

# THE MILITANT

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role of Chinese overseas  
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 74/NO. 21 MAY 31, 2010

## U.S. gov't takes aim at workers rights

BY CINDY JAQUITH

In a move to further undermine workers' rights, the Barack Obama administration is discussing with the Justice Department and members of Congress how to strip some U.S. citizens of their "Miranda rights" when undergoing police interrogation.

These rights were put in place following a Supreme Court ruling in 1966 that threw out the conviction of an Arizona worker, Ernesto Miranda, who "confessed" to a crime while he was in police custody with no lawyer present. The case was heard in the midst of the civil rights battles that overturned Jim Crow segregation against Blacks. That powerful movement was also the impetus for a parallel expansion of political rights and constitutional protections for all working people.

The 1966 court ruling held that a suspect has the right to remain silent when interrogated by cops and the right to an attorney, including one paid for by the state if the defendant can't afford it. The police must inform the person of their

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## 'We're tired of miners dying in unsafe mines'

Union members march against Massey



AP Photo/Steve Helber

Miners and supporters demonstrate against Massey Energy outside Jefferson Hotel during annual shareholders' meeting in Richmond, Virginia, May 18.

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

May 18—Some 1,000 coal miners and other workers from various unions marched through downtown Richmond, Virginia, and rallied outside the hotel where Massey Energy

Co. was holding its annual shareholders meeting today. The action was organized by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) to protest the deaths of 29 miners in a massive explosion at the company's Upper Big Branch Mine in Montcoal, West Virginia, April 5, the worst mining disaster in U.S. history.

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## Capitalist rulers fear impact of 'euro crisis'

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The Spanish government announced new austerity measures May 12 targeting the standard of living of working people. The move is aimed at reassuring wealthy bondholders that the government won't default on debt payments to them.

A similar crisis a week earlier pushed the government of Greece, led by the Panhellenic Socialist Movement, to implement deep cuts aimed at the working class in exchange for \$140 billion in loans from the European Union (EU) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) to avert an imminent debt payment default.

Fearing further government defaults, in particular from the southern European governments of Spain and Portugal, the EU and IMF set up a \$1 trillion fund for emergency loans.

"Fears Intensify That Euro Crisis Could Snowball," read the headline in the May 16 *New York Times*, noting that the bailout is not solving the crisis. "With many governments groaning under the weight of huge deficits, the debt of weaker nations that use the euro currency will have to be restructured."

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## Welcome new readers!

We extend a warm welcome to the 2,149 people who subscribed to the *Militant* for the first time or renewed

**'MILITANT' FUND SURPASSES \$110,000 INT'L GOAL —p. 4**

over the last eight weeks during our spring international circulation drive. Almost 1,900 people also picked up

a copy of the new book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by Jack Barnes, often with a subscription.

Subscribers signed up at actions protesting cutbacks in education funding in California, at demonstrations by Black farmers demanding an end to racist practices by the U.S. government, at antiracist protests in

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Militant/Nick Castle

*Militant* supporter James Harris, left, shows paper and *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* to participant at May 1 immigrant rights rally in Los Angeles.

## Canada: 3,000 workers sustain strike against int'l nickel giant

BY JOHN STEELE

MONTREAL—Frame-ups and harassment of strikers by Vale Inco, near Sudbury, Ontario, have become a major issue in the strike of 3,000 nickel workers that is now in its 11th month. The workers, members of United Steelworkers (USW) Local 6500, are fighting against concession demands by the bosses that would affect pensions and rights on the job and allow for more contracting out of union jobs.

Vale Inco has refused to negotiate and is attempting to achieve full production using management and scabs. Strikers report only 10 members of Local 6500 have crossed the picket lines.

Protests by strikers and family and community supporters closed city roads to an operating Vale Inco mine and mill May 7–12. The Ontario Labor Relations Board (OLRB) then held a hearing May 14 to decide on the union's request to immediately discuss the question of nine union members fired by the company during the strike on frame-up charges of threatening company officials, security guards, and scabs.

In a ruling announced May 17, the

OLRB ignored the union request and "directed" Vale Inco and the union to restart negotiations with a government mediator.

Vale Inco has been pushing to have the question of the fired workers referred to a drawn-out hearings process on a "bad-faith bargaining" complaint that the union filed with the labor board in January.

The workers won a victory May 13 when striker Denis Barbeau was acquitted by the Ontario Court of Justice.

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# Blacks, Latinos targeted in N.Y. ‘stop and frisk’

BY SETH GALINSKY

New York City police stopped a record 575,300 people in 2009 under its “stop and frisk” policy, 8 percent more than in 2008. While Blacks make up only 25 percent of the city’s population, they were 55 percent of those stopped by the cops. Almost 90 percent of those questioned were Black or Latino.

The main reason given by the cops for the stops was “furtive movements.” Other reasons they listed include “inappropriate attire for season” and “wearing clothes commonly used in a crime,” according to the Center for Constitutional Rights.

