *Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?* Petras is among those who promote the idea that Jews, and their defense of Israel, are what has dominated U.S. policy. This false conspiracy theory is a danger to working people and one that is taken up in the book as well. Several left with copies after such discussions.

These were the themes that drew 150 people to buy the book this year, and many others to ask for it after the stock had been sold out.

Sales of *New International* magazine

Taken together, sales of *New International*, a magazine of Marxist politics and theory, accounted for one-fifth of the total sales—more than 400 copies.

Some of the broadest political discussions at the stand began as brief presentations of the politics contained in the different issues of this magazine. As one of the volunteers summarized the analysis of the historical and economic roots of the world economic crisis, the character of the expanding imperialist wars worldwide, and the growing assaults on the rights and living standards of working people in the United States that accompanies them, a small crowd would often gather.

Copies of *Nueva Internacional* no. 6 with the title article “Capitalism’s Long Hot Winter Has Begun” and issue no. 4 titled “Imperialism’s March Toward Fascism and War” would change hands as the presenter outlined the long-term decline of capitalist profit rates, the rise of speculation in forms of fictitious capital, and how the deepening debt balloon



Militant/Arnold Weissberg

Pathfinder volunteer explains articles in Spanish edition of *New International* magazine of Marxist politics and theory during November 13–22 Venezuela International Book Fair. That issue includes: “What the 1987 Stock Market Crash Foretold”; “Imperialism’s March Toward Fascism and War”; and “Defending Cuba, Defending Cuba’s Socialist Revolution.” More than 400 copies of *New International* were sold.

produced the world depression we are now living through. At the end, several would line up to buy a copy or two.

One person came by with a friend and explained he had bought *Nueva Internacional* no. 6 in the past and was amazed at how accurate it was at describing the economic crisis that later began to unfold in 2007. He suggested his friend get a copy while he bought the latest *Nueva Internacional* no. 8, with the article “The Clintons’ Antilabor Legacy: Roots of the 2008 World Financial Crisis.”

Many fairgoers would remark that they felt that somehow Venezuela was protected from the capitalist crisis by the country’s large oil reserves. Others, however, would point to the rise in food prices and the deterioration of infrastructure that are producing blackouts and water shortages as examples of the growing instability that is being felt more and more deeply in the working class here.

Nueva Internacional no. 5—with the feature article “U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War”—drew broad interest as well. Among other themes, the political resolution at the center of this book answers the questions: What was the Soviet Union and what brought about the collapse of the regimes that ruled it? Did world capitalism emerge from the Cold War stronger, or did the outcome accelerate its instability? What is socialism and why is its construction a revolutionary political task of the working class?

All 10 copies of Leon Trotsky’s *The Revolution Betrayed* and all 15 copies of *Lenin’s Final Fight* also sold quickly. Alongside *Nueva Internacional* no. 5 these two books provide an indispensable explanation of the character of the bureaucratic regime led by Stalin that usurped power in the Soviet Union, and the battle against it. Books that were available at the stand only in English and therefore only in small numbers—from four to eight copies were brought—like Trotsky’s *History of the Russian Revolution and Reform or Revolution* by Rosa Luxemburg and *Rosa Luxemburg Speaks*, also sold out.

The cumulative impact of Pathfinder’s presence at

the book fair and at other political activities in Venezuela over the past several years was also felt. An older worker told this reporter that he has been steadily building up his collection of books by Jack Barnes, the national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. A student who had seen Pathfinder literature tables at the World Youth Festival in Caracas in 2005, had checked the Pathfinder Press Web site and planned his purchases. They included both volumes of *Revolutionary Continuity* by Farrell Dobbs, the most recent issue of *Nueva Internacional*, and *Their Trotsky and Ours* by Barnes.

Hundreds also stopped by the stand looking for collections of speeches by revolutionary leaders they had heard of.

Topping the list was Malcolm X—162 books of his speeches were sold and 113 copies of *Nueva Internacional* no. 8 with the lead article “Revolution, Internationalism, and Socialism: The Last Year of Malcolm X” by Barnes. Every title in Spanish by Nelson Mandela and by Thomas Sankara, as well as anything about the Grenada revolution and speeches by Maurice Bishop, also sold out.

Some of those who bought titles by Malcolm X were part of debates and discussions on the question of the fight against racism in Venezuela and the broader region. Among these were a group of Afro-Colombian students who visited the stand and spent more than an hour discussing the fight against racism in Colombia and the importance of the example of Malcolm X in their work.

