

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

History shows Blacks in
vanguard of U.S. class struggle
—PAGE 6

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 74/NO. 12 MARCH 29, 2010

Legalize immigrants! Stop the deportations!



Militant/Laura Anderson

Students and workers march in Chicago March 10 to demand legalization for immigrants

U.S. gov't targets undocumented

BY SETH GALINSKY

Seventeen immigrant workers were arrested by immigration cops March 9 at the Fremont Beef meatpacking plant in Nebraska and accused of “identity theft.”

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) claimed this wasn’t a raid, just an “enforcement action.” The 17 workers were flagged during an immigration audit when their names were checked against a Federal Trade Commission database.

Workers and youth across the country have been standing up to increased government attempts to scapegoat im-

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A fight for entire working class

The stepped-up deportations and firings of undocumented workers are a key part of the capitalist rulers’ attempts to place the burdens of the

EDITORIAL

grinding, drawn-out depression onto the backs of working people.

Millions have been laid off. Social services across the board, from mass transit to hospitals and schools, are being cut. Bosses are speeding up production lines to crank out more goods with fewer workers. This war at home is the other side of the wars being waged

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Afghan war: U.S. general reorganizes commandos

BY DOUG NELSON

March 16—U.S. general Stanley McChrystal, top commander in Afghanistan, has brought many U.S. special forces in the country directly under his authority, the *New York Times* reported yesterday. The move comes after a number of operations in Afghanistan that caused civilian casualties have gained wide publicity, cutting across Washington’s efforts to win the “hearts and minds” of Afghans and bolster support for the U.S.-backed government in Kabul.

Washington has elevated the place of its special operations forces, trained hunter-killers, over the last decade in advancing its wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and in anticipation of other “counterinsurgency” campaigns to protect U.S. imperialist interests. The appointment of McChrystal to command U.S.-led forces in Afghanistan was in line with this course. He specializes in commanding “black opera-

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Workers Power book needed for fights today

BY PAUL MAILHOT

Supporters of the *Militant* have launched a subscription campaign this spring centered on selling thousands of copies of the book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by Jack Barnes, along with winning 2,000 new subscribers and renewals to the paper. The drive began March 13 and will culminate on May 12. A chart reporting the initial results will appear in next week’s issue of the paper.

As the working class feels more deeply the pressures of years of the capitalist depression, socialists are responding to opportunities to present a clear revolutionary perspective to a growing vanguard in the working class seeking to defend working people from the dictatorship of capital. Under the rule of capital, millions are being thrown out of their jobs, social services are being slashed, deportations are mounting, farm foreclosures

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Chinese-Cuban general starts speaking tour in Montreal



Militant/John Steele

Cuban brigadier general Armando Choy, center with light shirt, arrives in Montreal to begin speaking tour with events at universities and in Chinese community.

BY JOHN STEELE
AND MAGGIE TROWE

MONTREAL, March 16—Retired Cuban brigadier general Armando Choy began a five-day speaking tour here today with a presentation on the Cuban Revolution to more than 50 students at Marianopolis College. Choy’s talk was followed by an animated discussion, which continued informally with more than a dozen students and faculty members following the meeting.

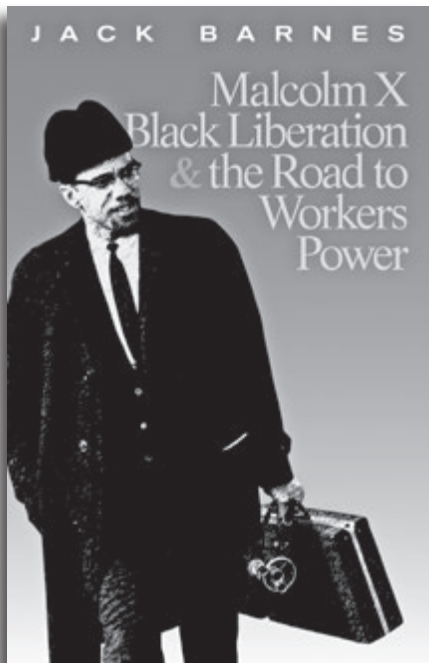
Marianopolis professors Philip Dann and Dolores Chew, from the Humanities and English departments, and students

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Special offer

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

by Jack Barnes



“This is a book about the dictatorship of capital and the road to the dictatorship of the proletariat. A book about the last century and a half of class struggle in the United States—from the Civil War and Radical Reconstruction to today—and the unimpeachable evidence it offers that workers who are Black will comprise a disproportionately weighty part of the ranks and leadership of the mass social movement that will make a proletarian revolution. . . .”

Available for only \$10 with subscription to the *Militant*. Regular price: \$20. Order online or from a distributor listed on page 8.

PathfinderPress.com

Also Inside:

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Australia unionists back Aboriginal protest camp

BY RON POULSEN

SYDNEY, Australia—Protests have been taking place here against federal government intervention in remote Northern Territory Aboriginal communities. Beginning in 2007, 73 Aboriginal townships with rights to traditional lands were taken over and made “prescribed areas” under direct control of the federal government in Canberra, which imposed many discriminatory restrictions.

A February 24 meeting here drew some 50 people to hear a reportback from a union work brigade that recently erected a building at a new Aboriginal protest camp about 200 miles northeast of Alice Springs in central Australia.

The new encampment outside the federally “prescribed area” has become a focus of protests against the continued intervention from Canberra. In July 2009, members of the Alyawarr people “walked off” their existing town camp at Ampilatwatja to protest “rules and interference” by white bureaucrats directing the federal intervention. They moved to escape overcrowded and neglected housing and raw sewage in the streets.

Liz Barrett, a young research officer from the Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Union, described how, in two weeks, union volunteers joined by some local Aboriginal youths built a “protest house” that will now be used as a central community hall.

Barrett cited a recent Northern Territory government press release that said it had “almost built two houses

in two and a half years” for Aboriginal people. Both were built only after community leaders signed a 99-year lease turning traditional land over to the government.

Rebel Hanlon, who joined the encampment for a protest weekend, explained that he was one of “lots of indigenous members” of the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union. Due to lack of jobs, housing, and education, Hanlon said, “indigenous people die 17 years earlier than the average” in Australia. Those of indigenous descent make up 2.5 percent of Australia’s population of 22 million.

“We are going back to the bad old days of working for rations,” Hanlon told the meeting. Under intervention “income management,” a “basics card” has replaced both welfare

550 farm workers fired after immigration audit

BY JOHN NAUBERT
AND CLAY DENNISON

BREWSTER, Washington—Two days before Christmas 2009, 550 field and warehouse workers were fired at Gebbers Farms here after federal immigration agents charged that workers’ employment forms were “suspect.”

The fired workers make up about a quarter of Brewster’s population. It was the biggest firing of its kind in Washington State. Former workers have told the media that firings are still taking place.

“Many of those who were fired had worked 13 to 20 years,” said a woman who had worked for the company for



Aboriginal elders protest in Alice Springs, Australia, in January. Government-issued “basics” card system is “going back to the days of working for rations.”

payments and wages for Aboriginal workers employed by government programs.

Paul McAleer, Sydney branch secretary of the Maritime Union of Australia, pledged his union’s support, saying opposition to the intervention

is “a working-class issue, not an Aboriginal issue.”

