

THE MILITANT

INSIDE
Lessons for fighters today from Lenin's final political battle
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 74/NO. 17 MAY 3, 2010

Nebraska gov't puts new limits on abortion

BY CINDY JAQUITH

Two antiabortion measures in Nebraska signed into law April 13 impose further restrictions on women's right to choose abortion. Both are the first law of their kind in the United States.

In a direct challenge to the 1973 Supreme Court ruling that legalized abortion, the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act prohibits abortions in Nebraska at or after the 20th week of pregnancy. The state government justifies the measure with claims that at 20 weeks a fetus can sense pain.

The law only allows exceptions for medical emergency, imminent death of the woman carrying the baby, or risk of "substantial and irreversible physical impairment of a major bodily function." Abortions for the sake of a woman's mental health are explicitly ruled out.

The 1973 Supreme Court ruling
Continued on page 2

Thug gets slap on wrist for killing immigrant

BY SETH GALINSKY

NEW YORK—The man charged with killing Ecuadoran immigrant Marcelo Lucero in Patchogue, Long Island, was found guilty of manslaughter as a hate crime April 19. He was acquitted of the more serious charge of second-degree murder.

"This was a slap on the wrist," Walter Sinche, president of the Alianza Ecuatoriana Internacional who attended the trial, told the *Militant*. "It shows the way the legal system works in the United States. It was a message to the community" that the lives of immigrants are worth less.

Jeffrey Conroy, who stabbed Lucero Nov. 8, 2008, faces eight years to a maximum of 25 years in prison when sentencing takes place May 26. If he had been convicted of the murder charge the maximum punishment was life in prison.

A gang of seven Patchogue-Medford High School students had attacked Lu-
Continued on page 4

March on May 1 to legalize immigrants



Robin Hood Community Services

Demonstration for immigrant rights in Las Vegas April 10, one of several ahead of May Day.

The demonstrations taking place May 1 in many cities across the United States present an important opportunity to join forces with others to demand immediate legalization of all

EDITORIAL

immigrant workers and an end to deportations. These actions take place on the heels of increased protests in defense of immigrant rights over the

past several months, including a rally in Washington, D.C., last month of more than 100,000.

The fight to win legalization for all undocumented immigrants is a life-and-death question for the entire working class. As the capitalist economic depression continues with no sign of abatement, the employers scapegoat undocumented immigrants for "stealing jobs." They want U.S.-

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'Social revolution necessary,' Cuban youth tell N.Y. students



Militant/Arnold Weissberg

Audience at April 14 program where Cuban Federation of University Students leaders Anibal Ramos and Yenaivis Fuentes spoke at Hunter College in New York City.

BY DAN FEIN
 AND BEN JOYCE

NEW YORK—More than 400 people joined discussions in the New York area on the Cuban Revolution April 12-14. Cuban youth leaders Yenaivis Fuentes Ascencio and Anibal Ramos Socarrás spoke at public meetings at three university campuses and in Harlem.

The two are medical students and leaders of the Federation of University Students in Cuba. They have been on a month-long speaking tour in the United

States. A broad range of academic departments, professors, student groups, political organizations, and cultural groups and institutions sponsored their speaking engagements.

Some 100 people heard the Cuban youth at Harlem's Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, part of the New York Public Library system. Nellie Bailey, a member of Cuba Solidarity New York and director of the Harlem Tenants Council, cochaired the meeting
Continued on page 5

Canada nickel workers strike stands firm after 10 months

BY JOHN STEELE
 AND JOE YOUNG

SUDBURY, Ontario—The strike against Vale Inco by almost 3,000 nickel miners, smelter, and refinery workers, members of United Steelworkers (USW) Local 6500, is now into its 10th month. At stake are gains won through decades of union strug-

gles by generations of members of Local 6500.

"If we fall, 150,000 will fall," striker Mike Lacelle, who works underground at the Froid-Stobie Vale Inco nickel mine, told the *Militant* April 8. Lacelle was referring to the thousands of parent-company Vale workers in

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More effort needed to close gap in fund

BY SETH GALINSKY

The *Militant* fund drive has made progress in the last week with the total amount pledged now equal to the international goal of \$110,000. But the effort is still a week and a half behind on the pace of collections.

As of week five, we are at 44 per-
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'To whom belongs the decisive word'	8

Florida teachers force veto of antiunion bill

BY ERNEST MAILHOT

MIAMI—In an important victory for working people, protests by teachers and their supporters forced Florida governor Charles Crist to veto Senate Bill 6, which would have cut back on teachers’ rights, weakened their union, and set back public education.

More than 6,000 of the 21,000 Miami-Dade County teachers didn’t show up for classes Monday, April 12. Thousands of students left school early or staged protests in the middle of the day. At some schools most of the students dressed in black to show support for the teachers.

Hundreds of students from New World School of the Arts left school and marched through downtown Miami. At the end of the workday more than 1,000 teachers and their supporters gathered in the rain at Tropical Park in Westchester.

These protests along with many others throughout the state over the following days forced Crist to veto the legislation, known as the teacher pay bill. The

measure would have linked teachers’ pay to student test scores and gutted seniority rights by eliminating tenure for all new hires. Passed in both houses of the Florida legislature, the bill limited contracts for new teachers to one year. If a teacher was deemed to need improvement for two out of five years his or her certification would be revoked.

Many teachers said their massive absence on April 12 was organized by rank-and-file teachers who spread the word throughout the school system. The United Teachers of Dade, the teachers’ union here, did not call for its members to stay away from work, but to demonstrate after work hours. According to Florida law it is illegal for teachers to strike.

Sophia Miller, a teacher for five years at Henry Filer Middle School, was part of a rally of 500 at the Miami-Dade School Board the day before the bill was vetoed. Senate Bill 6, she said, “is part of weakening the union. It takes away our bargaining rights and today, we need unions.”

Several students from Michael Krop



Militant/Ernest Mailhot

Teachers and supporters demonstrate against antiunion bill April 14 outside Miami-Dade School Board. Measure would have linked teachers’ pay to test scores and gutted seniority.

High School were welcomed by teachers as they chanted, “Veto now” and “Kill the bill.” Rebecca Oliva and Francesca Martinez explained how students at their school had collected signatures

on a petition in support of the teachers and that on the day teachers stayed away from their classes more than 1,000 students walked out at midday to press their demand for a veto.

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Two antiabortion laws adopted in Nebraska

Continued from front page

says that no state can bar abortions before the fetus has become viable, generally considered to be 24 weeks.

The second law adopted in Nebraska mandates special risk screening of a prospective patient seeking an abortion. While the woman may proceed with the abortion whether risks are found or not, the measure erects new

red tape and delays, and is aimed at intimidating both the woman and her doctor.

The law is vague about what “risks” the doctor has to look for, saying they include “physical, psychological, emotional, demographic, or situational” factors. These risks must be provided in writing at least 24 hours before an abortion. Among other things, the doctor is also required to evaluate the patient “to identify if the pregnant woman has the perception of feeling pressured or coerced into seeking or consenting to an abortion.” Failure of the doctor to meet all the requirements can result in a civil lawsuit by the patient for physical or emotional damages.

The ban on abortions after 20 weeks is partly aimed at physicians like Dr. LeRoy Carhart. Carhart, who has a clinic in Nebraska, was an associate of Dr. George Tiller, who provided these abortions in Kansas until his murder by an ultrarightist in May 2009. Car-

hart later announced he would continue to provide late-term abortions.