In a March 13 column titled “Big Brother in Blue,” liberal *New York Times* columnist Bob Herbert notes that the targets of this police harassment are often forced “to sprawl face down on the sidewalk or spread themselves against a wall or over the hood of a car to be searched.”

Close to 90 percent of those stopped are not arrested or given summonses. In most cases, however, no matter what the outcome of the “frisk” the person’s name is entered into the police department’s permanent computerized database.

Conservative columnist Heather MacDonald defended the policy in the March 25 *New York Post*. She writes that stop and frisk deters “criminal activity *before* it happens.”

MacDonald asserts that “blacks and Hispanics committed 98 percent of all shootings. Blacks committed nearly 70 percent of all robberies” in the city. The policy is not biased, she claims, because the percentage of those arrested during the stops, about 6 percent, is the same

for Blacks, Latinos, and whites.

The indiscriminate stopping and harassment of Blacks and Latinos goes hand in hand with New York mayor Michael Bloomberg’s plans to expand a network of security cameras and license plate readers in the city to fight “terrorism” and “street crime.” An existing network covers the New York Stock Exchange and other “high-profile” buildings, according to the Associated Press.

Bloomberg says the expansion to midtown will be completed by 2011. Under the plan existing and new cameras operated by private companies would also be connected to the police department’s network. There are thousands of surveillance cameras in the city.

Meanwhile, the Chicago City Council on May 12 approved a \$16.5 million settlement of a federal class-action lawsuit against the city police department.

The lawsuit, filed in 2004, charged that an “institutionalized system of police torture” existed in Chicago, including shackling people to walls or benches and depriving them of food and water.

In a related case, jury selection in the trial of former Chicago police detective Jon Burge began May 6. After revelations that for some two decades city cops beat, applied electric shocks, and nearly suffocated prisoners, Burge was fired in 1993.

Dozens of people went to prison based on coerced confessions extracted by the cops. Burge is not being charged with torture. Instead he is accused of perjury and obstruction of justice for lying under oath in 2003 about the abuses.

## University of Puerto Rico students strike



Militant/Ron Richards

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico—Thousands marched here to back students on strike at 10 of 11 University of Puerto Rico campuses May 7. The students are fighting a plan to reduce the number of students who get tuition waivers, to increase fees, and what they fear are initial attempts to privatize the university. Sign says, “We have proposals, we have chairs, sit down to negotiate.”

After 3,000 students at a May 13 assembly voted by an overwhelming majority to continue the strike, which began April 21, cops surrounded the Río Piedras campus to prevent food or water from reaching striking students. Major unions organized actions May 18 in support of the students.

—RON RICHARDS

## Seattle video shows cop brutality

BY CLAY DENNISON

SEATTLE—“It happens all the time. They do whatever they want,” said Rico Muñoz, a Seattle high school student, of a newly exposed case of brutality by city cops. Muñoz was one of 15 participants in a May 15 picket line in front of police headquarters in downtown Seattle.

The picket was in response to a video shown on local television May 6. The video, shot in the early morning hours of April 17, shows Seattle cops who had stopped three young men and forced them to lie face down on the sidewalk. Detective Shandy Cobain, a member of the gang unit, is heard telling one of them, 21-year-old Martin Monetti, “I’m going to beat the [expletive] Mexican piss out of you, homey. You feel me?” A short time later, Cobain kicked Monetti’s hand and the side of his head. Another cop, Mary Lynn Woollum, is seen stomping on the back of Monetti’s knee or leg.

Stacia Hawkinson, a high school teacher at the picket line, told the *Mili-*

*tant*, “So many of our students that I know personally have been abused physically by the police, and it’s wrong. How could I not be here protesting?” Hawkinson carried a hand-lettered sign that featured pictures of Monetti and Malika Calhoun, a 15-year-old student who was assaulted in a holding cell by two cops in 2009.

Protester Isis Sanchez described other cases of police harassment. “I was walking with my brother, who is half Black, and a cop pulled over and asked if we were looking into a car we had just walked past.” After asking about the car, “he asked me, ‘Does your mom know you’re with him?’” Others at the picket reported that passersby described physical abuse and harassment at the hands of the Seattle police.

The first television station to receive the video did not air it. Photographer Jud Morris who filmed the video released it first on the Internet and then to another station that broadcast it three weeks after the incident. The first station fired Morris.

## THE MILITANT

### BP oil rig blast & fight for job safety

*More facts are surfacing about the unsafe conditions on the BP-leased oil rig that exploded April 20, killing 11 workers. Subscribe to the ‘Militant’ to keep up with the news and articles explaining how workers can advance the fight for safety on the job.*



Shrimpers in Louisiana confront BP May 6 over loss of income due to oil spill.