A march and rally in Redfern of about 250 people was held February 13 to protest continued federal intervention in the Northern Territory by the Labor government.

three months before she was dismissed. She didn’t want her name used for fear of reprisals. “Some people have left the region to find work,” she said. “The firings have divided families. Many are without work and food. Except for the food bank at a church, no one is sending help.”

“People need to know what happened to us here,” she added. “Everyone should be legalized so we can work. Without legalization we work and pay taxes, but we get nothing in return.”

Many of the fired workers live in company-owned housing. The company

has ordered them out by March 28.

Brewster is a town of about 2,000 on a small peninsula on the upper Columbia River. During the harvest thousands of workers come to the area seeking work. Gebbers Farms owns more than 5,000 acres of apple and cherry orchards. Its year-round workforce packs cherries in season and apples the rest of the year.

Some of the workers have reported that when they tried to get jobs with other companies in the region they were told that their names are on a list and they haven’t been able to get hired.

Cuban 5 art shown in Oregon

BY CECELIA MORIARITY

EUGENE, Oregon—More than 100 people attended the March 5 opening of Antonio Guerrero’s art exhibition “From My Altitude” at the Fenario Gallery here.

Together with Gerardo Hernández, René González, Fernando González, and Ramón Labañino, Guerrero was arrested in 1998 in Miami, where the five were monitoring the activities of right-wing Cuban exiles who have launched armed attacks on Cuba.

They were convicted on trumped-up “conspiracy” charges and have been unjustly held in U.S. prisons ever since.

One of the gallery’s walls features large photos of each of the Cuban Five along with reproductions of their statements made at the time of sentencing. Guerrero’s artwork lines the opposite wall. The exhibition runs through March 20. For more information on showing the exhibit in your area, go to www.freethethefive.org.

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THE MILITANT

Stop the attacks on education!

Working people and youth are taking to the streets across the United States to protest the capitalist rulers’ steep cuts in school funds, public transportation, and health care. Keep up with the actions in the ‘Militant’ each week. Don’t miss an issue!



Militant/Eric Simpson

Castlemont High School students participate in protest against education cuts in Oakland, California, March 4.

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Hundreds in N.Y. hear Cuban women's group leaders

BY ANTHONY DUTROW
AND RUTH ROBINETTE

NEW YORK—More than 300 people turned out for meetings to welcome three leaders of the Federation of Cuban Women visiting here as part of the United Nations-sponsored celebration of International Women's Day. A March 12 public meeting at Hunter College drew nearly 200 people to hear Maritzel González, Ana Violeta Castañeda, and Yamila González. Another 130 people heard the FMC representatives speak in Harlem March 10.

Mariya Abrosikova, president of the Student Political Science Association, opened the Hunter event. Her group was one of several campus organizations, including the Hostos Puerto Rican Club and the Women's Rights Coalition, that hosted the event.

The cochairs of the Hunter meeting were Nancy Cabrero, president of Casa de las Américas, a Cuban American organization here that defends Cuba's socialist revolution, and Alison Bodine of IFCO/Pastors for Peace. The July 26 Coalition also sponsored both the Hunter and Harlem events.

Maritzel González, the FMC's foreign relations representative for North America, explained that August 23 will be the 50th anniversary of the founding of the FMC, which "came out of the triumph of the revolution." She was referring to the 1959 overthrow of a hated U.S.-backed dictatorship by millions of Cuban workers and peasants. They threw the wealthy landlords and factory owners out of power and formed a government representing their own class interests. This revolutionary government carried out an extensive land reform, nationalized industry and placed it under workers control, and enacted measures to uproot race and sex discrimination, including programs to bring women into the workforce, politics, and society. The FMC has been at the center of the revolution's effort to overcome women's oppression ever since.

Cuban role in Haiti

González pointed proudly to the role of Cuban medical personnel in Haiti, many of them women, in the aftermath of the earthquake this year. Cubans go anywhere help is needed, she said. "We go into jungles, we ride mules if we have to."

When the quake hit, González added, a Cuban medical team of several hundred was already there. In many parts of Haiti they were providing the



Militant/Willie Cotton

Top: Crowd at March 12 Hunter College meeting for Federation of Cuban Women (FMC) representatives. Bottom from left to right: Maritzel González and Ana Violeta Castañeda of FMC, translator Manolo de los Santos of IFCO/Pastors for Peace, Yamila González of FMC.

only health care there. "Today there are more than 1,400, including 406 Haitian graduates of Cuban medical schools," she said.

González contrasted this to the U.S. embargo, which forces Cuba to buy medical supplies "at much higher prices from third countries," rather than from U.S. companies.

Castañeda spoke about the case of the Cuban Five. These five Cuban revolutionaries have been in U.S. prisons since their arrest in 1998. They were in Florida monitoring the activity of right-wing Cuban American groups that have a history of violent attacks on Cuba. They were convicted on trumped-up "conspiracy" charges in 2001 and given long sentences. "Thanks to your efforts here," she said, "you put enough pressure on the U.S. government to reduce the sentences of three of them. They deserve much more than a reduction. They should be free!"

Yamila González spoke about the campaign the FMC is waging to win visas for Olga Salanueva and Adriana Pérez, the wives of Cuban Five prisoners René González and Gerardo Hernández respectively, so they can visit their husbands. Washington has repeatedly denied them visas. Nancy Cabrero announced that Casa de las Américas is launching an effort in the New York area to win support for the visa fight.

Harlem meeting

The issue of Black rights in Cuba was a topic at both the Hunter and Harlem meetings. In Harlem, the predominantly Black audience warmly welcomed the FMC representatives. Nellie Bailey, president of the Coalition to Save Harlem, chaired the meeting.

In the discussion one African American woman said she had encountered racist attitudes when visiting Cuba and asked the speakers why.

Castañeda explained the Cuban Revolution's history of combating racism. "Prior to the revolution you could see signs that said, 'No children, dogs, or Negroes allowed,'" she said. "We inherited a nation full of racism and

discrimination against women. Only because of the revolutionary transformation in Cuba, have women, blacks, and people of color achieved full and equal rights under the law."

She said that while legal discrimination ended with the victory of the revolution, "there is still work to be done, because discriminatory attitudes remain in the minds of many. With 50 years of the revolution we have not been able to eliminate 450 years of colonialism."

The Harlem program also featured presentations opposing the slander campaign launched by Carlos Moore, a longtime opponent of the revolu-

Miami car caravan protests U.S. ban on travel to Cuba

BY ROLLANDE GIRARD

HIALEAH, Florida—More than 50 cars joined a caravan here March 6 to protest the U.S. ban on travel to Cuba. Participants put signs on their windows in English and Spanish, demanding the "right to travel to Cuba for all" and blew their horns through the streets. Many onlookers waved in support while a few showed their displeasure. Hialeah is a city where many residents are Cuban American.

The caravan was organized by Alianza Martiana, a coalition of Cuban American organizations that oppose Washington's embargo of Cuba. The event was announced on Radio Miami, a Spanish-language station operated by opponents of the embargo. For some in the caravan it was the first time they had joined a protest like this.

While restrictions on travel to Cuba by Cuban Americans were lifted in April 2009, other U.S. citizens, except for journalists, are prohibited unless they receive a permit from the U.S. Treasury Department.