The Associated Press reported that Carhart released a statement a day after the bills were signed into law. The doctor said the new laws “are anti-woman and strengthen his commitment to fight for women’s reproductive rights,” AP reported.

The Center for Reproductive Rights called the ban on abortions at or after 20 weeks “flatly unconstitutional.” Nancy Northup, president of the group, said, “It absolutely cannot survive a challenge without a change to three decades of court rulings.”

The law “will endanger the health of pregnant women in Nebraska who have a constitutional right to access the essential reproductive health care banned by this bill,” the center said.

The laws go into effect October 15.

Joe Swanson in Lincoln, Nebraska, contributed to this article.

THE MILITANT

Only unions can enforce safety

The worst coal mine disaster in 40 years—claiming 29 lives April 5—is focusing attention on the urgent need to organize the mines to enforce safety. Keep up with this important struggle in the pages of the ‘Militant’ every week.



Rescue teams outside Upper Big Branch Mine in West Virginia where 29 died.

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U.S. gov't seeks to placate anger over mine deaths

BY ALYSON KENNEDY

The deaths of 29 coal miners in an April 5 explosion at Massey Energy's Upper Big Branch Mine in Montcoal, West Virginia, has led state and federal agencies to order investigations with promises that safety laws will be enforced. Similar promises were made four years ago after an explosion killed 12 miners at the Sago Mine in this state, but the government has done nothing to make coal mining any safer.

At a White House news conference April 15, President Barack Obama called Massey Energy's safety record at the Upper Big Branch mine "troubling" and ordered federal inspectors into mines. He said the backlog of cases at the Mine Safety and Health Review Commission would be tackled and if a mining company consistently violates safety standards, as Massey did, they will be "placed on an updated Pattern of Violations" list.

Meanwhile, West Virginia governor Joe Manchin halted coal mine production in the state for one day April 16. He appointed David McAteer, the former assistant secretary of the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) under the Clinton administration, to head an investigation into the mine explosion.

A voluntary production "stand down," a pause between shifts to review safety, was ordered by Manchin after the Sago explosion. Safety procedure reviews were organized by MSHA and hearings conducted by the U.S. Senate. Congress then passed the 2006 Mine Improvement and New Emergency Response Act, which required mine operators to have emergency breathing devices that contain two hours of oxygen, communication and tracking devices, and airtight rescue chambers. Despite this law, which was never adequately enforced, the worst mine disaster in 40 years occurred four years later at the Upper Big Branch Mine.

In 2006 this mine saw a big increase in violations. MSHA threatened to place the mine on a "pattern of violations" list. After the warning, the company reduced enough of the violations to avoid being placed on this list. In 2009, MSHA issued more than 500 safety violations against the mine, 39

percent of them "significant and substantial." MSHA also issued 48 withdrawal orders at Upper Big Branch last year.

The violations continued this year, as Massey strove to mine coal as fast as possible. According to newly released MSHA records, bosses told workers at the mine in January "'not to worry' that the flow of air in the mine that controls deadly gases and coal dust was headed in the wrong direction," reported the *Charleston Gazette*. At no point did MSHA move to simply close down the mine.

Marlene Griffith, the widow of William Griffith, 54, one of 29 coal miners killed in the explosion, filed a wrongful death lawsuit on April 15 against Massey Energy and Performance Coal, the Massey subsidiary that operated the Upper Big Branch mine. Griffith had been working as a coal miner since 1974 and had been at the Upper Big Branch Mine since 1992.

Rhode Island State gov't slashes welfare rolls

BY SETH GALINSKY

The state of Rhode Island has slashed its welfare rolls by more than 25 percent since 2008 even though it has the third highest unemployment rate in the United States.

Since December 2007 the number of people in the United States receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) cash benefits has increased less than 10 percent, even though official unemployment nearly doubled and the number of people receiving food stamps grew by more than 40 percent.

This is a direct result of a law signed by former president William Clinton in 1996 as part of his pledge to "end welfare as we know it."

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act imposed a lifetime limit on welfare benefits of five years, along with other restrictions aimed at pushing peo-

Montreal protest answers chauvinist bill



Militant/Katy Le Rougetel

MONTREAL—About 100 people attended a rally in front of City Hall here April 17. Protesters chanted, "My clothes, my choice" and "Kill Bill 94." The provincial government's proposed Bill 94 would ban women wearing a niqab or burqa from obtaining public services. Holding megaphone above is Meena Samreen, a young journalist, who organized the action with help from friends.

—KATY LE ROUGETEL

ple off welfare. Shortly before leaving office, Clinton boasted that 8 million people had been cut from state welfare rolls—a 60 percent drop.

The 1996 law also allows states to impose even stricter time limits. Many states have done so, including Rhode Island, which in 2008 lowered the lifetime limit to 48 months, with no more than 24 months of aid in any five-year period.

In testimony before Congress, Elizabeth Lower-Basch from the Center for Law and Social Policy noted that there is a wide variation and some states increased the numbers receiving benefits. But "even the states with the largest increases are serving far fewer families than they were prior to [the 1996] welfare reform," she said.

The federal welfare setup "explicitly rewards states" for cutting the number of people receiving assistance, Lower-Basch pointed out.

Only 22 percent of children in families that are under the official poverty level nationwide receive TANF assistance today.

The *New York Times* interviewed single mothers in Rhode Island who are losing benefits due to the cutoffs.

"It's very difficult to find any job," said Coralie Concepcion, whose TANF payments for herself and three children ended January 31. Concepcion said she had turned in more than 200 job applications last year.

"It's horrible," Meagan Fontaine, who has two young children, told the *Times*. "I apply for 45 jobs in a week. You don't get calls back, or you get an interview but no job. Employers are so picky. They can pick anyone they want in these hard times." Fontaine's welfare benefits will end soon.

As the economic crisis continues the number of people needing

Continued on page 9

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



May 3, 1985

Recent revelations confirm an escalating pattern of government harassment of people who have visited Nicaragua or who are involved in opposition to Washington's war in Central America.

The aim of this harassment is to intimidate those traveling to Nicaragua and other opponents of the U.S. war in Central America. It is also to lay the groundwork for curtailing most, if not all, travel to Nicaragua.

Illegal prying, disruptions, and victimization have been engaged in by the FBI, the Post Office, the Internal Revenue Service, the Customs Service, and the Defense Investigative Service. The FBI said some of its interrogations were done at the request of the CIA and the National Security Council.

FBI director William Webster told a House committee April 17 that the FBI had questioned 100 travelers to Nicaragua over the past two years.



May 2, 1960

The Korean people have brought an end to the twelve-year-old dictatorship of Syngman Rhee.

Through two rounds of demonstrations involving several million people in the major South Korean cities, the population has taken the fate of the country into its hands.

The dictator, a creature of the landlords and capitalists and a stooge of the American State Department, tried at first to crush the movement of the popular masses through use of his murderous police.

On April 19, the cops had fired point blank into the thousands of students that marched on Rhee's palace to protest still another outrageously rigged election on March 15.

The Rhee government said 124 were killed and 777 wounded. Unofficial estimates of the casualties ran twice as high.