Laura Garza contributed to this article.



Militant/Arnold Weissberg

Volunteer Amanda Ulman talks with Venezuela book fair participants. Higher sales at fair this year represent growing interest among workers and youth in revolutionary working-class answers on how to confront the deepening worldwide economic and social crisis of capitalism.

Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?

A Necessary Debate

by Mary-Alice Waters

Also available in Spanish, French

The Communist Manifesto

by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels

Also available in Spanish, French, Arabic, Farsi

New International no. 12

Featuring “Capitalism’s Long Hot Winter Has Begun”

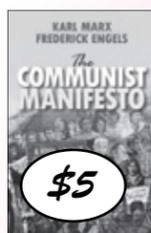
by Jack Barnes

Also available in Spanish, French, Swedish, Greek, Farsi

History of the Russian Revolution

by Leon Trotsky

Also available in Russian



'Cuba is only country where blacks and mestizos have government as their ally'

Below is an interview with Esteban Morales that appeared in the December 14 Cuban newspaper *Trabajadores*. Morales is director emeritus of the University of Havana's Center for the Study of the Hemisphere and the United States. He wrote the preface to the Cuban edition of *Habla Malcolm X* (Malcolm X Speaks) published by the *Ciencias Sociales* publishing house. In the interview Morales answers a slander campaign organized by Carlos Moore, a decades-long opponent of the Cuban Revolution, that charges the Cuban government with sanctioning racial discrimination. (See last week's Militant article "Cubans answer slander of racism against revolution.") Translation and footnotes are by the Militant.

ANA MARGARITA GONZÁLEZ AND RAFAEL HOJAS MARTÍNEZ

It would be absurd to think that in Cuba there are no racial problems, negative stereotypes, discrimination, or racism that exist as dead weight, but not only as dead weight but also as something that an imperfect society is still able to reproduce.

The recent declaration by some Afro-Americans supposedly supporting the struggle for civil rights in our country manipulates and magnifies these problems, trying to make it seem that the racial problem in Cuba is similar to any other country in the hemisphere, which is not true.

This is the point of view of Dr. Esteban Morales, political scientist and essayist, signer of the message sent by Cuban intellectuals to their Afro-American colleagues, in which they reflect on the truth of this controversial subject.

"The fundamental weakness of their declaration is that their criticism is based on the same pillars that, historically, the U.S. government has used, arguing that there is a totalitarian dictatorship here, that we are a country without human rights, no democracy for blacks, and blaming the problems on the government and political leadership.

"The humanitarian policies of the Revolution have helped overcome this obstacle. Institutional racism does not exist. It is a phenomenon that was dragged along and reproduced during a relatively long period, during which we were not paying attention. In 1962 we idealistically proclaimed that racism was resolved, but what it did was hide itself, and it re-emerged in the midst of the economic crisis.

"As opposed to what they suggest, it is Fidel Castro himself, who, in March 1959, in a number of speeches, recognized the existence of racism and discrimination and the necessity of doing away with them and seeing them as a social defect.

"He himself returned to this theme during the special period¹ at Union of Artists and Writers of Cuba congresses

1. The special period refers to the sharp economic crisis precipitated in the early 1990s when Cuba abruptly lost most of its aid from and favorable trade relations with the Soviet bloc countries following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

and at meetings on teaching. And his arguments are still valid."

Why do these symptoms persist?

Professor Morales accepts that "we have made mistakes. The first: the idealist conception that the Revolution's policies would cause racism to slowly disappear like other scourges from the past that we inherited.

"Cuba may be the country that has advanced the most in its eradication, especially the inequality and injustice that goes hand in hand with it, but fifty years of revolution, as radical as it may have been, are not enough to end a problem of 450 years of colonialism.

"All of us Cubans must continue struggling against this deformation, in education, in culture, in the media. To make people conscious that the problem exists and must be solved.

"It is not possible to speak of a general, unified culture if this is not resolved, but the Cuban reality is quite far from, for example, that of the United States, which is the most racist society the world has ever known, despite having elected a Black president.

"In our country we have many shortcomings in the teaching of history. The multicoloredness doesn't get into the books the way it should, the racial question is not mentioned or explained, and the near-complete absence of Africa, Asia, the Mideast, makes it difficult for kids to leave school with a deep sense of the roots of Cuban culture. The difficulties are being discussed in National Commissions created to deal with this.