As caravan participants prepared to depart, a couple dozen right-wing demonstrators showed up. They waved Cuban and American flags and yelled insults through a bullhorn, trying to

tion who claims the Cuban government is racist and violates the civil rights of black Cubans. The speakers were U.S. writer and political activist Amiri Baraka and Glen Ford, executive editor of *Black Agenda Report*.

Discussion of 'dissidents'

One participant in the Hunter meeting asked the FMC representatives their opinions on the recent suicide by Cuban prisoner Orlando Zapata. Zapata died while waging a hunger strike and refusing medical treatment.

"The U.S. media called Zapata a 'dissident,' but he was a common criminal, who had many victims," said Yamila González. "They don't tell you this, or how hard our doctors struggled to save his life."

A Cuban American opponent of the revolution took the floor to claim that the wives of "dissidents" imprisoned in Cuba were being mistreated by the Cuban government. The FMC speakers said that political debate is encouraged in Cuba, but those who accept Washington's money to organize against the revolution are mercenaries, not "dissidents."

An African American student asked how she could be part of Cuban educational programs, such as the medical school other U.S. students have attended. Maritzel González said that U.S. law denies citizens here the right to freely travel to Cuba. "That's the greatest difficulty you will face," she said. "The U.S. government has to give you a license. Without that you can't go to school there."

"I was inspired by the presentations," said Enrique Zender, who came to the Hunter event after getting a leaflet on campus. "If there's ever been a time to learn the truth about Cuba, it's now."

provoke those demonstrating against the embargo. Instead they were rebuffed with laughter. The rightist protesters followed in their cars, which made the caravan look larger than it was.

Direct travel to the island by Cuban Americans in the United States is under attack due to a recent lawsuit by Ana Margarita Martinez. She was married to Juan Pablo Roque, a former Cuban air force pilot who came to Miami in 1992. He joined Brothers to the Rescue, a right-wing group that had been harassing Cuba, to monitor its actions. Roque returned to Cuba in 1996 a couple of days before two planes from Brothers to the Rescue were shot down after ignoring repeated warnings to stop violating Cuba's airspace.

Under U.S. law, which allows suits against foreign governments for "terrorist acts," Martinez won a judgment for \$27 million in 2001, saying that Roque married her under false pretenses.

She is asking the courts to garnish money from eight charter companies in South Florida that pay fees to Cuba for landing rights, fuel, ground support, and other services. An estimated 20,000 passengers go to Cuba on these flights each month.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CALIFORNIA

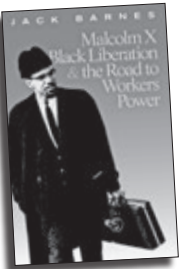
San Francisco

From Selma to Lowndes County: The Fight for Black Rights in the Jim Crow South. Speaker: Betsey Stone, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., March 26, 7:30 p.m. 5482 Mission St. Tel.: (415) 584-2135.

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis

Full, Unconditional Legalization for All Immigrants Now! Stop the Deportations! Speaker, Natalie Morrison, SWP. Fri., March 26, 8 p.m. 1311 1/2 E. Lake St., 2nd floor. Tel.: (612) 729-1205.



Sell the book on ‘workers power’

Washington, D.C.

So far 13 of my railroad coworkers have purchased *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*. Seven of these were sold with subscriptions to the *Militant*. Nine of these coworkers had read the paper before and wanted to deepen their understanding of working-class struggle.

Whenever possible, I gave the book to the coworker to peruse, and suggested that the quickest way to get an idea of the scope of this book is to look through the photos and the table of contents.

“Road to workers power, OK, I’ll read that,” said one engineer. The fact that the book situates Malcolm X in the context of a fight for workers power seemed interesting to some. Others were interested in reading about leaders like Robert F. Williams and E.D. Nixon, who usually are not given their due in histories and documentaries about the fight to overthrow Jim Crow segregation.

Tom Headley

Seattle

A number of supporters of the Socialist Workers Party here are selling the *Workers Power* book to coworkers and others they are talking to. Carmen May-

Book needed

Continued from front page

are increasing—the general conditions of life for the mass of working people is deteriorating.

Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power is about one of the outstanding revolutionary leaders of the working class. It also is about the last century and a half of class struggle in the United States and the overwhelming evidence that workers who are Black will comprise a disproportionately weighty part of the ranks and leadership of the mass social movement that will make a proletarian revolution.

The book explains why only the revolutionary conquest and use of state power by the working class and the expropriation of finance capital can lay the foundations for a world based not on exploitation, violence, and racial discrimination, but on solidarity among working people that encourages the creativity and recognition of the worth of every individual, regardless of sex, national origin, or skin color.

The response of working people to discussing these questions is why the spring circulation campaign, different from other drives in the past, places massive sales of a substantial book, *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, at the center of achieving the international goal.

Running concurrently with the spring circulation campaign is a *Militant* fund drive to raise \$110,000 to finance weekly production of the *Militant*. Unlike other newspapers that rely on advertisement income to publish, the *Militant* relies on the financial contributions of workers and others who value the paper’s communist perspective. The chart of local quotas for the fund is printed in this issue.

Readers of the *Militant* are invited to contribute to the spring campaigns!

mi-O’Reilly, who works for the school district, recently reported she sold a copy of the book to a coworker.

“She told me that she had read a lot about Malcolm X before, so she wanted to see what the book had to say about Black liberation and workers power,” Carmen explained. “I also suggested she get an introductory subscription.”

“If that’s where you’re getting your information and facts,” the coworker told Carmen, “then I want to read that, too.”

Mary Martin



Militant/Eric Simpson

Militant supporter Tom Tomasko, right, sells *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* and *Militant* at recent protest in Oakland, California, against education cuts.

Cuban general starts Montreal speaking tour

Continued from front page

participating in the Third World Studies Certificate program invited him to speak.

Choy recounted how, as “a student like yourselves,” he joined the movement against the U.S.-backed dictator Fulgencio Batista, after Batista took power in a military coup in 1952. Choy fought in the Cuban revolutionary war, which culminated in a mass insurrection of the toilers in 1959 that overthrew the Batista regime and established a government of workers and farmers that began to implement social policies in the interests of working people.

Two years after the revolutionary victory, he fought to repel an invasion by U.S.-backed mercenaries, who were defeated in less than 72 hours by Cuba’s armed and organized working people, delivering Washington its first military defeat in the Americas.

Choy told the students how in October 1953 Fidel Castro gave a speech defending himself in court after the defeat of an armed attack by Cuban revolutionaries he led on the Moncada barracks in eastern Cuba on July 26 that year.

Castro’s speech, known as “History Will Absolve Me,” became the basic programmatic statement of the July 26 Movement, the organization that, together with the Rebel Army, would lead Cuba’s toilers to revolutionary victory. It called for elimination of the vast economic inequalities that marked Cuban society, of racial discrimination, and advanced a broad program of social

measures, beginning with a radical land reform to guarantee land to more than 100,000 peasant families.

“The beginning of the Cuban Revolution also saw the beginning of Cuba’s proletarian internationalism, not only in words, but in deeds,” Choy said. “That has been demonstrated in Africa and in Latin America.”

Choy participated in an internationalist mission in Angola during 1980–81. Between 1975 and 1991, Cuba sent 375,000 volunteers to aid that country—which had just conquered its independence after centuries of Portuguese colonial rule—in defeating the invading troops of apartheid South Africa. After his tour, Choy served as Cuban ambassador to Cape Verde from 1986 to 1992.