May 4, 1935

Swift massing storm clouds of labor revolt are spreading darkly throughout the nation over the wide-flung domain of General Motors Corporation. Moving with a precision, speed and power seldom ever displayed in this country, the progressive and militant strike committee of the struck Toledo Chevrolet plant, headed by Jim Roland, twice today landed lightning blows against the massive citadel of Sloan, Rascob, DuPont and Co. and forced the shut-down of the huge Fisher Body plant in Cleveland, Ohio, and the Chevrolet assembly and Fisher Body plants in Norwood, Ohio, suburb of Cincinnati.

Riding rough-shod over the stalling and cowardly policies of Bill Green and his official machine, the Toledo strikers, acting through their local strike committee, have already sent strike calls to all locals of the United Automobile Workers Federal Labor Union in G.M.C. plants.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

CALIFORNIA

San Francisco

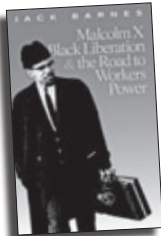
Lenin's Final Fight to Defend Working-Class Power—Lessons for Workers Today. Speaker: Andrea Morell, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., April 30, 7:30 p.m. 5482 Mission St. Tel.: (415) 584-2135.

Weekend of Solidarity with the Cuban Five

Venice, California

Opening reception for exhibit of Antonio Guerrero's Artwork. Sat., May 22, 7:30 p.m. Special Guests: Danny Glover, Ed Asner. Social Public Art Resource Center, 685 Venice Blvd.

"Women Behind the Cuban Five" Fundraising Brunch. Special Guest: Dolores Huerta. Sun., May 23, 11 a.m. 685 Venice Blvd. Tel.: (310) 570-5419. Ausp: International Committee for the Freedom of the Cuban 5.



Read, Sell, & Discuss

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

Seattle

This past week we sold five copies of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* along with eight *Militant* subscriptions. Three of these subscriptions were sold in Anacortes, Washington, across from the site where six workers were killed at the Tesoro oil refinery April 2. One of the subscriptions was to a student, another to a firefighter, and the third to a construction worker who had seen a coworker killed in an accident at his work site.

Another subscription was sold at a picket line here against the Rio Tinto mining company. More than 500 miners, members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 30, have been locked out by the company since the end of January after voting against a takeback contract.

We also visited the ILWU hiring hall, where workers come to pick up their paychecks. There a young African American worker bought the book with a subscription after looking through the book's photos.

—Edwin Fruit

New York

An attractive display of the new Pathfinder book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* was set up at a luncheon meeting for Cuban medical students Yenaivis Fuentes and Anibal Ramos at Hofstra University in Hempstead, New York, April 14. It received a really good response. Fuentes and Ramos, both leaders of the Cuban Federation of University Students, were on a one-month speaking tour of U.S. campuses. Hofstra was one of the three campuses where they spoke during a three-day visit here.

After the presentations, four students who had not brought money to the

meeting asked if we could wait a few minutes while they went to their dorms or ATM machines. They returned shortly each holding \$20 bills to sign up for the special offer of 12 weeks of the *Militant* and the *Workers Power* book for \$15. We sold a total of nine books and subscriptions to the 30 students at the meeting.

—Dan Fein and Ruth Robinett

San Francisco

Two supporters of the *Militant* working at United Airlines here have so far sold 15 copies of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* and four subscriptions to the *Militant*. One useful way of getting the book around has been to ask those who have already bought it for suggestions of other coworkers who might be interested. We've also been lending out copies of the book, encouraging everyone to look at the many photographs and read the captions. This has helped convince others to buy the book.

—Tom Tomasko

Communist candidate campaigns in Scotland



Militant/Andrés Mendoza

EDINBURGH, Scotland—Caroline Bellamy, Communist League parliamentary candidate from Edinburgh South West, campaigns April 17 with the book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and Road to Workers Power*. “The focus of our campaign is on the need for working people to take political power out of the hands of Britain’s ruling families—the only solution to the capitalist crisis and the grinding assault on our living standards,” Bellamy said, “a perspective that is at the center of this book.”

—TONY HUNT

Thug gets slap on wrist for killing immigrant

Continued from front page

cero, a dry-cleaning worker, and Angel Loja, a construction worker, during a night of what the gang called “beaner hopping” or “Mexican hopping.”

Loja testified in court that the thugs called him and Lucero “Mexicans” and “illegals.” One of the attackers said, “You come to this country to take our money from us.”

“This is not the charge we wanted,” Joselo Lucero, Marcelo’s brother, told a press conference, although he hoped that the verdict meant “an

end to [immigrant] hunting, at least for now.”

Immigrant rights groups on Long Island have criticized the police for failing to act to investigate numerous previous assaults against Latinos.

In the course of the trial it was revealed that it took nearly 40 minutes from the time a 911 call came in reporting the stabbing, until an ambulance finally brought Lucero to the hospital, just three miles away.

Conroy’s defense lawyers tried to blame Lucero for the stabbing because he defended himself by remov-

ing his belt and swinging it to get his attackers to back off.

Lucero could have left, Conroy claimed on the witness stand, “but he chased us” after being punched in the face by one of the thugs.

After the verdict, the Lucero family visited the spot where Marcelo was killed.

“This is the place where my brother broke the rules [of putting up with a beating and keeping his mouth shut] and defended himself,” Joselo Lucero told *El Diario*. “It didn’t matter how many they were, he didn’t want to be treated like he was nothing, but to be treated as a human being.”

May Day demonstrators will be drawn to communist literature

BY BEN JOYCE

Demonstrations for immigrant rights taking place in cities across the country on and leading up to May 1 will provide a boost to the campaign to sell and discuss *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* and expand the *Militant*’s readership.

At the May 1 mobilizations by working people, students, and others demanding legalization for undocumented workers, we will find fighters attracted to a communist perspective.

With 1,183 *Workers Power* books and 1,156 *Militant* subscriptions sold so far, the international effort is slightly behind schedule.

In a number of areas, supporters of the *Militant* reported gains this week. In Philadelphia, seven copies of the new book by Jack Barnes were sold along with four subscriptions to the paper during a book festival sponsored by the Free Library of Philadelphia. Most of the sales were to Black workers or youth.

In the Jamaica neighborhood of Queens, in New York City, a team of *Militant* supporters sold three copies of the *Workers Power* book and two subscriptions in about an hour.

With three weeks left in the drive, organizers will be redoubling our efforts

to make sure the quotas are reached in full and on time. Join us! To help get a communist perspective into the hands of those who need it, contact your nearest *Militant* distributor, listed on page 5.

Fund drive

Continued from front page

cent of the goal; we should be at 63 percent. Supporters of the *Militant* in two areas raised their goal in the last several days, showing what’s possible in the remaining three weeks of the drive.

Maggie Trowe in Des Moines, Iowa, reports that organizers of the fund there raised their quota by \$200 to \$2,700. “We have pledges from people who have not contributed in recent years,” Trowe writes. “Two were Black workers who bought *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, the new book by Jack Barnes. The third was from a former coworker in a meatpacking plant in nearby Marshalltown who gave \$50.”

New York fund supporters raised their goal by \$1,000 to \$20,000. “We have pledges from 111 people so far,” writes Dan Fein, “including \$425 from seven first-time contributors.”