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Editor: Paul Mailhot

Managing Editor: Martín Koppel

Business Manager: Angel Lariscy

Editorial volunteers: Róger Calero, Seth Galinsky, Cindy Jaquith, Angel Lariscy, Omari Musa, Doug Nelson, Jacob Perasso, Brian Williams

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Fax: (212) 244-4947

E-mail: [themilitant@mac.com](mailto:themilitant@mac.com)

Website: [www.themilitant.com](http://www.themilitant.com)

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# BP oil spill: Unfolding ruin for working people

BY ANGEL LARISCY

MAY 19—A month after a BP oil rig explosion in the Gulf of Mexico killed 11 workers, neither the company nor the U.S. government has a solution to the massive oil leak on the ocean floor that is threatening the livelihood of millions and decades of environmental disaster.

There were early warning signs of problems aboard the rig that BP ignored, the *Miami Herald* reported May 14. For weeks pressure was building up in the well from the oil and natural gas beneath the ocean. Workers heard loud noises at least three times the day of the explosion as the gases were vented. In the final hours, a heavy gas cloud settled over the platform and birds flying above began to drop. Then gas seeped into the main engines, igniting them, and the rig blew up.

According to a study by the Center for Public Integrity, two oil refineries owned by BP are responsible for 97 percent of all flagrant violations found in the U.S. refining industry in the past three years.

As of May 17 BP said it is salvaging about one-fifth of the oil from the broken pipe on the ocean floor and pumping it into a tanker, leaving the remaining fuel to spew into the water.

Already the leak has had an impact on working people in the Gulf region's fishing and shrimping industry. Accord-

ing to the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Gulf produces 73 percent of domestically produced shrimp and 59 percent of oysters. Large areas off the coast of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama are now closed to fishing and shrimping.

Normally in the middle of their biggest season, small fishermen, who already live paycheck to paycheck, find themselves without work. Many have resorted to leasing their boats to BP for the cleanup effort at about half of what they make during the height of the season.

Tracy Kuhns of the Jefferson Parish Association of Family Fishermen was interviewed for an article that appeared on the Web site TakePart.com, which covers environmental and other issues. She helps fishermen fill out applications to have their boats hired by BP to skim oil. She also organizes to get them gloves, rubber sleeves, and respirators with replaceable filters. "Initially they were sending people out with nothing, no preparation, and they were coming back covered with oil after spending a day trying to scoop it up and breathing it in," she reported.

BP originally said 1,000 barrels a day were leaking from the broken pipe. Government officials later raised the figure to 5,000. The leak could "easily be four or five times" the government estimate,



Unemployed fishermen and families wait to receive donations from New Orleans Catholic Charities in Hopedale, Louisiana, May 5. Only some are selected by BP for cleanup work.

Ian MacDonald, an oceanographer at Florida State University, told the *New York Times* May 13.

"There's a shocking amount of oil in the deep water, relative to what you see in the surface water," said Samantha Joye, a professor of marine sciences at the University of Georgia. Scientists have found one oil plume 10 miles long, 3 miles wide, and 300 feet thick in spots.

Downplaying the impact of the oil leak, Tony Hayward, CEO of BP, said

in a May 14 interview with the *Guardian* newspaper, "The Gulf of Mexico is a very big ocean. The amount of volume of oil and dispersant we are putting into it is tiny in relation to the total water volume."

"If they don't stop that oil flowing way out there it's coming into the wetlands," Aaron Scott, 73, of Louisiana told the *Miami Herald*. "We'll lose the crabs, the oysters, the fishing. We'll lose our way of life," said Scott, who has been a fisherman for 57 years.

## Canada nickel workers' strike

**Continued from front page**  
tice of making criminal threats stemming from a January 21 incident at the union's Copper Cliff picket line.

The determination of the workers to defend their union remains strong. Striker Seepo Vataja, who has worked in the mines for 18 years, told the *Militant*, "The last vote against their contract proposal was bigger than the first vote to go out on strike. The protests showed we have support in the community. At the Clarabelle Mill there were hundreds of people who stayed despite the court order to disperse, and there were students from

the university who were there right to the end."

A group of professors at Laurentian University in Sudbury who support Local 6500 forced university officials to cancel facilities there rented by Vale Inco to train scabs. The professors sent an open letter to the administration demanding that Vale Inco apologize for the "misuse" of the university's facilities. The company maintained it had a right to rent facilities like any other business and threatened to end its donations to the university.

Busloads of strikers are scheduled to go to Ottawa May 26 for a "camp-out" on Parliament Hill, where they plan to stay overnight.

## —MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

### TEXAS Houston

**Malcolm X, Black Liberation and the Road to Workers Power.** Speaker: Steve Warshell, Socialist Workers Party, with video excerpt of Malcolm X speech at Oxford University, December 1964. Sat., May 29, 7:30 p.m. 4800 W. 34th St., Suite C-51A. Tel.: (713) 688-4919.

## —CALENDAR—

### AUSTRALIA

#### Sydney

**March and Rally—Drop the Charges against the Cairns Couple! Repeal All Abortion Laws! Free, Safe, Accessible Abortion on Demand!** Sat., May 29, 11 a.m. Martin Place. *Ausp: Women's Abortion Action Campaign.* Tel.: 0407 665 857.

Come to discussion and book signing on:

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

Atlanta, Thursday, May 27 at 7 p.m.