Today, Choy carries major responsibilities in the Cuban government organizing the administration of the Port of Havana. He is president of the State Working Group for the Cleanup, Preservation, and Development of Havana Bay, which is one of the most important environmental projects in Cuba.

‘Revolution brought changes’

Choy was welcomed to Marianopolis by English professor Philip Dann, who introduced Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press and editor of *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*. Waters spoke about the conquests of Cuba’s socialist revolution as documented by the three generals in that book, and introduced

Choy, one of the authors.

She also told the students about the case of the five Cuban revolutionaries being held hostage in U.S. prisons, serving sentences as long as double-life, simply for gathering intelligence on the activities of Cuban counterrevolutionary groups operating in the United States to carry out violent attacks in Cuba.

Following Choy’s talk students asked questions. “How did the Soviet Union help the Cuban Revolution? Was the relationship amiable or were there tensions?” asked one student.

“We had a good relationship with the USSR,” Choy answered. “We received a great deal of aid in the form of training, food, arms, and oil, for which we were very appreciative.

“At the same time,” he continued, “although many people don’t believe it, we’ve always maintained a policy independent of the Soviet Union. For example, we supported national liberation movements in Latin America and Africa, which the Soviets did not.” In the case of Angola, Choy explained the Soviet Union put the emphasis on developing the regular army, while the Cubans insisted “to win a civil war against the forces of Jonas Savimbi, who was a puppet of imperialism, they had to organize

Continued on page 9



Naomi Jolliffe

Cuban brigadier general Armando Choy, second from right, with participants at meeting at Marianopolis College in Montreal where he spoke March 16.

<i>Militant Fund drive</i> March 13–May 12, 2010	
Country	Quota
UNITED STATES	
Atlanta	\$7,800
Boston	\$3,500
Chicago	\$9,600
Des Moines, IA	\$2,500
Houston	\$2,500
Los Angeles	\$8,700
Miami	\$3,000
New York	\$19,000
Philadelphia	\$3,700
San Francisco	\$14,000
Seattle	\$8,000
Twin Cities, MN	\$7,000
Washington, D.C.	\$6,500
Total U.S.	\$95,800
Canada	\$6,650
New Zealand	\$3,000
Australia	\$1,500
UNITED KINGDOM	
Edinburgh	\$300
London	\$750
Total U.K.	\$1,050
Sweden	\$500
International Total	\$108,500

ON THE PICKET LINE

Massachusetts: Unionists strike Shaw's Supermarket center

BOSTON—More than 300 members of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 791 struck the Shaw's Supermarket distribution center in Methuen, Massachusetts, March 7.

"We know how the economic condition is, so we're not asking too much," striker Juan Arias told the *Militant* as he walked the picket line. "But they don't want to give a good contract. It's an offense to the employees." Workers rejected the proposed contract by a vote of 228 to 8.

"They want to make this a sweatshop," striker Steve Finno told the *Militant*. According to past work rules, "if it was over 60 pounds, you'd have two people to lift it. Now there are no limits, and if the equipment can't be used, you can have 100 pounds to lift by yourself."

Finno explained that the company's "five-year contract would give a 25-cent raise now and another 25 cents in September, then nothing for the second and third years, then 5 cents, then 10 cents."

Strikers have also set up picket lines at Shaw's stores that aren't organized by the UFCW in New Hampshire and Massachusetts, including several in the Boston area.

—Kevin Dwire

Stevedores' strike in Finland slows trade, paper production

Stevedores in Finland went on strike March 4 over job security and severance pay. The dockworkers, organized by the Finnish Transport Workers Union (AKT), are demanding severance pay equivalent to a year's earnings for laid-off employees. The strike involves 3,000 permanently employed stevedores at Finnish harbors.

The walkout is estimated to have halted some 80 percent of all foreign trade. Five days into the strike, paper manufacturer UPM announced it was shutting down three of its mills in the country, which employ 2,000 workers, for lack of storage space. The paper giant Stora Enso has also shut down a paper machine in one of its plants.

By law paper companies had to pay workers at suspended plants for seven days after work stopped.

The AKT organized a demonstration on the first day of the strike, marching to the headquarters of the Confederation of Finnish Industries, where they held a rally. The national chairman of the Paperworkers Union has expressed support for the dockworkers.

The strike by the stevedores began the day after a one-day strike by transportation workers, which resulted in a settlement between the workers' union and transportation companies.

—Anita Östling

Canada nickel miners vote to continue strike

MONTREAL—A strike by 3,000 nickel miners and refinery workers at Vale Inco's operations in Ontario, Canada, has entered its eighth month after workers voted down the company's latest offer March 12. Members of United Steelworkers Local 6500 in Sudbury, representing most of the workers, rejected the company's demands by 89 percent. As they left the meeting, strikers burned Vale Inco's offer in their picket-line fire barrels. The union has called a mass demonstration and rally in Sudbury for March 22.

In Port Colborne, 106 members of Local 6200 voted to maintain the strike, while only two voted to accept the concession contract.

Vale Inco is demanding takeaways from workers' pensions, cost-of-living allowance, and the production bonus system. Vale Inco is also pressing to undermine job security through contracting-out provisions. The company recently announced plans to bring in contract workers to restart production.

Another 200 workers at the company's operations in Vosiey's Bay, Newfoundland, have been on strike since August 1.

—John Steele

TJX workers in New England rally to press contract demands

BLOOMFIELD, Connecticut—Some 200 workers at the Home Goods distribution center and their supporters rallied here March 10 to press their contract demands. Home Goods is a subsidiary of TJX, which also operates T.J. Maxx, A.J. Wright, and Marshalls.

Workers represented by UNITE HERE at four TJX locations—in Bloomfield and three others in Massachusetts—are fighting for higher wag-



United Food and Commercial Workers members on strike against Shaw's Supermarket distribution center in Methuen, Massachusetts, March 9.

es, against mandatory overtime, and to maintain vacation/personal days.

Workers from the Massachusetts outlets arrived in two buses to attend the rally. Also participating were city workers from Hartford, organized by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, and members of UNITE HERE from New Haven, Connecticut.

The rally was conducted in Span-

ish and English, with about 20 speakers, ranging from the president of the Connecticut AFL-CIO to rank-and-file workers from the four distribution centers. Workers emphasized that above all they were fighting for respect. They described being harassed by management when they take bathroom breaks, and they ridiculed attempts by the bosses to buy them off by offering free hot dogs.

—Tim Craine

Retired general to head transport security agency

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Further signaling the capitalist rulers' plans for an expanded role of the U.S. military in domestic affairs, President Barack Obama has chosen retired Maj. Gen. Robert Harding to head the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). As a subdivision of the Department of Homeland Security, this agency conducts screening and oversees "security" at airports and all other U.S. transportation networks.

Harding, who served in the army for 33 years, is a former head of operations at the Defense Intelligence Agency. In the mid-1990s, he was intelligence director for the United States Southern Command, overseeing espionage operations throughout Latin America. He also commanded the 902nd Military Intelligence Group, an Army counterintelligence organization.

"The appointment comes at a time of heightened attention to the quality of government intelligence and transportation security," stated the *New York Times*, "after the attempted bombing on December 25 of a Northwest Airlines flight to Detroit from Amsterdam."