Campaign to sell ‘Workers Power’ with ‘Militant’ subscriptions				
March 13–May 12 (week 5)				
Country	Books sold	Subs sold	Subs quota	Subs %
UNITED STATES				
New York	274	212	265	80%
Seattle*	80	88	115	77%
Philadelphia	66	59	90	66%
Miami	45	52	80	65%
Houston	53	42	65	65%
San Francisco	78	94	150	63%
Twin Cities, MN	70	89	155	57%
Washington, D.C.	85	63	110	57%
Chicago	82	64	120	53%
Atlanta	68	68	140	49%
Boston	23	31	65	48%
Los Angeles	65	53	130	41%
Des Moines, IA	38	43	125	34%
Total U.S.	1027	958	1610	60%
UNITED KINGDOM				
London	72	51	90	57%
Edinburgh	13	16	30	53%
Total UK	85	67	120	56%
Canada	21	49	100	49%
New Zealand	20	35	65	54%
Australia	15	28	50	56%
Sweden	15	19	20	95%
Total	1183	1156	1965	58%
Should be		1250	2000	63%
* Raised quota				

‘Militant’ fund drive			
March 13–May 12 (week 5)			
Country	Quota	Paid	%
UNITED STATES			
San Francisco	\$14,000	\$9,455	68%
Philadelphia	\$3,700	\$2,420	65%
Atlanta	\$7,800	\$4,405	56%
Seattle	\$8,000	\$4,375	55%
Twin Cities, MN	\$7,000	\$3,805	54%
New York*	\$20,000	\$9,625	48%
Des Moines, IA*	\$2,700	\$1,237	46%
Los Angeles	\$8,700	\$3,180	37%
Houston	\$2,500	\$820	33%
Chicago	\$9,600	\$2,720	28%
Boston	\$3,500	\$970	28%
Miami	\$3,000	\$635	21%
Washington, D.C.	\$6,500	\$575	9%
Other		\$600	
Total U.S.	\$97,000	\$44,822	46%
Canada	\$6,650	\$2,150	32%
New Zealand	\$3,000	\$677	23%
Australia	\$1,500	\$705	47%
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	\$750	\$30	4%
Edinburgh	\$300	\$0	0%
Total UK	\$1,050	\$30	3%
Sweden	\$500	\$175	35%
France	\$300	\$225	75%
Total	\$110,000	\$48,784	44%
Should be	\$110,000	\$68,750	63%

Cuba's example discussed at L.A. campus meetings

BY WENDY LYONS

LOS ANGELES—"In Cuba no one graduates from college with a debt. If you pass an exam in Spanish, history, and math you can go to the university free of charge," said Yenaivis Fuentes, a medical student from Cuba, at an April 15 meeting at California State University, Los Angeles. The standing-room-only audience of 175 burst into sustained applause.

This was just one of the ways in which the difference between living in a capitalist society and one where the workers and farmers have taken political power struck those who heard Fuentes and medical student Aníbal Ramos on the final leg of their national tour sponsored by the Cuban Student Academic Exchange.

Keisha Brunston asked about the role of police in Cuba. Brunston has fought to expose the killing of her nephew Deandre, an unarmed Black youth accused of domestic violence, who was shot in 2003 by Los Angeles cops.

"There is a big difference between the police in Cuba and other countries," Ramos replied. "In Cuba they are there to protect the revolution, not to repress the people. They have to face Cuban law if they harm their own people."

Ramos also noted the difference between prisons in Cuba and the United States. He described how the Cuban Five, Cuban revolutionaries imprisoned on frame-up charges by the U.S. government since 1998, had been put in solitary confinement for 17 months. Cubans "don't understand how this kind of prison can exist," Ramos said.

Asked what she thought about the situation for workers and farmers in the United States, Fuentes described their visits with family farmers and immigrant workers in the United States during their tour.

"Life is very difficult for farmers in the United States," Fuentes said. "If they do not have a good harvest they can lose their land and home. They have a lot of machinery, which is very good, but it seems they have to work 16-18 hours a day to pay off their debts and they just get to keep a small percentage of the money they make." She had noted earlier that in Cuba, however, anyone who wants to work the land cannot lose that land.

Roberto, a garment worker whose family is from Mexico, said he was struck by the difference between the situation for farmers in the United States and Mexico as compared to Cuba.

The Latin American Society, Latin American Studies Department, Pan African Studies Department, Chicanos/Latinos for Community Medicine, MECha, Asociación de Estudiantes de Español, and Unión Salvadoreña de Estudiantes Universitarias sponsored the meeting.

The next day the Cuban youth spoke at the University of California in Riverside to 80 people, hosted by the Latin American Studies Program, Department of Ethnic Studies, Chicano Student Programs, and Latin American Perspectives.

Speaking in the discussion, student Karen Aguilar said, "As university students we have little information and fewer facts about Cuba. As a result, what Gloria Estefan has to say seems to matter more." Estefan is a Cuban American

singer based in Miami and a well-known opponent of the Cuban Revolution.

Fuentes pointed out that a recent Miami demonstration in support of the Ladies in White, a small group in Cuba of opponents of the revolution, received prominent coverage in the U.S. media. "A few weeks later, a march of more than 100,000 in Washington, D.C., for rights for immigrants wasn't nearly as well covered," she said.

Maria Anna Gonzales, who helped organize the meeting, urged participants to join the fight to free the Cuban Five.

Dr. Fred Dominguez, assistant professor at Charles Drew University of Medicine and Science, organized a tour for the two Cubans at the South Central Family Health Center. Chief Medical Officer Felix Aguilar conducted the tour. Ramos gave a brief impromptu presentation on the importance of proper diet to a class that was learning about controlling diabetes.

Janice Yen and two other members of Nikkei for Civil Rights and Redress conducted a tour for the Cuban youth through the Japanese American

Cuban student leaders speak in N.Y. area

Continued from front page

along with Tom Baumann, a student at Hunter College and member of the Socialist Workers Party. Howard Dodson, the director of the Schomburg Center, welcomed the students on the center's behalf.

"The Schomburg Center is a friend of Cuba," Dodson said. He noted that Arturo Alfonso Schomburg, whom the center is named after, was an Afro-Puerto Rican independence fighter and an ally of José Martí, a national hero in Cuba who led the fight for independence from Spain.

Dodson told the audience about his disappointment in not being able to attend a recent exchange in Cuba coinciding with the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

Fuentes gave a brief summary of Cu-



Militant/Eric Simpson

Audience of some 175 people participate in April 15 meeting with two medical students from Cuba at California State University, Los Angeles. Participants heard about some of social conquests made possible by making a socialist revolution.

National Museum. They explained that their organization fought for 10 years to win a government apology and reparations in 1990 for the imprisonment of 120,000 Japanese from the West Coast in internment camps during World War II.

Fuentes asked how many people were alive when the reparations were won. Yen said that about 88,000 were still alive at the time. In 2001 repre-

sentatives of their organization went to Cuba and visited with Japanese-Cubans who had also been put in camps there during World War II.

On the last night of their visit 75 people joined the students at a potluck dinner organized by Latin American Society students from Cal State Los Angeles. It was held at the home of Carlos Ugalde, retired professor from Glendale Community College.

ban history from the struggle for national liberation from Spanish colonizers in the 19th century and U.S. imperialism's subsequent semicolonial domination of the island for the first half of the 20th century. She described the historical period opened up by the triumph of the socialist revolution in 1959 and the social gains that working people conquered as a result of using state power in their own interests.

Case of Cuban Five

Ramos's presentation centered on the decades-long campaign of imperialist violence and aggression following the victory of the revolution. He described the case of the Cuban Five, five Cubans who came to Florida in the 1990s to monitor violent counterrevolutionary groups operating out of Miami, keeping Havana informed of planned attacks.