**At the Auburn Avenue Research Library**  
101 Auburn Avenue, NE

The Auburn Avenue Research Library of American Culture and History, in collaboration with Atlanta Pathfinder Books, will host a community discussion and book signing on the maturation of Malcolm X as a global revolutionary. This event will feature Steve Clark, the editor of several collections of Malcolm's speeches, published by Pathfinder Press.

**For more information: (404) 730-4001, ext. 303**

## Free the Cuban Five!

Known internationally as the Cuban Five, Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, René González, Antonio Guerrero, and Fernando González were arrested in Miami in 1998 and framed-up on charges ranging from "conspiracy to commit espionage" and acting as an unregistered foreign agent to "conspiracy to commit murder" in the case of Hernández.

Under pressure from an international campaign to free the five, three have had their sentences reduced. In October, Guerrero's life sentence plus 10 years was reduced to 21 years and 10 months. In December, Labañino's sentence was reduced from life plus 18 years to 30 years and Fernando González's from 19 years to 17 years and 9 months. But the court has thus far refused to reconsider the sentences of Hernández, serving two life terms plus 15 years, or René González, sentenced to 15 years.

In early May, Guerrero was moved from a maximum security prison to a medium security facility within the same prison complex in Florence, Colorado. According to antiterroristas.cu, a Web site that promotes the campaign to free the five, the move is the result of the reduction in Guerrero's sentence "as well as his exemplary behavior throughout 11 long years in prison, including not just an unblemished record of good conduct but also volunteering to teach classes to his fellow inmates."

### Write to the Cuban Five

#### Rubén Campa (Fernando González)

Reg. #58733-004, FCI Terre Haute  
P.O. Box 33, Terre Haute, IN 47808

(NOTE: The envelope must be addressed to "Rubén Campa," but address the letter inside to Fernando.)

#### René González

Reg. #58738-004, FCI Marianna  
P.O. Box 7007, Marianna, FL 32447-7007

#### Antonio Guerrero

Reg. #58741-004, FCI Florence  
P.O. Box 6000, Florence, CO 81226

#### Gerardo Hernández

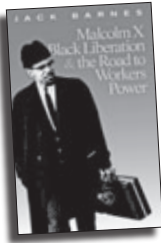
Reg. #58739-004, U.S.P. Victorville  
P.O. Box 5300, Adelanto, CA 92301

#### Luis Medina (Ramón Labañino)

Reg. #58734-004, U.S.P. McCreary  
P.O. Box 3000, Pine Knot, KY 42635

(NOTE: The envelope must be addressed to "Luis Medina," but address the letter inside to Ramón.)





Read, Sell, & Discuss

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

Washington, D.C.

Recently a team went to Amtrak’s Ivy City maintenance yard to sell to the afternoon shift change. A few weeks earlier, three rail workers there bought copies of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, along with subscriptions to the *Militant*.

As one worker was looking through the photos in the book, one of the workers who had gotten the book previously pulled up, rolled down his window, and said, “I’m almost done reading that book. It’s really good. You need to buy that, brother!”

With that encouragement, the rail worker pulled out \$15 and got the combination. Both are Black and live in Baltimore, as do a number of rail workers in D.C.

Over the last few months, we have sold 36 copies of the book to rail workers. Most have been sold by a longtime *Militant* supporter who works on the railroad.

—Susan LaMont

Des Moines

Over the weekend we attended the Prairie States Regional National Organization for Women conference in Des Moines and the Fourth Annual Latino/Latin American Summit of the Great Plains in Omaha. After participating in discussions at both, we sold 4 copies of *Workers Power* and 4 subscriptions to the *Militant*.

Today at work a coworker gave me \$15 for the *Workers Power* book I had given her to look at along with a *Militant* subscription. She said she would like to talk more because she was curious about how I had come to hold these ideas.

—Maggie Trowe

Chicago

Two coworkers in a large garment factory where I recently started working have bought copies of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*. One is a young Latino who has attended several May Day marches. He told me that he was interested in learning something about the Black struggle in this country because he didn’t learn anything from the Black studies class he took in high school.

I am never empty-handed. I always have a small supply of the book, papers, subscription blanks, and the current forum leaflet. You never know when a discussion will lead to an opportunity to get literature into the hands of a coworker.

—Ilona Gersh



Militant/John Naubert

Mary Martin, back to camera, showing *Malcolm X, Black Liberation and the Road to Workers Power* and *Militant* to high school students in Seattle shopping area.

## Militant Fund contributions top \$117,000!

BY ANGEL LARISCY

“I am glad to contribute to the *Militant*. It is worth far more to me than I pay for it,” a Black hospital worker told New York *Militant* fund director Dan Fein when he came to his Harlem apartment to collect a \$100 contribution. The worker had renewed his subscription for two years in January and purchased a copy of the new Pathfinder book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation and the Road to Workers Power* by Jack Barnes. New York supporters exceeded their \$20,000 quota and raised \$21,674 from 132 readers.