Increased government security measures were announced with Harding's nomination. These include more "advanced imaging technology" scanners that take full body pictures of individuals through clothing. The TSA plans to deploy 450 of these units by the end of the year and another 500 in 2011.

Obama's previous nominee to head the TSA, former FBI agent Erroll Southers, withdrew his name in January amidst disagreement with some senators who thought he would grant collective bargaining rights to the 45,000 airport screeners. Currently, these workers may

join unions, but those unions cannot bargain on behalf of them. Harding hasn't stated his position on this question.

Although Harding still needs to be confirmed by the Senate, Republican senator James DeMint issued a statement commending his "distinguished career in the Army."

The move to install an army general as head of the TSA fits in with moves by the U.S. rulers over the past decade to give the U.S. military a wider scope for operations within the United States. The William Clinton administration set up the Joint Task Force-Civil Support in October 1999 as a "homeland defense command." In 2002 the Pentagon established the U.S. Northern Command.

Prior to this, under the Posse Comitatus Act of 1878, the U.S. armed forces had been barred from domestic operations.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



March 29, 1985

CHARLESTON, West Virginia—The owners of A.T. Massey Coal Co. have escalated their union-busting war against the United Mine Workers.

The union struck Massey subsidiaries in West Virginia and other states on Oct. 1, 1984. Massey refused to sign the national contract that the union negotiated with the Bituminous Coal Operators Association that was signed in the fall of last year. Seventy-three union members here in Mingo County in southern West Virginia are still on strike.

Massey is stepping up its violence against the strikers and UMW supporters. On March 15, a 16-truck convoy of loaded coal haulers rammed a small car off a West Virginia mountain road, crushing the car and hospitalizing the four miners who were riding in it. The strike supporters were heading for lunch at a union-organized center in Lobata, West Virginia.



March 28, 1960

"A wave of concern for Southern Negro college students is stirring campus after campus in the North," reported the March 20 *New York Times*. Surveying student actions at 18 major northern universities and colleges, the *Times* found that the issue has aroused students as had few others.

The paper's observation that "there is a quality of invention to their work" was illustrated at Bennington College in Vermont where 20 girls staged a two-hour sit-down at a Woolworth lunch counter, refusing to buy anything.

At Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, New York, 20 placard-carrying girls and 20 faculty members marched through the town March 22. The following day seven students picketed the local Woolworth's but were hauled off to police headquarters where the police chief threatened to arrest them if they continued picketing.



March 30, 1935

The inevitable world carnage is drawing near with a speed and precision that is reminiscent of the months that preceded July 1914.

The imperialist rulers, themselves subject to laws of development beyond their control, are plunging headlong into a new world war, and dragging the masses of the working people along with them, as the cannon fodder to be sacrificed on battlefields in order to determine which of the imperialist bandits, or which set of them, shall exercise the more dominant position in world finance, in world markets, in world politics. The friction among the competitors for leading position has reached that overheated stage where the tiniest spark throws the accumulated tinder into blazing flames.

No longer is the "coming war" to be visualized as something that may or may not appear in the remote future.

History shows Blacks in vanguard of fights

The following is the 10th in a series of excerpts the Militant is running from Pathfinder Press's latest book, Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power, by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. We encourage our readers to study and discuss the book. This excerpt is from the chapter "Black Liberation and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat." Subheading is by the Militant.

BY JACK BARNES

Don't start with Blacks as an oppressed nationality. Start with the historical record of the vanguard place and weight of workers who are Black—a place and weight disproportionate to their percentage among the toilers in this country—in broad, proletarian-led social and political struggles in the United States.

This goes back to the closing years of the U.S. Civil War and especially to the postwar battle for a radical reconstruction, in which Black toilers provided leadership in substantial parts of the South both to freed slaves and to exploited farmers and workers who were white. It continued in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the labor battles that built the United Mine Workers—at a time when most unions were not only organized along craft lines but either excluded Blacks or segregated them in separate locals. Sharecroppers, tenant farmers, and other rural toilers, both Black and white, waged struggles in the 1920s and through the Great Depression.

Workers who were Black were in the front ranks of key battles that built the CIO industrial unions in the 1930s. They were in the vanguard of working people during World War II who refused to subordinate or postpone struggles for justice in the name of "the patriotic war effort"—fighting discrimination in the war industries,

protesting Jim Crow conditions in the armed forces, and demanding (unsuccessfully) that the Roosevelt administration and Democratic dominated Congress pass federal legislation outlawing racist lynchings. They were in the forefront of those who opposed that imperialist war. And many of us at this meeting know firsthand the lasting social and political impact on the working class and labor movement today of the mass civil rights movement and rise of the Black liberation struggle from the mid-1950s through the early 1970s.

We're not speculating about the future. We're pointing to a historical record. It's a matter of fact. It's a mind-boggling record, it seems to me. It bowls you over when you hear it. The same cannot be said of the big majority of oppressed nations or nationalities in general in other parts of the world. But this *is* the political record of the largely proletarian Black nationality in the United States. This *is* its specific political character since the defeat of chattel slavery, the effort to extend the victory in the Civil War throughout the South, and the beginning of the expansion of a modern hereditary proletariat in the United States.

It is this dynamic that Trotsky, already more than seven decades ago, was pointing to when he said it is possible "that the Negroes will become the most advanced section" of the working class, and "will proceed through self-determination to the proletarian dictatorship in a couple of gigantic strides, ahead of the great bloc of white workers." It was for that reason that he was "absolutely sure that they will in any case fight better than the white workers" on the whole. And it was that same record of struggle that eleven years earlier had led the Communist International to also point out—in its resolution on "The Negro Question" adopted by the 1922 Fourth



Top, longshore workers defend themselves against cop assault on picket line, January 2000. Bottom, 1968 strike by sanitation workers in Memphis, Tennessee, became catalyst of final stage of struggle consolidating defeat of Jim Crow racist segregation.

Congress—that "the history of the Negro in America fits him for an important role in the liberation struggle of the entire African race." . . .

Malcolm X's political trajectory

The SWP and YSA led the way in teaching "the revolutionary youth of this country to tell the difference between the nationalism of the oppressed and the nationalism of the oppressor, to teach them to differentiate the forces of liberation from the forces of the exploiters; to teach them to hear the voices of the revolution regardless of the tones they take." We were well known in the 1960s and 1970s for our political battles on these questions with opponents, including the Communist Party, which at least well into the 1970s dismissed Black nationalism as a "capitulation to racism," or "racism in reverse."

Party leaders from my generation, however, as well as Farrell [Dobbs], Joe [Hansen], and many others, believed that Malcolm had thought out, knew exactly what he was saying, and *meant it* when he said in the *Young Socialist* interview that he was "reappraising [his] definition of Black nationalism," that he truthfully no longer believed "we [can] sum up the solution to the problems confronting our people as Black nationalism," and that he hadn't been "using the expression for several months" because he didn't want to erect barriers to collaboration with other revolutionaries "dedicated to overturning the system of exploitation that exists on this earth." . . .

Malcolm had become a champion of the socialist revolution in Cuba and of its proletarian internationalist leadership. He hailed the revolutionary government in Algeria headed by Ahmed Ben Bella and other leaders, who openly proclaimed their socialist course and convictions. Malcolm promoted the *Militant* newspaper and was deepening his political collaboration with the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance, two communist organizations. In fact, the great bulk of the "true revolutionaries" Malcolm admired and worked with were communists: in Cuba, in Algeria, those he sometimes called the "MLFers"—the YSA and SWP. Those are facts.