The five revolutionaries were arrested by the FBI in 1998 and railroaded to prison on frame-up charges, including "conspiracy to commit espionage." One of the five, Gerardo Hernández, was convicted of false charges of "conspiracy to commit murder." They are still serving draconian sentences in federal prison.

"President Obama has the power to free them through a presidential pardon," Ramos said. "But this will only happen if he receives pressure from the people of this country and internationally."

Forty people attended an April 14 luncheon at Hofstra University, many of them leaders of student organizations. "When you hear about human rights violations in Cuba, look at the source," said Ryan Greene, director of the Office

Continued on page 9

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Lessons for fighters today from Lenin's Victory of Cuba's socialist revolution marked renewal of commun

Printed below is the third and final part of the new introduction to Pathfinder Press's 2010 edition of Lenin's Final Fight. The book contains the speeches and writings of V.I. Lenin, central leader of the world's first socialist revolution, during his final political struggle, five years after the victory of the October 1917 revolution. The first and second parts of the introduction were run in the April 19 and April 26 issues of the Militant. Copyright © 2010, Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BY JACK BARNES
AND STEVE CLARK

The political battle waged by Lenin within the Soviet Communist Party leadership in 1922–23 did not end in victory. The civil war devastation, above all the deaths and political exhaustion of broad sections of the most conscious and selfless cadres in the working-class vanguard, compounded by the defeats of revolutionary struggles throughout Europe and Asia, weighed too heavily in the scales.

In January 1923 an opportunity for the working class to take power in Germany was lost due to the vacillations of the Communist Party leadership there and most of the central leadership of the Communist International including Lev Kamenev, Gregory Zinoviev, Karl Radek, and Joseph Stalin. And in 1927–28 the more consolidated Stalin leadership's insistence that the Communist Party in China subordinate itself politically and organizationally to the bourgeois Kuomintang resulted in the defeat of the second Chinese Revolution and the massacre of workers and communists in Shanghai, Canton, Wuhan, and other cities.

Following World War II, in the wake of the victory of Soviet workers and peasants over German imperialism's invasion and a new rise of national liberation struggles across Asia and

Africa, capitalist property relations were overturned and workers states established across much of Central and Eastern Europe, as well as in China and the northern half of Korea and of Vietnam.

Most significant of all—of a different order of political importance—the triumph of the Cuban Revolution in 1959 and the caliber of its proletarian internationalist leadership registered a renewal, for the first time in more than three decades, of the example of a communist government course that had been brought to an end with the defeat of Lenin's final fight.

All these experiences from the past century have confirmed that the proletariat's conquest of state power and expropriation of capitalist-owned land and industry have no *automatic* bias toward the construction of socialism. The proletarian dictatorship opens the *transition* from capitalism to socialism. The victorious workers state can then either go forward toward socialism—as an integral part of the world revolutionary struggle against imperialist exploitation and oppression—or backward toward laying the basis for capitalist counterrevolution. Advances are made possible by resolute communist political leadership, by deepening

“The conquest of state power and expropriation of capitalist-owned land and industry have no *automatic* bias toward the construction of socialism. The victorious workers state can either go forward toward socialism as part of world revolutionary struggle, or go backward toward laying the basis for capitalist counterrevolution. . .”

ing politicization of a growing working-class vanguard—prepared for the inevitability of the unexpected and unforeseen—and, above all, by new victories in the world revolution.

In a speech to party cadres and students at the University of Havana in



Bohemia

March in Havana in August 1960 with symbolic burial of coffins representing U.S.-owned companies expropriated by working class and transformed into property of revolutionary government. Victory of workers power in Cuba renewed example of government with communist course and proletarian internationalist leadership—an example that had been extinguished with defeat of Lenin's final fight.

November 2005, then Cuban president Fidel Castro addressed this challenge of communist leadership and political consciousness. He pointed not only to the consequences for working people and youth in Cuba of Washington's decades-long military threats and eco-

ent-day illness.” Nor is it simply a product, he said, of the Special Period—the term used in Cuba to describe the years of deep economic crisis and hardship in the 1990s following the collapse of Cuba's trade with and assistance from the Soviet Union and regimes across Eastern and Central Europe. But the Special Period “aggravated” the situation, Castro said, because “we saw the growth of much inequality and certain people were able to accumulate a lot of money.”

“Were you aware of all these inequalities I have been talking about?” Castro asked those gathered at the University of Havana. “Were you aware of certain generalized habits?” Several minutes later, Castro repeated his question: Is the “revolutionary process irreversible, or not? What ideas or degree of consciousness would make the reversal of the revolutionary process impossible?”

Recalling “what has happened more than once” over the past century in countries where bourgeois rule had been toppled, Castro emphasized that “some people thought that socialism could be constructed with capitalist methods. That is one of the great historical errors,” he said, including of “those who called themselves theoreticians, blanketing themselves from head to toe in the books of Marx, Engels, Lenin and many others.

“That is why I commented that one of our greatest mistakes at the beginning of, and often during, the revolution was believing that someone knew how to build socialism.” No, that could only be discovered in practice by the combat-tested and politicized toilers themselves.

Due to the political consciousness of Cuban working people, and their readiness to defend their historic gains arms in hand, Castro said that the danger of destruction of the revolution comes not from an assault or invasion from U.S. imperialism. The Cuban Revolution, he said, has reached “the point where we can affirm today that our country is militarily invulnerable, and not because of arms of mass destruction,” which the Cuban government neither

nomic warfare, but the social inequalities, political pressures, and corruption produced by Cuba's inescapable immersion in the capitalist world.

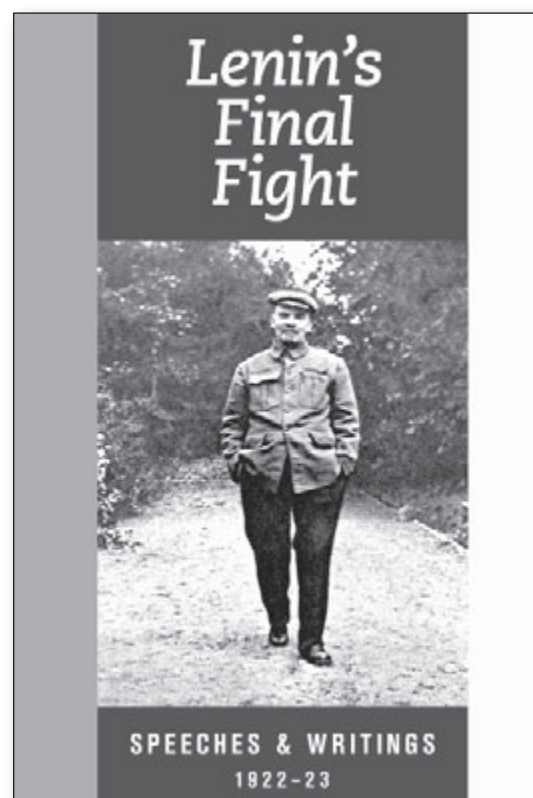
“Do you believe that this revolutionary socialist process can fall apart or not?” Castro asked those present at the University of Havana meeting in 2005. When they answered with a resounding “No!” Castro replied: “Have you ever given that some thought? Have you ever deeply reflected about it?”