Responses like these from workers all over the world are what pushed the collection for the eight-week international *Militant* fund over \$117,200—107 percent of the \$110,000 goal!

The *Militant* is a socialist weekly

that relies on contributions from working people and others who value its coverage of working-class struggles and its political analysis of historical and current events. The annual fund covers basic operating expenses and reporting trips.

The fund ran simultaneously with the successful campaign to sell 2,000 subscriptions to the paper and about the same number of copies of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*.

Mike Tucker of New Zealand reported one first-time contributor said he hadn’t considered how the *Militant* is financed without paid advertising until he was asked to contribute. New Zealand supporters went over their \$3,000 quota by \$840. “We organize it early and collect it in,” wrote Tucker.

Supporters of the *Militant* in Chicago collected 65 contributions from six states in the Midwest region to go over their quota, reports Dennis Richter. Nine of those decided to increase their pledges during the course of the campaign.

Thanks to all those who contributed!

## Welcome

**Continued from front page**

the United Kingdom, at U.S. demonstrations for legalizing undocumented workers, at plant gates and on the job, on campuses, and on street tables and going door to door in working-class neighborhoods from Sydney, Australia, to Stockholm, Sweden.

The *Militant* explains how the bosses’ drive for profits is at the heart of the current economic depression and why workers and farmers need to take political power out of the hands of the capitalist class. Once working people hold state power in our hands, the job begins of reorganizing society from one based on exploitation, violence, and dog-eat-dog competition to one of solidarity among working people that recognizes the worth of every individual regardless of sex, national origin, or skin color.

The *Militant* is your paper. Are workers at your plant involved in a fight over job safety, pay, or speedup? Are you involved in protests for immigrant rights, against the U.S. intervention in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, or against the closing of hospitals? Do you have a question or comment about an article you read in the paper? Send us an article, photos, or a letter.

The spring subscription campaign has ended, but the opportunities to expand the paper’s readership continue, as do the possibilities to reach many others with the political perspectives laid out in *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*. Talk to your coworkers, classmates, friends, and relatives. Encourage them to subscribe and get the book.

In solidarity,  
Paul Mailhot  
Editor

<i>‘Militant’ fund drive</i>			
March 13–May 12 (Final)			
Country	Quota	Paid	%
UNITED STATES			
Houston*	\$2,800	\$3,265	117%
Boston	\$3,500	\$3,882	111%
New York*	\$20,000	\$21,674	108%
Washington, D.C.	\$6,500	\$6,930	107%
Chicago	\$9,600	\$10,065	105%
Seattle*	\$8,850	\$9,275	105%
Miami	\$3,000	\$3,125	104%
Twin Cities, MN	\$7,000	\$7,285	104%
Los Angeles	\$8,700	\$8,955	103%
Atlanta	\$7,800	\$8,012	103%
Des Moines, IA*	\$2,700	\$2,720	101%
Philadelphia	\$3,700	\$3,705	100%
San Francisco	\$14,000	\$14,032	100%
Other		\$600	
Total U.S.	\$98,150	\$103,525	105%
Canada	\$6,650	\$5,880	88%
New Zealand	\$3,000	\$3,840	128%
Australia	\$1,500	\$1,550	103%
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	\$750	\$1,250	167%
Edinburgh	\$300	\$325	108%
Total UK	\$1,050	\$1,575	150%
Sweden	\$500	\$510	102%
France	\$300	\$335	112%
Total	\$111,150	\$117,215	107%
Should be	\$110,000		100%
* Raised goal			

## ‘We’re tired of miners dying’

**Continued from front page**

ter in the United States in 40 years.

UMWA members, retirees, and others came by bus from seven states, including West Virginia, Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio, and Utah, to participate in the action.

“We’re tired of miners dying in unsafe mines,” Tanya James, a 50-year-old miner from Elk Garden, West Virginia, told the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. At a vigil and protest attended by hundreds of workers yesterday, she and 51 other miners jointly turned on their helmet lights to commemorate the 52 miners killed in Massey-owned mines since 2000.

“It all comes down to Massey Energy putting profit over people,” Charles Suggs, who traveled to the meeting from Rock Creek, West Virginia, told the Associated Press. “This is not purely a Massey issue. This is a coal industry-wide issue.”

In the meeting, Massey CEO Donald Blankenship praised the company’s safety record, saying its rate of nonfatal accidents “had fallen by 90 percent under his stewardship from 1992 to 2010,” the *Wall Street Journal* reported. He asserted that the explosion at the Upper Big Branch Mine “will make the company safer.”

Miners in the United States are not

alone in fighting for safe conditions so that no miner has to die. In Russia, miners and other working people have organized protest actions in response to the May 8 explosions at the Rospodskaya mine. The blasts killed 66 miners and injured 129. Another 24 miners are missing.

Some 200 miners and others conducted a sit-in May 14 on railroad tracks in the city of Mezhdurechensk in Siberia where the mine is located to protest unsafe working conditions and demand higher wages instead of pay based on financial incentives tied to production. A busy rail line was “barricaded for three hours,” reported the Moscow News, an online newspaper.