What is so essential in understanding Malcolm X is that we can see the fact—not the hope, not the faith, the *fact*—that, in the imperialist epoch, revolutionary leadership on the highest level of political capacity, courage, and integrity converges *with* communism, not simply *toward* the communist movement. That truth has even greater weight today as billions around the world, in city and countryside, from China to Nigeria to Brazil, are being hurled into the modern class struggle by the violent expansion of world capitalism. From seeing in life how that process unfolds, we draw confidence in the prospects for world revolution, in the development of a genuinely worldwide proletarian revolutionary leadership.

Malcolm X *in his own words*

**Malcolm X
on Afro-American History**
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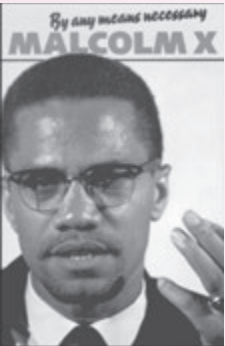
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School ‘reform’ means more cutbacks, firings

BY CINDY JAQUITH

The Barack Obama administration’s “Blueprint for Reform” of the No Child Left Behind Act takes another step toward more school closures, firings of teachers, undermining seniority provisions and union contracts, and privatization of schools.

In his March 13 radio address Obama put his plan in the framework of U.S. employers’ competition with capitalist rivals abroad for profits. “The nation that out-educates us today will out-compete us tomorrow,” he said, noting “we’ve now fallen behind most wealthy countries in our high school graduation rates.” His solution: increase competition between school districts for scarce funds, between teachers over who gets hired or fired, and between individual families for which students get into better schools, all while maintaining education as an institution that reinforces the social relations and privileges of capitalism.

The National Education Association, one of the two major teachers unions, announced it “cannot support the plan as released.” The American Federation of Teachers charged the “reforms” amount to “scapegoating” teachers for the crisis of the U.S. education system.

The White House presents the “blueprint” as eliminating problems in the No Child Left Behind law, signed by former president George Bush in 2002. It has been criticized for forcing schools to focus on math and reading scores to the detriment of social studies, humanities, sciences, and other subjects. Actually, the Obama bill will tighten availability of federal funds for education and deepen the gap between schools in middle-class areas and those in working-class neighborhoods, forcing school districts to compete against each other for funds.

The blueprint states, “We will support the expansion of high-performing public charter schools and other autonomous public schools,” referring to those that receive public funds but are managed by private companies.

It calls for school districts to “meaningfully differentiate teachers and principals by effectiveness” and encourages “differentiated compensation,” code words for ignoring wage and seniority provisions in union contracts.

School programs that “do more with fewer resources” will be prioritized for better funding because they “increase

efficiency”—presumably by laying off personnel, increasing workloads, and cutting back on materials.

Using new criteria devised by the Department of Education, the plan calls for dividing schools into “Reward” and “Challenge” categories. Challenge schools are ones in the lowest 5 percent as ranked by performance.

Challenge schools will be required to institute one of four programs to continue receiving funds. They are the same as the “Race to the Top” criteria the White House is using to decide what school districts receive federal “stimulus” funds.

One option is “Transformation.” The school board must fire the principal and “implement new governance and flexibility.”

The second option is “Turnaround.” The principal and at least 50 percent of the teachers must be fired. At the high school in Central Falls, Rhode Island, the entire teaching staff has just been fired in accordance with “Turnaround.” Obama praised the move. At six schools in Boston all teachers must reapply for their jobs, with only 50 percent expected to be rehired.

U.S. gov’t targets undocumented immigrants

Continued from front page

migrants. Some 500 people, including from high schools and at least six universities, marched in downtown Chicago March 10 chanting, “Undocumented and unafraid,” “Education, not deportation,” and “Legalization now!”

On March 13, 400 workers and students rallied in Pasadena, Texas, a suburb of Houston, to support the call for the upcoming March 21 mobilizations for immigrant rights.

“I think we are part of a historic process and it will take more and more actions to win,” said University of Houston student Kody Allen.

During his campaign for president and after his election, Barack Obama promised to bring undocumented workers “out of the shadows.” While vowing to crack down on employers who hire undocumented workers and tighten border “security,” Obama said he would back “immigration reform” to create a “pathway” to citizenship for immigrants already in the United States. This includes requiring immigrants to pay hefty fines, learn English, pass background checks, and “go to the back of the line” before becoming eligible for legal residency.

Since taking office, the Obama administration has stepped up actions leading to the firing, deportation, and prosecution of workers without papers.

In 2009, ICE deported 387,000 immigrant workers, the highest number in U.S. history. Federal prosecutions for immigration violations also jumped nearly 16 percent.

Over the last year, ICE has tripled the number of immigration audits, which lead to the firing of workers who can’t prove they have work documents. If ICE concludes a worker does not have required papers, the company can be fined up to \$10,000



Pawtucket/Butch Adams

Central Falls High School teachers in Rhode Island protest the firing of the school’s entire teaching staff February 23.

The third option is “Restart.” The school is placed under private management, either as a charter school or another privately managed institution, which determines its own curriculum, salaries, and hours.

The fourth option is “Closure”—the school is closed down.

The blueprint contains a lot of rhetoric about broadening education beyond math and reading, and improving schools in “high-need” districts, but the reality for these schools is the opposite. The Board of Education in Kansas City voted March 10 to close nearly half the city’s schools, which serve a predomi-

nantly Black, working-class student body.

In New York City, the government is proposing to rapidly phase out free transit passes for students, which will narrow the available schools many working-class youth can attend. In New Jersey, three hours of after-school programming each day are being eliminated. The heavily subsidized programming offered tutoring and recreation, as well as freeing up parents to work during that time period. Most of those using the programs were Blacks and Latinos, according to the *New York Times*.

per undocumented worker.

These penalties were part of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act, passed when Ronald Reagan was president. The law granted amnesty to some 3 million undocumented workers, but included new anti-immigrant measures.

The Obama administration has also stepped up attempts to criminalize immigrant workers. In December, ICE arrested 286 undocumented workers in California during what it called its “largest ever enforcement surge” targeting “criminal” immigrants.

Border agents doubled

In August last year, Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano boasted that she had doubled the number of ICE agents on the U.S.-Mexico border in the first six months of 2009 as part of a twin antidrug, anti-immigrant campaign.

In a signal of what the White House means by “reform,” Obama met with Democratic senator Charles Schumer and Republican senator Lindsey Graham March 11 to discuss what the U.S.

president called “their promising framework” for immigration legislation. The two presented Obama with a three-page outline of their proposed reform. Last year Schumer said that the priority should be to make a “dramatic reduction in future illegal immigration.”