Earlier Castro had described in some detail the corrosion of proletarian solidarity in Cuba brought about by growing numbers of “parasites who produce nothing and just take”—siphoning gasoline from cars on the street, or from pumps at state-run filling stations, or stealing in myriad ways the wealth created by the labor of working people. He compared the incomes of these individuals to those of Cubans “working in factories, in industries,” in the electrical and water utilities, or even to doctors, engineers, or university professors.

Such theft of social resources and materials, Castro said, is not just “a pres-

2010 edition *Lenin's Final Fight*

With new introduction by Jack Barnes and Steve Clark



“As capitalism in the twenty-first century enters its deepest economic and social crisis since the decades leading from the first to the second imperialist world war, programmatic and strategic matters in dispute in the communist workers movement in the early 1920s once again weigh heavily in prospects for the working class worldwide to advance along its historic line of march toward the conquest of power.”

This book brings together, for the first time, the reports, articles, and letters through which Lenin waged the political battle to keep the revolution on a proletarian course. Many were suppressed for decades, and some have never before appeared in English. —\$20

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political battle to defend workers power

ist government course with proletarian internationalist leadership

possesses nor aspires to develop or deploy. “We have a people who have learned to handle weapons. We have an entire nation which, in spite of our errors, holds such a high degree of culture, education, and consciousness that it will never allow this country to become their colony again.”

The revolution “can self-destruct,” however, Castro reiterated. “They can never destroy us, but we can destroy ourselves, and it would be our fault.”¹

Fidel’s conclusion was prominently cited and affirmed once again in January 2009 by Cuban president Raúl Castro in his speech on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the revolution’s triumph, addressing the challenge that remains at the center of leadership and policy decisions taken by the revolutionary government of Cuba.

Revolutionary prospects for 21st century

As capitalism in the twenty-first century enters its deepest economic and social crisis since the decades spanning the first and second imperialist world wars, programmatic and strategic matters in dispute in the communist workers movement in the early 1920s once again weigh heavily in prospects for the working class worldwide to advance along its historic line of march toward the conquest of power.

“One of capitalism’s infrequent long winters has begun,” noted a political report adopted by the Socialist Workers Party in 2002, half a decade prior to the 2007 financial implosion that announced the imperialist order’s latest global crisis. And “with the accompanying acceleration of imperialism’s drive toward war, it’s going to be a long, hot winter.”

Even more important, slowly but surely and explosively, it will be one that breeds a scope and depth of resistance not previously seen by revolutionary-minded militants throughout today’s world. . . .

We find ourselves in the very opening stages of what will be decades of economic, financial, and social convulsions and class battles. [We] must internalize the fact that this world—the likes of which none of us have

known before in our political lives—is not only the world that must be faced today, but the one we will be living and fighting in for many years.

By *acting* on this reality today, we will not be caught short politically as wars erupt, deeper social crises explode, pogroms are organized and attempted, and union conflicts become life-and-death battles. The proletarian party that exists tomorrow can only grow out of the proletarian party we put together *today*.²

In this effort, the political lessons of Lenin’s final fight, recounted in his own words in these pages, take on increasing importance for the working class, and for youth attracted to the power of working people to put an end to capitalism’s exploitative and oppressive social relations and transform the course of human history.



Before Pathfinder Press published the first edition of *Lenin’s Final Fight*, in English in 1995 and Spanish in 1997, these articles, letters, speeches, resolutions, and notes by Lenin had never before been collected and presented in a single book—anywhere, or in any language.

From December 21, 1922, until March 6, 1923, when Lenin dictated what turned out to be his final letter, every single thing he is known to have written is contained in these pages. They are presented chronologically, as Lenin led the defense of Bolshevism’s proletarian internationalist course in the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party. Other writings and speeches by Lenin after late September 1922, when the fight opened, are also included, as is Lenin’s political report to the eleventh congress of the Soviet Communist Party in March 1922. A few letters, notes, and articles by other Bolshevik leaders who figured prominently in the struggle have been included as well, when they are needed to clarify central political issues.

Joseph Stalin was general secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union for more than three decades, and head of state in the Soviet Union for much of that time. During those years, many



Militant/Bernie Senter

Airline food service workers rally April 7 at Miami airport for new contract. As capitalism enters its deepest economic and social crisis since 1930s, programmatic and strategic matters in dispute in communist workers movement in early 1920s weigh heavily in prospects for working class worldwide to advance along its historic line of march toward conquest of power.

of Lenin’s writings contained in these pages were suppressed. A few years after Stalin’s death in 1953, a section of his political heirs, including then-Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev, sought to wash their hands of some of the Stalin regime’s most notorious acts. Only then were most of these writings by Lenin acknowledged and, over time, published in the Soviet Union. Some had not been available anywhere since the mid-1920s.

A number of long-sequestered documents were finally translated and printed in the English-language edition of Lenin’s *Collected Works* published in Moscow between 1960 and 1970, and in the Spanish-language edition published there between 1981 and 1990. But these documents by

in the source notes to each piece.

One item was published for the first time, in any language, in this book. That is the March 1923 report prepared, at Lenin’s request, by three of his secretaries concerning a Political Bureau-initiated whitewash of Great Russian chauvinist abuses in the republic of Georgia. Kept secret by Moscow until 1991, the final section of that long-suppressed report, “On the Conclusions of the Dzerzhinsky Commission,” appears in appendix 1.



Chapter divisions, titles, and footnotes have been prepared by Pathfinder, as well as a chronology of important events and a glossary of names of individuals, organizations,

“The political lessons of Lenin’s final fight take on increasing importance for the working class, and for youth attracted to the power of working people to put an end to capitalism’s exploitative and oppressive social relations. . .”

Lenin were scattered throughout the *Collected Works* (in English, vols. 33, 36, 42, and 45; in Spanish, especially vols. 45 and 54), making it difficult for readers to follow the political trajectory of Lenin’s half-year-long fight. Prior to their publication in Spanish in Moscow, some of the documents had been printed in an Argentine edition of Lenin’s *Collected Works* published from 1960 to 1967, in a book published in Spain in 1970, and in the Cuban magazine *Pensamiento Critico* in 1970.

Several works by Lenin that appear in these pages for the first time in either English or Spanish are indicated

and publications. While chapter titles focus on a central aspect of the struggle during a particular time period, those chapters often also contain material by Lenin on other questions related to the communist course he was fighting to advance. For each item the source and related information appear as the first footnote. A list of initials and acronyms used in the book is also included.

The previously mentioned English and Spanish editions of Lenin’s *Collected Works* were used in preparing this book. The existing translations in each language, however, were compared and corrected against the fifth Russian-language edition of Lenin’s writings, published in the late 1950s and 1960s.

Special appreciation for their collective effort in checking and correcting, against the Russian original, the translations published in the Spanish edition of *Lenin’s Final Fight* is due to a team of volunteers from the University of Matanzas in Cuba: Edith González, Idalmis Izquierdo, Diosmedes Otero, and Landelino Sierra.



Militant/Cindy Jaquith

Workers participating in volunteer brigade building housing in Havana, February 1990. Some thought “that socialism could be constructed with capitalist methods,” said Fidel Castro. “That is one of the great historical errors.” Learning how to build socialism could only be discovered in practice by combat-tested and politicized toilers themselves.