Cops attacked the protesters. Workers fought back, pelting the police with stones and bottles. Twenty-eight demonstrators were detained and 17 policemen injured, according to the *New York Times*.

In response, Russian prime minister Vladimir Putin intervened with a public rebuke to the mine’s management. He also called for increasing miners’ wages and expanding the powers of the state safety inspectors to include temporarily shutting mines and dismissing mine officials, the *Times* reported.



# Boeing strikers say no to health, pension cuts

BY OLLIE BIVINS

LONG BEACH, California—Some 1,700 workers organized by United Auto Workers Local 148 went on strike May 11 at the three Boeing Corporation C-17 plants in Long Beach, Torrance, and Carson, California. As the walkout enters its second week, the resolve of the workers remains firm.

The C-17 is a troop and matériel transport plane. It has been used in the

wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and also in Haiti.

The key issues in the strike are Boeing's insistence on increased medical and pension costs for employees.

"We're fed up," Brian Sullivan, who has worked at the plant here since 1985, told the Long Beach *Press-Telegram*. "The medical issue is the main issue for us. The concessions are too much and the company expected us to take it lying down. We won't."

Initially the company demanded the right to lay off union members out of seniority, picking and choosing whom they would dismiss. Many Black workers were especially concerned about company discrimination under this contract provision. "You have a lot of Blacks with high seniority, and like many workers who are aging, some aren't as productive as they were at one time. It was feared that the company would use this as a way to weed them out," Paul Johnson, a structural assembler, explained to the *Militant*.

Immediately after a militant march and rally of about 600 workers in front of the plant and the voting down of



AP Photo/Damian Dovarganes

United Auto Workers members picket outside Boeing plant in Long Beach, California, May 11. They are on strike to prevent cuts to health insurance and pensions.

the contract by 80 percent of the union members, the company issued a statement saying it had listened to the concerns of the workers and withdrew the seniority provision from the table. The contract, however, remained unacceptable to union members.

On May 14 hundreds of strikers marched to the plant from the union hall in Long Beach, about two miles away, for a rally of more than 700 in front of a

major entrance to the facility. They were joined by Teamsters, members of the Service Employees International Union, and nonunion, mostly Latino immigrant custodians who work inside the plant. As of May 17 no further talks between Boeing and Local 148 have been scheduled.

*Ollie Bivins is a striking member of UAW Local 148.*

## Iran: Kurdish strikes protest executions

BY CINDY JAQUITH

Strikes broke out in Iranian Kurdistan May 13 to protest the execution of five prisoners, four of them Kurdish activists. The *New York Times* said the strike "was the largest in Kurdish areas since 2005, when another Kurdish activist was shot and killed by security forces."

Farzad Kamangar, Ali Heidarian, Farhad Vakili, and Shirin Alamhouli, all Kurds, were put to death by hanging in Tehran May 9 with no notice to their families or attorneys. Alamhouli was the one woman among the four. They had been convicted of carrying out "terrorist attacks" as members of the Free Life Party of Kurdistan, an armed group that calls for Kurdish self-governance within Iran. Each had also been found guilty of being a *mohareb*, or enemy of God, which is a capital crime in Iran.

Like Kurds in neighboring Iraq, Syria, and Turkey, Iranian Kurds face discrimination in jobs, education, housing, language, and culture.

Kamangar had been a schoolteacher. In his hometown of Kamyaran students boycotted classes and workers stayed home from work. Student strikes in other Kurdish areas were also reported.

The city of Sanandaj, the capital of Kurdistan Province, was "deserted" in the words of one person there who spoke to the *New York Times* but did not want his name used. "People have stayed home and the entire bazaar is closed," he said. Photos published by several news Web sites seemed to confirm this. Shops were also closed in Bukan, Oshnavieh, Mahabad, and Marivan.

Mehdi Eslamian, who the government said belonged to a group favoring restoration of the monarchy, was the fifth person executed May 9. He had also been convicted of being a *mohareb* and of involvement in the bombing of a mosque.

The hangings were widely viewed as a warning to all opponents of government policy in advance of possible protests June 12, the anniversary of last year's presidential elections. Hundreds of thousands demonstrated in the wake of the elections after the government declared incumbent Mahmoud Ahmadinejad the winner. Mir Hossein Mousavi, who ran against Ahmadinejad, issued a statement opposing the May 9 executions on his Web site. He said the five did not receive fair trials.

In the face of these protests the Iranian government refused to release the bodies of the five to their families, fearing more demonstrations. The families were not allowed to be present for the burials.

## U.S. government takes aim at workers rights

Continued from front page

rights in advance of questioning. Failure to do so makes any information obtained inadmissible in court.

To question someone held incomunicado in detention "is inherently intimidating and works to undermine the privilege against self-incrimination," the court ruled. "Unless adequate preventive measures are taken . . . no statement obtained from the defendant can truly be the product of his free choice."

The court noted it had heard a series of cases in which "the police resorted to physical brutality—beating, hanging, whipping—and to sustained and protracted questioning incomunicado in order to extort confessions."