"The second error was to not take into account variations in skin color, which is an index of social differentiation, and is the starting point for the racial groups that shaped our country.

"The Spanish came here of their own volition, the blacks were brought over in slave ships, caught on the west coast of Africa or sold by their own tribes. They became the slaves, which in this part of the world was based on color. In classical slavery, the slave could be blonde or blue-eyed. Here it was the Indian or the black." From the mixing of these and others came the Cuban color.

"Walk the streets of Havana today and you'll see what I'm talking about. Despite the fact that there are many young blacks working at the Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology, in our barrios you'll find many marginalized people, who don't succeed in taking advantage of, or reaching, all the benefits



Militant/Ben Joyce

Esteban Morales, director emeritus of the University of Havana's Center for the Study of the Hemisphere and the United States, center, at presentation at Havana International Book Fair February 20 of the book *Malcolm X Speaks* and of "Revolution, Internationalism, and Socialism: The Last Year of Malcolm X," the feature article by Jack Barnes in issue 14 of *New Internationalist* magazine. Other participants from left: Adalberto Hernández, president of the Federation of University Students; Martín Koppel, Pathfinder Press; Fernando Martínez Heredia, recipient of 2006 national prize for social sciences, and Sonia Almaguer, director of *Ciencias Sociales*.

the Revolution has provided.

"And they don't because their starting points were different. You can see this in many parameters of daily life: housing, quality of employment, institutional support, access to jobs in the public and private sectors, above all in the so-called new economy.

"The level of democracy and civil rights we have achieved is the same for all racial groups. The extent to which we have to improve is the same for everyone. Some will take better advantage than others because they are in a better position to do so.

"The racial question in our country is not simply economic. It has to do with everything, and, politically, the topic should be on the agenda of all the organizations and discussed."

So, another attack on the Revolution?

Going back to the declaration of the Afro-Americans, Professor Morales stated categorically that "these people grab on to our difficulties to attack the Revolution. However, Cuba is the only country in the world in which blacks and mestizos have the state and the government as their ally. If there had not been a revolution, the blacks would have had to make one in order to reach the level which more than a few of us have achieved.

"I am convinced that some of the signers did not know what they were signing. They were manipulated, and one

person asked to have her name taken off because she realized that there were distortions, that they were trying to twist reality, to inject themselves into an internal debate and turn it into something to do with 'dissidents.'"

Cuban aid to African nations: Proof that the Cuban Revolution is not racist?

"It is a piece of evidence. The fact that Cuban doctors, teachers, and medical technicians—white and black—go to the most remote places in the world to help those who need help, is evidence, but it is 'practical' evidence. We need theory, because at the same time we are doing that, we are not dealing with the racial problem openly, completely, and profoundly as we must do internally.

"This is a contradiction, it would appear to be demagoguery. We dealt very well with it on the outside, we're friends of the blacks, the Indians, and the wretched of the earth, but here there was a certain atmosphere of social repression, where to speak of racism could get you called racist and divisive. We used to think that it wasn't necessary to talk about it, that it was going to be resolved simply through the unfolding of profoundly humanistic policies. It's proven that even after capitalism ends, racism remains in the consciousness, in the institutions, in people's way of life.

There are experts who say that this declaration could affect the Obama government. What do you think?

"We cannot know exactly what effects it will cause. Obama has always tried to keep away from the racial question, including not being able to present himself as a Black candidate. He tried to sidestep it, and he did.

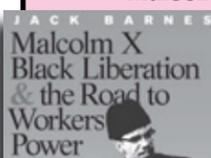
"But Obama has once again revived the restrictions and charges against Cuba and this declaration goes in the same direction. The document these people signed is being discredited as witnessed by the fact that ours is gaining signers and theirs is losing them.

"In the United States there is a great deal of sensitivity to this problem."

At times there have been quotas for
Continued on page 8

For further reading

Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power

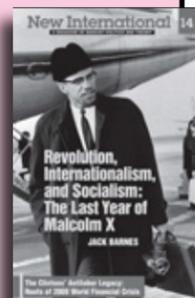


by Jack Barnes

Includes "Radical Reconstruction: Its Conquests and the Consequences of Its Defeat" \$20

Che Guevara Talks to Young People \$15

"Revolution, Internationalism, and Socialism: The Last Year of Malcolm X" in *New Internationalist* No. 14. \$14



Available online or from a distributor listed on page 8

PathfinderPress.com

No to cutbacks in social wage!