‘To whom belongs the decisive word’

Leon Trotsky’s 1932 letter laid out perspective of building proletarian parties

The following is the 15th 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, discuss, and help sell the book. The following is a letter written by Leon Trotsky in 1932. It’s printed in the book along with a short introduction under the heading “To Whom Belongs the Decisive Word.” Copyright © 2009 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.*

The task of communists emphasized by Leon Trotsky in the last of the three discussions in Mexico in 1939—the building of parties that are proletarian in composition, not just in program and strategy—was central to the revolutionary continuity he was organizing his co-thinkers in the Socialist Workers Party and worldwide to put into practice.

Trotsky had summarized this course much earlier in a June 13, 1932, letter urging the leadership of the world communist movement to actively work to recruit a group of Black workers in Johannesburg, South Africa, who had asked to join.

* * *

The Johannesburg comrades may not as yet have had the opportunity to acquaint themselves more closely with the views of the Left Opposition on all the most important questions. But this cannot be an obstacle to our working to-

gether with them as closely as possible at this very moment, and helping them in a comradely way to come into the orbit of our program and our tactics.

When ten intellectuals, whether in Paris, Berlin, or New York, who have already been members of various organizations, address themselves to us with a request to be taken into our midst, I would offer the following advice: put them through a series of tests on all the programmatic questions; wet them in the rain, dry them in the sun, and then after a new and careful examination accept maybe one or two.

The case is radically altered when ten workers connected with the masses turn to us. The difference in our attitude to a petty-bourgeois group and to the proletarian group does not require any explanation. But if a proletarian group functions in an area where there are workers of different races and, in spite of this, remains composed solely of workers of a privileged nationality, then I am inclined to view them with suspicion. Are we not dealing perhaps with the labor aristocracy? Isn’t the group infected with slaveholding prejudices, active or passive?

It is an entirely different matter when we are approached by a group of Negro workers. Here I am prepared to take it for granted in advance that we shall achieve agreement with them, even if such an agreement is not yet evident, because the Negro workers, by virtue of their whole position, do not and cannot



Leon Trotsky (upper left) in Prinkipo, Turkey, April 1933, with (clockwise) Communist League of America leader Arne Swabeck and Trotsky’s secretaries Pierre Frank, Rudolf Klement, Jean van Heijenoort.

strive to degrade anybody, oppress anybody, or deprive anybody of his rights. They do not seek privileges and cannot rise to the top except on the road of the international revolution.

We can and we must find a way to

the consciousness of the Negro workers, the Chinese workers, the Indian workers, and all the oppressed in the human ocean of the colored races to whom belongs the decisive word in the development of mankind.

Canadian nickel miners maintain strike

Continued from front page

other countries. “Everyone is watching us,” he said. The company “miscalculated our resolve.”

Based in Brazil, Vale Inco is the second largest mining company in the world. It bought out Inco, a Canadian-owned mining company, in 2006.

Sudbury is the center of a vast mining region four hours north of Toronto. The strike began last July with workers rejecting the company’s concession demands, including elimination of the defined-benefit pension for new hires and

of the nickel production bonus system, which would significantly reduce the income of the workers. Pension income for new hires would be tied to the ups and downs of the stock market rather than a fixed rate.

Since then the company has refused to negotiate and has resumed some production using company staff, contract labor, and more than 50 members of USW Local 2020, which represents Vale Inco’s 290 office and technical workers.

The walkout is now the longest in the history of numerous strikes at the Sudbury basin mines. Despite the economic pressure, 89 percent of the strikers, who receive \$200 a week in strike benefits, voted down Vale Inco’s last “offer” March 12. Strikers reported 10 members of USW Local 6500 have crossed the picket lines.

On the eight picket lines, the strikers are limited to eight pickets per site by court injunctions. They can only hold up traffic in and out of the mines and other facilities for 12 minutes. The strikers face daily harassment and provocations by AFI “security guards.” AFI is the professional strikebreaking outfit hired by the company.

“The injunction also says we can’t wear balaclavas,” said Rene Duguay, a mechanic. “But the security people can wear them. Everything is against the workers.” Balaclavas are close-fitting knit hats that cover most of the head and part of the face. Strikers report 10 union activists have been framed up and fired on charges of threatening AFI personnel and scabs.

Office and technical workers, members of Local 2020, voted by more than 80 percent to accept a new contract rather than join Local 6500 on strike. The

office workers’ new contract gives them a 6.5 percent raise over three years, while the company has only offered Local 6500 members 2.7 percent over five years.

The use of scab labor has raised safety issues. A striker at the refinery, who didn’t want his name used, said, “Someone is going to get hurt.” He was referring to the fact that insufficiently trained scabs were handling Carbonyl, which is stored under high pressure in huge tanks. Carbonyl is an extremely toxic and deadly gaseous form of nickel.

Generational ties and solidarity

The Vale Inco bosses are facing a workforce with a solid union consciousness, which includes more than 7,000 pensioners in the area with decades of work and picket line experience.

“In the last three years Vale Inco has hired 1,200 young workers,” Rick Bertrand, USW Local 6500 vice president, told the *Militant*. “Vale thought the young workers wouldn’t stand up. But they did because their fathers and great grandfathers were in this.”

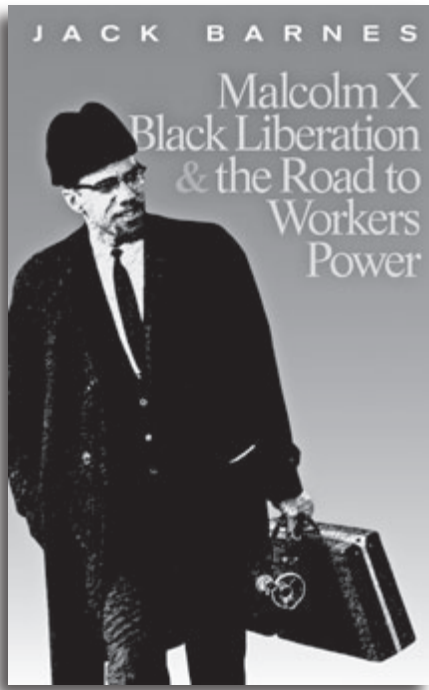
On March 22 a rally here drew 5,000 strikers and supporters. Among those attending were workers from other unions bused in from around the province, leaders from Vale Inco unions in other countries, and students from Laurentian University. Many of the speakers at the rally took a Canadian nationalist stance, condemning the federal government for allowing Vale to take over Inco without any “net benefit to Canada,” and demanding Ottawa intervene.

On May 3 the Ontario Labor Relations Board will begin hearing a “bargaining in bad faith” complaint by Local 6500 officials against Vale Inco.

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. . . .”

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Build immigrant rights actions

Continued from front page

born workers to think of themselves as “Americans” who have more in common with the boss than with fellow workers born in other countries. The labor movement must reject that. Workers and farmers—wherever they were born, whatever language they speak, whatever their skin color or religious views, or whatever piece of paper or ID they happen to carry—have a common enemy: the ruling capitalist families who profit from the wealth working people produce. As their profit rates have declined, the bosses and their government have stepped up their drive against immigrant workers. They’ve increased the pace of deportations, expanded the authority of police to act as immigration cops, and stepped up raids aimed at depicting many immigrants as criminals. The rulers’ aim is to deepen divisions among those with “proper” papers and those without, to heighten insecurity and fear among immigrants, and maintain a layer of the working class permanently vulnerable to deportation, hoping they will keep their heads down in face of abuse and be too afraid to join

union and other working-class struggles. The bipartisan immigration “reform” bills are part of the attack on immigrant workers. The Schumer-Graham proposal, for instance, would for the first time require all working people to carry a national ID card. The bill would increase and give wider authority to cops to act as immigration agents. While it promises permanent residence for some undocumented workers, it demands they first “admit” they broke the law, pay heavy fines, pass background checks, and be proficient in English. Those that successfully jump all those hurdles are given the opportunity to “go to the back of the line” of immigrants awaiting green cards. Only by fighting for legalization of all immigrant workers now, with no conditions, can the labor movement effectively fight for jobs, against attacks on health care, racist discrimination, U.S. wars abroad, and build a movement to take power out of the hands of the capitalist class. We urge working people to join in the actions listed below and demand: Legalize all immigrants now! Stop the firings and deportations! End the militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border!