When the government interrogated Faisal Shahzad, the U.S. citizen accused of attempting to bomb Times Square, it was four hours before he was read his Miranda rights. Arrested May 3, it was 15 days before he was arraigned.

Attorney General Eric Holder has tried to justify the treatment of Shahzad by pointing to a 1984 Supreme Court ruling that allows cops to delay reading someone their rights in cases of "public safety." He said on ABC that the latitude for interrogation before reading someone their Miranda rights should be expanded to be "more consistent with the threat that we now face": "international terrorists."

The Supreme Court aimed another blow at workers rights May 17 by upholding a law that permits the U.S. government to extend the detention of some federal prisoners indefinitely beyond their sentences. The law allows authorities to arbitrarily declare certain inmates convicted in abuse cases as being too "sexually dangerous" to release.

Five inmates who remain in a North Carolina prison hospital even though they have served out their time filed suit to overturn the law. Four of them origi-

nally received three- to eight-year sentences. More than two years have passed since the expiration of their terms.

As solicitor general, Elena Kagan argued before the high court in favor of upholding the reactionary law. She is now the Obama administration's Supreme Court nominee.

Justices Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas voted against upholding the law. In his dissent Thomas wrote, "The fact that the federal government has the authority to imprison a person for the purpose of punishing him for a federal crime—sex-related or otherwise—does not provide the government with the additional power to exercise indefinite civil control over that person."

According to Reuters, there are about 100 cases of other federal prisoners still incarcerated after serving their sentences. U.S. states also have the power to continue holding inmates convicted of sex crimes after their term is up.

## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



May 31, 1985

Over the weekend of May 17–19, right-wing Vietnamese thugs in San José [California] have escalated their attacks on the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance.

Their attempt to disrupt a May 18–19 SWP and YSA educational conference on Vietnam failed. More than 120 people attended, and the socialists and other supporters of democratic rights are stepping up the campaign to defend the right to hold public meetings and discussions about Vietnam.

After burning a Vietnamese flag, about 50 of the thugs rushed across the street, charging the conference monitors. Seeing that the monitors did not retreat, but that more appeared, the thugs stopped short.



May 30, 1960

The list of new subscribers to the *Militant* keeps growing from week to week. We have received 505 new subscriptions and 124 renewals, since the beginning of the sub campaign on April 15.

We have gone through a sufficient body of experience now to permit the generalization that those *Militant* supporter groups who have put out maximum efforts have accounted for the bulk of the new subscribers and renewals. There are some groups who are lagging way behind and some, I am sorry to say, who have not even started. I feel sure these groups will be encouraged to get into the swing of the campaign by the successes of the more energetic ones.



June 1, 1935

The National Unemployed League condemned the administration's "starvation wage scale" in a letter to President Roosevelt stating, "The organized unemployed will refuse to work for the privilege of starving on wage rates which are not enough to live on and just too much to die on."

The League demands the President scrap the entire present program by going before Congress for the Workers Security Bill sponsored by the National Unemployed League.

The Bill provides for the 30 hour week in all industry; a program of public works on a basis of 30 hours per week; a system of unemployment and social insurance to be paid by the employers and the government.



# Impact of Malcolm X on Grenada revolution

The following is the 19th 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 from a 1987 speech by Barnes printed under the title "Malcolm X: Revolutionary Leader of the Working Class." Copyright © 2009 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

Malcolm's political ideas and example were not simply valuable for their time, but offer a guide for revolutionists today and tomorrow. That's ultimately the only test by which anyone can judge revolutionary leadership—a political test. It is the measure of Malcolm's true stature as an international proletarian leader.

Malcolm's revolutionary convictions have been validated in many ways, but let's start with one in our own hemisphere. Let's start with the Grenada Revolution of March 13, 1979. That's when the workers and farmers of that small Caribbean island, under the leadership of the Maurice Bishop-led New Jewel Movement, overturned the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Eric Gairy. They brought to power a workers and farmers government that organized and led them in throwing off the boot of U.S. and British imperialist domination and beginning to transform the social relations that for so long had perpetuated capitalist exploitation and oppression. In short, Grenada's toilers were led to begin discovering their own worth, and were organized to act on that knowledge.

Maurice Bishop was part of the generation of revolutionists, both biologically and politically, that came right after Malcolm. As I noted earlier, Malcolm has many heirs and will have millions more, including right here in the United States and other imperialist countries. But it's useful

to point to one who helped lead workers and farmers to power—because the revolutionary class struggle for political power was the direction in which Malcolm was heading during the last year of his life, and the single most important goal around which Malcolm and other committed revolutionaries converged.

Maurice Bishop came to politics under the impact of the "Black Power" movement in the Caribbean, which was itself deeply influenced by Malcolm and the Black struggle in the United States. Bishop, as a young man in college in the United Kingdom, had read and studied Malcolm. (A prime example of Malcolm's notion that if you print the truth, it gets around.)