The capitalist rulers in New York are launching a new round of cuts to transportation, education, and other vital social services. It is the latest in the radical assault on the living conditions of the working class by the bosses and their government in Albany. The aim of these cutbacks, wage freezes, and other measures by capitalist politicians is to make us shoulder the burden of their economic crisis.

As they do so the rulers, their government, and their media outlets look for opportunities to divide working people, especially by blaming unionized city and state workers for the cutbacks. For two consecutive days the *New York Post* printed editorials vilifying transit workers and teachers, claiming that “taxpayers” are being ripped off by the workers’ “very-generous-for-a-recession raises.” The bourgeois mouthpiece said flat out that “the only real answer is to cut labor costs.”

The accusation that the paltry wage increases workers receive are responsible for cutbacks in social services is false. Higher wages don’t come out of a “wage pool” that is drained by some workers to the detriment of other workers. It’s a lie aimed at dividing working people. They want us to believe that fellow workers are getting ahead at our expense.

Higher wages *do* mean less profits for the boss class—those who own the factories, mines, railways, and exploit our labor. As the capitalist politicians push through measures to make working people pay for the economic crisis, they are making

sure that the interests of the propertied families they serve are protected. While schools, health care, and public transportation are put on the chopping block, payments to the wealthy bondholders from California to New York remain untouched.

When the bosses and their governments around the world say “we have to make sacrifices, we have to tighten our belts,” they mean *workers* have to give up many of the things we’ve come to depend on every day. There is no “we” that applies to both working people and the bosses and their government.

Social services and wage increases are won by working people through organized, collective struggle. That’s why the unions, the basic defense organization of the working class, will increasingly come under attack. To put working people in a stronger fighting position we should demand the capitalists open their books to committees of workers and farmers so that we can expose the bloated “administrative costs” and “debt service” payments. Working people should call for a federally funded public works program to put millions of people to work at union-scale wages.

A revolutionary movement of working people fighting to win these and similar demands is necessary to defend what we have won as a social wage. These gains can only be defended and extended by working people taking political power and joining the worldwide struggle to reorganize society on the basis of the needs of the majority, rather than the interests of big capital.

Afghanistan war to get more violent

Continued from front page

and Pentagon officials, has been emphasizing that there is “no time line” on ending escalation of the U.S. war there. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said December 6, “We’re not talking about an exit strategy.”

The first new troops, a battalion of Marines, will arrive in Afghanistan this week. By April the number will grow to 17,000, said Secretary of Defense Robert Gates.

By the time all 30,000 troops are in place, including some 38,000 NATO soldiers, there will be about 136,000 in the country—greater than the 110,000 Soviet soldiers at the peak of the 1979 to 1989 failed Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

Brig. Gen. Eric Tremblay, spokesman for NATO in Afghanistan, said that “an increase in tempo could lead to increased collateral damages.” Collateral damages is military jargon for “unintended” damage or deaths, usually of civilians.

More than 1,000 civilians were killed in Afghanistan in the first six months of 2009, according to a UN report that blamed both the U.S.-led forces, the Taliban, and other insurgents for the deaths.

Along with the increased troops, Petraeus told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that “additional mission force elements” would be sent to Afghanistan in the spring. This is a reference to stepped up missile attacks from aerial drones, more bombings from warplanes, and an increase in the use of Special Forces.

At a December 8 news conference in Kabul, Afghanistan president Hamid Karzai, with Gates standing by his side, said that Afghanistan would not be able to pay for its own security for 15 to 20 more years.

Afghan army not effective

Washington has expanded the size of the Afghan army and attempted, without much success, to turn it into an effective fighting force. It wants to increase the army from its current size of 95,000 to about 170,000 by July 2011.

According to the *Washington Post*, some weeks only 52,000 Afghan soldiers report for duty. Washington recently boosted pay to Afghan soldiers and police to try to increase morale and win new recruits.

In spite of NATO claims that 7,000 new troops from U.S. allies will be sent to bolster the U.S. escalation, few specific commitments have been an-

nounced.

London has pledged to send at least 500 more troops to join the 9,500 British troops there, the second largest NATO contingent in Afghanistan, many of them deployed in the areas of heaviest combat.

The governments of Australia, South Korea, Sweden, Georgia, Ukraine, Macedonia, and Montenegro, none of which are NATO members, pledged almost 2,000 troops. The Italian and Polish governments promised to send some 2,100 more.