Rhode Island State slashes welfare rolls

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government assistance has increased. According to a just-released report from the U.S. Census Bureau, 24 percent of U.S. households received some form of “means-tested benefits” in the third quarter of 2008, compared to 16 percent in 1984. This includes those receiving food stamps, reduced-price school meals, and Medicaid. In one indication of the depth of the crisis, a January 3 article in the *Times* reported that some 18 percent of those who receive food stamps, about 6

million people, have no other income. Meanwhile, New York City officials have revived a plan to make homeless people with jobs pay rent for staying in shelters. “Open-handed handouts, we know, don’t work,” Deputy Mayor Linda Gibbs said April 13, referring to the rent plan. “We’re not doing this to close budget gaps. It’s really the principles . . . involved.” Under New York’s “principles” homeless workers will have to pay as much as 44 percent of their income in rent, according to the *Daily News*.

Partial list of May 1 actions for immigrant rights

- ARIZONA**
Tucson: 9 a.m. El Casino Ballroom, 437 E 26th St.
- CALIFORNIA**
Los Angeles: 12 p.m. Corner of Broadway & Olympic
San Bernardino: 10 a.m. 7th & Mt. Vernon
Salinas: 7 p.m. 1155 E Alisal St.
San Francisco: 12 p.m. 24th St. & Mission St.
San Jose: 4 p.m. Story and King Rd.
- CONNECTICUT**
New Haven: 11 a.m. Grand Ave. & Ferry St.
- GEORGIA**
Atlanta: 10 a.m. Georgia State Capitol
- ILLINOIS**
Chicago: 1 p.m. Union Park, 1501 W Randolph
- MASSACHUSETTS**
Boston: 12 p.m. Boston Common
Everett: 12 p.m. Everett City Hall
- MAINE**
Portland: 2 p.m. Kennedy Park & Union Station
- MICHIGAN**
Ann Arbor: 9 a.m. Allmendinger Park
Detroit: 12 p.m. West Vernor & Woodmere
- MINNESOTA**
Minneapolis: 2 p.m. Martin Luther King Park
- NEW HAMPSHIRE**
Manchester: 4:30 p.m. Manchester City Hall

- NEW JERSEY**
Newark: 12 p.m. Military Park
- NEW YORK**
Buffalo: 2 p.m. Martin Luther King Park
Ithaca: 2 p.m. Robert Purcell Center, Cornell Univ.
Hempstead: 12 p.m. Front St. and N Franklin St.
Manhattan: 11 a.m. Foley Square
Manhattan: 12 p.m. Union Square
- OREGON**
Portland: 11 p.m. SW Park & Salmon
Salem: 12 a.m. State Fairgrounds 2330 17th St. NE
- PENNSYLVANIA**
Kennett Square: 12 p.m. Nixon Park, North Walnut St.
- TENNESSEE**
Memphis: 12 p.m. National Civil Rights Museum
- TEXAS**
Dallas: 1 p.m. Guadalupe Cathedral 2215 Ross Ave.
- WASHINGTON**
Seattle: 12:30 p.m. Judkins Park
- WASHINGTON, D.C.**
2 p.m. Lafayette Park, in front of White House
- WISCONSIN**
Madison 12 p.m. Brittingham Park
Milwaukee: 12 p.m. 1027 S 5th St.

Cuban youth tour

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of Multicultural and International Student Programs, who opened the meeting. “The Guantánamo prison shows the U.S. government has no right to accuse others of human rights abuse,” he added, referring to the infamous prison camp at the U.S. naval base there. John Leschak, a student at Hofstra Law School, introduced the students and explained why he had decided to help organize the meeting. “Why Cuba? Because what the Cuban Revolution stands for and represents is an example,” Leschak said. The exchange was important, he said, because Washington prevents most people in the United States from going to Cuba to see it for themselves.

An April 13 program at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey, which drew more than 75 people, was sponsored by 10 campus institutions and student groups. Carlos Fernandez, director of the Center for Latino Arts and Culture, chaired the meeting. He noted that it has been nearly 10 years since such an exchange has taken place in the United States. Matt Matsuda, dean of the College Avenue campus at Rutgers and a professor of history, welcomed the students. Kim Butler, professor of Africana Studies, acknowledged Cuba’s unique role in supporting anti-colonial struggles on the African continent. Adriana Camacho, president of the Rutgers Union of Cuban American Students gave greetings on behalf of the sponsoring student organizations.

A dozen people asked questions during the discussion period. “Why are many Cubans against their government?” was one of the questions. “The newspapers here only talk about people like the Ladies in White, a tiny group of women in Cuba demanding that cell phones, computers, and kitchen facilities be provided to those who call themselves political prisoners,” Fuentes said. These opinions are a small minority in Cuba, she said, and the U.S. media exaggerates their weight in Cuban society.

Nyah Vullulleh, 22, a Liberian student from Philadelphia said, “This has been one of the best dialogues I’ve heard. I’m very interested in Cuba now, and will tell people I know how important it is for the world.” More than 200 people attended the public meeting at Hunter College in Manhattan April 14. Dr. Victor Torres-Velez, assistant professor of the Africana and Puerto Rican/Latino Studies Department, chaired the meeting, and Alberto Hernández, chief librarian at the Center for Puerto Rican Studies, welcomed the students on behalf of the center. Mariya Abrosikova, president of the Student Political Science Association, thanked all those who sent letters of invitation to the Cuban students.

‘This can’t happen in Cuba’

One question was about the Cuban students’ impressions of the United States. Fuentes recalled meeting farmers in Wisconsin who risk losing their land if unable to keep up with crushing mortgage payments. “This can’t happen in Cuba,” she said, where the revolution gave peasants title to land confiscated from wealthy landowners. Asked his impressions of the U.S. health-care “reform” law recently adopted, Ramos said in Cuba health care is not a commodity to be bought and sold. It is a right. “You cannot reform health care into a right,” he said. “That’s like making repairs on a collapsing house. You have to change the foundation it’s built on. A social revolution is necessary.” “Before tonight, I didn’t know about Cuba’s health-care system, or that in Cuba they’re allowed to have meetings and discuss things,” said Flor Araujo, 24, a psychology student at Hunter. “People see Cuba as a place where you can’t say or do anything—but they don’t know the truth.”

Correction

There were several errors in the photo box of the visit by the Cuban youth to the Department of Nursing at Bowie State University that appeared in the April 26 issue. In both the English and Spanish versions, the headline incorrectly calls the university a hospital. In the English version, the photo credit is Militant/Chris Hoepfner. It should be Militant/Amanda Ulman.