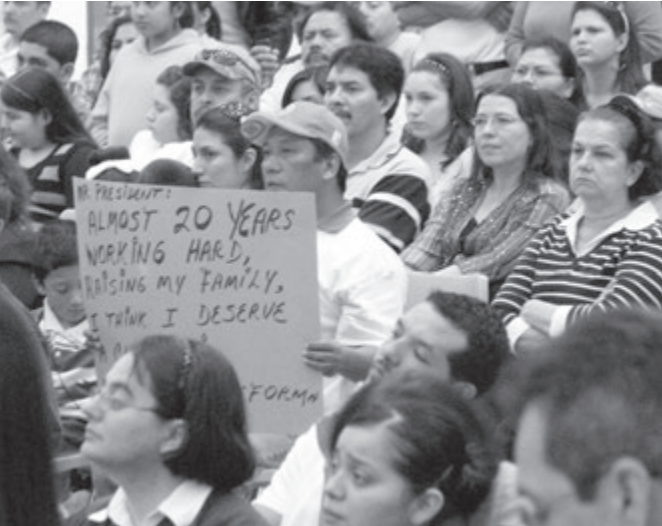
Graham is pushing to make it even harder for immigrants to cross the border from Mexico to the United States by expanding

“virtual fencing.” Both Schumer and Graham want to mandate a “tamper-proof” ID card for all workers in the United States.

Another key section of the so-called reform is expansion of programs that allow immigrants to work temporarily in the United States. These “guest workers,” while technically holding work papers, have little more rights than undocumented workers. If fired or laid off, or if they quit or go on strike, their papers become invalid and they can be expelled from the country.

Illinois congressman Luis Gutiérrez has introduced a 645-page bill in the House of Representatives that is favored by some leaders of immigrant rights groups and union officials as a way to pressure Obama to modify his position. It also calls for tightening border security along with demeaning background checks and substantial fines before a foreign-born worker can apply for residency in the United States.

Jacquie Henderson in Houston and Laura Anderson in Chicago contributed to this article.



Militant/Jacquie Henderson

Workers and students rally in Pasadena, Texas, March 13 in defense of immigrant rights.

The working class and the transformation of learning

The fraud of education reform under capitalism

by Jack Barnes

“Until society is reorganized so that education is a human activity from the time we are very young until the time we die, there will be no education worthy of working, creating humanity.” \$3

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Why socialist revolution in the U.S. is possible

Printed below is an excerpt from *Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?* one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month in March. In two talks, presented as part of a wide-ranging debate at the annual Venezuela Book Fairs in 2007 and 2008, Mary-Alice Waters, a member of the Socialist Workers Party National Committee, explains why revolutionary struggles by working people are inevitable, initiated not by the toilers, but forced upon us by the employing class's crisis-driven assaults on our living standards and job conditions—on our very humanity. As solidarity grows among a fighting vanguard of working people, the outlines of coming class battles can already be seen. Copyright © 2008 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

Today, above all I want to address my remarks, with all due respect, to those who doubt that socialist revolution in the United States is possible—to those who believe, or fear, that U.S. imperialism is too powerful, and that revolution has become at best a utopian dream.

To those who harbor such doubts, I will pose a question: What assumptions about the future, explicit or implicit,



Matthew Putney/The Waterloo Courier

Working people in Waterloo, Iowa, in May 2008 demand release of 400 workers at Agriprocessors packinghouse in nearby Postville, swept up in federal police raid against immigrants. “A fighting vanguard of the working class has emerged in action,” writes Waters. “That vanguard is already placing its mark on politics and the class struggle.”

could justify such a conclusion? What would the future have to look like?

I hope others here will address this as well. But I would like to give my answer.

To reach that conclusion, you would have to believe that the coming decades are going to look more or less like those we knew for nearly half a century following World War II.

You would have to believe that there won't again be economic, financial, or social crises on the order of those that marked the first half of the twentieth century. That the ruling families of the imperialist world and their economic wizards have found a way to “manage” capitalism so as to preclude shattering financial crises that could lead to something akin to the Great Depression; to growing assaults on the economic, social, and political rights of the toilers; to spreading imperialist war; to the rise of mass fascist movements in the streets. That such a crisis of the capitalist system would no longer be met by working-class resistance like the mass social movement that exploded in the United States in the 1930s and built the industrial unions.

You would have to be convinced that

competition among the imperialist rivals, as well as between them and the more economically advanced semicolonial powers, is diminishing and that their profit rates, which have been on a long downward trend since the mid-1970s, are now going to begin to rise for several decades on an accelerated curve.

You would have to believe that such a turnaround in their accumulation of capital can be accomplished without the massive destruction of productive capacity—human and physical—wrought by decades of war, such as those that culminated in the interimperialist slaughter of World War II. That is what was necessary for the capitalist rulers to get out of the last great depression.

I believe the evidence is overwhelming that the future we face is the opposite. Just read the headlines this last week! Think about what is happening from Wall Street to Pakistan, from Moscow to Tehran, from the Shanghai stock exchange to the ever-deeper gold mines of South Africa, to the world banking system.

The opening guns of World War III are already a decade and a half *behind* us. We are already living through the

opening stages of what will be many decades of bloody wars beginning with ones like those in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Iraq again. That is what the “transformation” of Washington's military structure and strategy is all about.

What is coming are years of economic and financial crises of which the current, still-expanding subprime mortgage crisis—and the even more massive debt balloon it is part of, on and off the balance sheets—offer only a hint.

What is coming are years that will bring increasingly conscious and organized resistance by a growing vanguard of working people pushed to the wall by the bosses' drive to cut wages and increase what they call productivity.

What is coming are years punctuated by street battles with ultrarightist movements aimed against fighting union militants, revolutionary socialists, Blacks, immigrants, Jews, and others—in even the most “stable” of bourgeois democracies.

What is coming are years of economic, social, and political crises and intensifying class struggle that *will* end in World War III, inevitably, *if* the only class that is capable of doing so, the working class, fails to take state power—and thus the power to wage war—out of the hands of the imperialist rulers.

A fighting working-class vanguard

In the United States, the outlines of these coming battles can already be seen. The historic shift is not ahead of us, it has already occurred.

The most important political development in the United States is something you rarely see images of on your TV screen or read about in the press. Its power has been expressed, however, by the millions of workers who have taken to the streets in cities and towns large and small across the breadth of the country the last two years on May Day, as that historic working-class holiday is fighting to be reborn in the United States as a day of *struggle*.

A fighting vanguard of the working class has emerged in action in the U.S.—taking the rulers by surprise, as registered in their divisions and heated debates over immigration policy. That vanguard is already placing its mark on politics and the class struggle.

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March
BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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A fight for entire working class

Continued from front page

abroad, in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq.

The capitalists have no intention of deporting most of the 11 million undocumented workers in the United States. They depend on this massive pool of superexploited immigrant labor to compete against their imperialist rivals around the world and against China.

Instead, the mass firings of undocumented workers, the increased scrutiny of work documents, the depicting of immigrants as criminals, and the militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border are aimed at heightening insecurity and fear among immigrants. The boss class wants to discourage their involvement in unionization efforts, as well as struggles against social injustice and other political fights. They want to drive a wedge between native- and foreign-born workers and between those with and without papers.

But immigrant workers and youth refuse to be victims. In 2006 millions took to the streets demanding legalization. “We are workers, not criminals!” they shouted.

Those actions marked the increased confidence, combativity, and politicization taking place in the working-class movement, which continues today. It is seen in the youth and workers who demonstrated March 10 in Chicago with signs that said, “Undocumented and unafraid.”

The anti-immigrant, anti-worker programs of the U.S. government are promoted by the Democratic and Republican parties alike. They make vague promises to workers who are foreign-born to “fix a broken system”; at the same time they appeal to U.S.-born workers to scapegoat immigrants for unemployment and deteriorating social conditions.