But a combined total of 5,000 soldiers from Canada and the Netherlands are set to completely withdraw by 2011.

U.S. officials openly state that the goal of the war escalation is not to crush the Taliban but to “reverse the Taliban momentum” and “degrade the Taliban to levels manageable by the Afghan security forces.”

Gates: Taliban part of Afghan fabric

In a December 8 interview on NBC Today, Gates admitted that “the Taliban are a part of the political fabric of Afghanistan at this point at some level.” Pointing to success that Washington had in Iraq in drawing some elements of the armed insurgency there into the government, Gates added, “that’s how this kind of a conflict always ends, in some kind of a political accommodation.”

Washington’s goal is to win at least some Taliban fighters. Those they can’t win over are to be “killed, captured or run off,” according to Petraeus.

So far, Washington’s attempts to split the Taliban have not been very successful.

“We have nothing to offer these people,” said Haji Jan Mohammed, director of the Afghan government’s “reconciliation” program for insurgents in two provinces. “We promise them jobs but there are no jobs, and we promise them land but there is no land.”

Some Democrats have opposed the escalation of the war. Democratic senator Russell Feingold has said that no “more American lives should be risked for a war that no longer serves our most pressing national security interest.”

Congresswoman Maxine Waters, a prominent liberal Black Democrat and Obama supporter, opposed sending more troops, complaining that Obama “did not provide sufficient details” on how Washington would “be able to withdraw from Afghanistan.”

Crisis in Greece

Continued from front page
highest in the EU.

Greek banks have borrowed about 40 billion euros from the European Central Bank (ECB), using Greek government bonds as collateral. The Greek National Bank since the beginning of November increased its investments in these bonds to 18 billion euros.

Construction and shipping

With industrial production continuing to slide, construction and shipping have been hit hardest. In the eight-month period ending in August, construction permits were down 15.8 percent from last year, throwing many, especially immigrant workers, out of a job. Tourism, which accounts for 17 percent of GDP, has also suffered in the last season, according to the *Athens News*, with revenues dropping by 20 percent.

Nikolaos Efthymiou, president of the Union of Greek Shipowners, complained that they are just making the operating costs and may soon fall below that.

Greek shipping, with tonnage at 16.1 percent of the world’s total, is central to the country’s economy. Greek shipping tycoons were also among the tops in the world in ordering newly built ships. Now they are canceling new building contracts.

According to figures released by the Bank of Greece December 1, some 300 workers are losing their jobs every day. The official unemployment rate is 9.9 percent.

The PASOK government has promised the EU it will present “a detailed plan” in January of how it is going to reduce the deficit and public debt.

The government of Prime Minister George Papandreou, which came to power through elections held in early October, plans a range of austerity measures along the lines of the previous conservative New Democratic Party government, reported *Athens Plus*. Among the expected measures are cuts in social spending, a curb in pay increases for civil servant workers, imposing a freeze on hiring of new government employees, increase in taxes, and raising workers’ retirement age.

The government has so far laid off 20,000 public workers by abolishing an apprenticeship program. Hundreds of these public workers marched in the center of this city December 1 demanding a decent job.

Blacks in Cuba

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blacks in our organizations in order to guarantee representation. Is this an example of racism?

“It was a failed attempt, a mistake as to the form which we believed could solve the problem of representation. But the problem is more complex.

“We have a lot of people who, although they are black, don’t think of themselves that way.

“There is the phenomenon of whitening, and if you as a black don’t come out and say what you are, it’s a demagogic posture, it’s not ethical. In Cuban culture it is absolutely necessary that people come to terms with and be what they are. The challenge is to create a consciousness without racial prejudice, stereotypes, and racism.

“It is necessary to create all the conditions for educating girls and boys in this process and we need others in the area of culture, of empowerment and economic equality. Between you and me there could be economic equality but not social equality, there could be legal equality but not social equality. Social equality is something much more complex.

“The fact that we were all born in the same hospital, that we go to the same recreation centers, to the same schools, has no fixed meaning. From the social point of view it is deeper, a phenomenon that passes from generation to generation, which implies being conscious that equality is the goal. The difference is what we run up against every day.

“Social equality is an integrated system in which individuals have to deal with their identity. I’m Cuban, an intellectual, a Party militant, and black, that’s who I am.” All mixed together.