A central part of these immigration “reforms” is instituting a national “tamper-proof” ID card for *all* workers. This won’t be used just against immigrants. It will be used to blacklist any worker who stands up and says “enough!” The bosses are preparing for the broader working-class resistance they know is coming.

That is why there is only one immigration reform worth fighting for: full, immediate legalization for all, without restrictions, and an immediate end to deportations!

In the course of this fight and others to defend working-class interests, such as the fight for jobs, to protest police brutality, to defend women’s right to abortion, and to win unions, we will begin to act on the conviction that the revolutionary conquest of state power by a class-conscious and organized vanguard of the working class—millions strong—is necessary and possible in order to eliminate capitalism and build a world based on human solidarity, not profit.

Chinese-Cuban general tours Montreal

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light, fast moving units able to fight in the jungle.”

Another student asked, “Has Cuba really been better off under Fidel Castro than under Batista? How can you say the Cuban government has been doing a good job when tens of thousands of Cubans left for the United States by boat in 1980 from the port of Mariel.” This student also asked about the recent death of Cuban prisoner Orlando Zapata Tamayo as a result of a hunger strike. Choy and Waters both responded.

“The Cuban Revolution brought about enormous changes for our people,” Choy responded. “There’s no comparison with not only the Batista government but all previous governments of what was a ‘pseudo-republic’ in Cuba” dominated by Washington.

“Jobs were not guaranteed before the revolution,” he continued. Today there is little unemployment and education is not only free, it is a right.

“Look, I was born in the mountains in the central region. When I finished the sixth grade, there were no schools nearby. My dad decided to move to the capital so I could study,” he said. “Today, in that small town more than 500 students attend university level classes. It’s like that throughout Cuba.”

Choy also pointed to Cuba’s “selfless aid to the peoples of Haiti and Chile before and after the recent devastating earthquakes in those countries. “In Haiti the Cuban doctors didn’t just arrive after the earthquake,” Choy said. “They were there four years ago, and Cuba reinforced them after the earthquake. That is what our socialist revolution has made possible.”

Waters took up the question of emigration from Cuba. “It’s important to remember that Cuba lives with the legacy of 500 years of colonial plunder and

imperialist domination. . . . Many who come to the U.S. from Cuba like others from all over the world, come in hopes of escaping the economic conditions created by imperialism.

“But unlike Washington’s treatment of immigrants from anywhere else in the world, any Cuban who sets foot on American soil is guaranteed citizenship and the right to work.” This is meant to foment immigration from Cuba, and the Mariel exodus was a product of such policies.

“Today Washington, Ottawa, and others are campaigning against the Cuban government demanding that Cuba release its “political prisoners,” Waters said, especially since the death of Zapata Tamayo. He was a prisoner with a long criminal record, she noted, including a conviction for violent assault. He was sent to prison for three years in 2004. After he assaulted prison guards his sentence was extended.

“It was only after he was in jail that he declared himself a ‘political prisoner.’ When he went on a hunger strike his demands included a cell phone, a TV, and cooking facilities in his cell. The Cuban government did everything possible to save his life, but couldn’t prevent his death. It’s important to see the case of Zapata Tamayo in the history Armando Choy was describing—the 50-year war’ that Washington has carried out to discredit and overthrow the Cuban Revolution. The so-called dissidents in Cuba are supported and financed by the U.S. government and its various agencies.”

After the event a number of interested students came to an informal reception to continue discussion with Choy. Five bought copies of *Our History Is Still Being Written* and asked Choy to autograph the book. Alice Krayem, a 19-year-old student, wanted to ask him more about land reform in Cuba. “My grandfather has a farm in Mexico,” she told him. “I’m half Mexican and half Lebanese, and I can relate to you being Chinese Cuban.”

Choy was also interviewed by reporters from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Chinese-language program department; and Radio Canada International, the CBC’s short wave service.

When Choy arrived March 15 he was welcomed with banners and cheers at the airport by a delegation of 15 people, including Christian Valet, a student at the University of Quebec at Montreal; Armand Vaillancourt, a noted Quebec sculptor who is hosting a dinner for Choy; Timothy Chan, president of the Chinese-Canadian Historical and Cultural Society of Montreal and organizer of a banquet in the Chinese district to honor Choy; and Joe Young, representing Pathfinder Books in Montreal, one of the tour’s organizers.

Afghanistan

Continued from front page

tions”—clandestine missions such as kidnappings and assassinations—and had led the Joint Special Operations Command in Iraq and Afghanistan.

But heavier reliance on these paramilitary soldiers—who are widely seen as responsible for a large proportion of civilian deaths—has hindered efforts to improve Afghani perceptions of the U.S.-led force, including as protectors from the brutality of the Taliban.

A team led by U.S. special forces that included Afghan police killed five civilians in a house during a February 12 raid in Paktia Province, according to the *New York Times* and the *Times* of London.

Twenty-five guests and three musicians were gathered at the house at night for a celebration. As an Afghan man, who happened to be a local police chief, left the place to investigate what he thought were Taliban, he and his 15-year-old son were shot. His brother, a district prosecutor, was shot dead as he sought to protest the family’s innocence. Three women, two pregnant, were also gunned down by U.S. special forces.

The surviving guests and injured relatives were “assaulted by U.S. and Afghan forces, restrained and forced to stand barefeet for several hours outside in the cold,” said an unpublished UN report cited in the London *Times*.

Nine days later, at least 27 civilians, including women and children, were killed and 12 injured when special forces called in an air strike on buses that turned out to be transporting workers from central Afghanistan to Kandahar in search of jobs.

Special forces generally operate independently with separate chains of commands from regular soldiers. This, along with their often covert nature, allows for greater latitude and less accountability. The new command structure seeks to place many of these forces under a similar protocol as regular soldiers. McChrystal has issued stricter rules of engagement, including restrictions on night raids, air strikes, and other operations designed to lower deaths traced to coalition forces.

Washington’s challenges

While U.S.-led forces have registered initial gains in clearing Taliban from key areas in southern Afghanistan and are benefiting from deepening intelligence and military cooperation with the Pakistani government, U.S. imperialism and its allies face a range of difficulties beyond combating the Taliban.

The Afghan police force has a widespread reputation for corruption and brutality. Dramatically increasing its ranks and revamping its image remain one of these challenges. In an effort to effect some change, 3,000 officers are being sent to Jordan and Turkey for training.

In one recent example of the problem, the police chief of Now Zad district in central Helmand was deposed for charging residents to return to their homes following the marines’ capture of the area from the Taliban in December.

The *New York Times* described a visit by Defense Secretary Robert Gates to the area’s main town last week. It remains largely deserted, with only 2,500 of 30,000 residents having returned. Locals, previously paid by the Taliban to plant bombs, are paid \$5 per day by the U.S. military to remove mines and do other work—a relatively good paying job in a country which has an unemployment rate of 40 percent.

Similarly, the U.S. military’s effort to bribe the Shinwari Pashtun tribe—comprising about 400,000 people in the southeast—with small-scale development projects and cash-for-work programs in exchange for fighting the Taliban has not borne fruit. A war between rival clans over a land dispute has eclipsed the project.

Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution

Our History
is still being written

THE STORY OF THREE
CHINESE-CUBAN GENERALS IN
THE CUBAN REVOLUTION

ARMANDO CHOY
GUSTAVO CHUI
MOISÉS SÍO WONG



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