Two years before the Grenada Revolution, in a 1977 interview with the Cuban weekly *Bohemia*, Bishop said that the political impetus in founding the New Jewel Movement had come from "the ideas of 'Black Power' that developed in the United States and the freedom struggle of the African people in such places as Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau." And he added that it was the Cuban Revolution that led the NJM "to develop along Marxist lines," and to recognize, "on the practical level of day-to-day political struggle, the relevance of socialism as the only solution to our problems."

It was through emulating the revolutionary march to state power in Cuba that Maurice Bishop became the working-class leader, the communist leader that he was. And in the process, he too—as Malcolm had, years earlier—came to grips with the limitations of nationalism as a guide to revolutionary political action. Bishop indicated his views in an interview he gave a little more than a year after the New Jewel Movement took power in Grenada—a July 1980 interview conducted by leaders of our movement and run in full in the *Militant* in September 1980. Bishop reminded our readers that due to a common his-



Youngest Centre for Popular Education volunteer teacher, Lyndon Adams, with Maurice Bishop, central leader of Grenada revolution. "Bishop came to politics under the impact of the 'Black Power' movement in the Caribbean, which was itself deeply influenced by Malcolm and the Black struggle in the United States," Barnes says. Cuban Revolution, said Bishop, led movement in Grenada to "develop along Marxist lines" and recognize "the relevance of socialism as the only solution to our problems."

tory of slavery, "There is a very close sense of cultural identity, which the people of Grenada automatically feel for American Blacks and which we have no doubt is reciprocated by the American Black community." Revolutionists in Grenada, Bishop said, "feel a particularly close affinity to American Blacks and other oppressed minorities, to the working-class movement in America." And he concluded the interview—"without intending to be disrespectful," he said—by calling on working people in the United States, whatever their skin color, to "get together and wage a consistent fight against the real enemy. Don't spend time fighting each other. . . ."

Does the fact that the Grenada revolution was betrayed by a petty-bourgeois Stalinist clique around Bernard Coard—serving up the island nation to U.S. imperialism "on a silver platter," in Fidel Castro's words—diminish in any way the significance of Bishop's example? The answer is no. We helped working people in

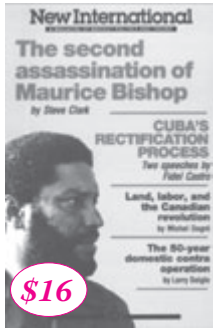
this country, in Grenada, across the Caribbean, and around the world to draw the lessons from that counter-revolutionary coup.

## For further reading . . .

### New International no. 6

- The 2nd assassination of Maurice Bishop
- Cuba's rectification process
- Land, labor, and the Canadian revolution
- The 50-year domestic contra operation

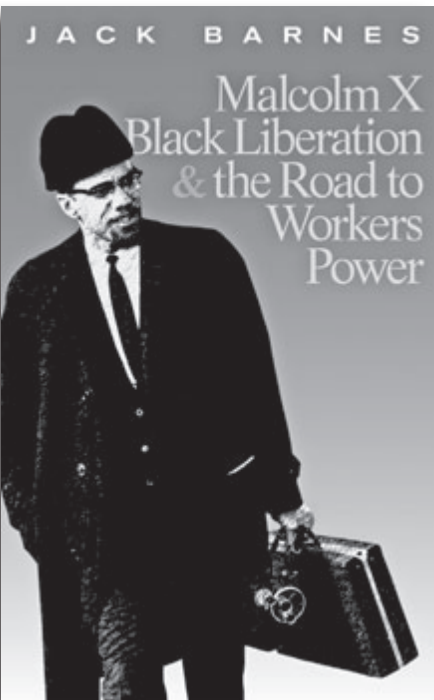
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A 1980 demonstration in Grenada in support of the revolution

Militant



# Conference discusses role of overseas Chinese

## Participants from 20 countries attend int'l gathering in Singapore

BY PATRICK BROWN  
AND BASKARAN APPU

SINGAPORE—Emigration of millions of Chinese around the globe over the last two centuries was the focus of an international gathering here that drew almost 300 people from some 20 countries. The seventh international conference of the International Society for the Study of Chinese Overseas (ISSCO) convened May 7 for three days of plenaries, panel discussions, and other activities.

Singapore's Nanyang Technological University and the Chinese Heritage Centre, located on the university campus, were the sponsors of the conference along with ISSCO. Most participants came from countries in Asia, including China, India, Japan, the Philippines, Taiwan, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, and Thailand. Others hailed from countries in Europe and North America, and from Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. Given the site of the conference and the substantial participation from across Southeast Asia, developments in this region were a particular feature of the event.

ISSCO held its founding conference in 1992 in San Francisco, noted Leo Suryadinata, ISSCO president and director of the Chinese Heritage Centre, at the opening session. Subsequent international conferences were held in Hong Kong in 1994, the Philippines in 1998, Taiwan in 2001, Denmark in 2004, and Beijing, China, in 2007. Numerous regional conferences have been organized as well, including in Cuba in 1999, South Africa in 2006, and most recently in New Zealand last year.

Conference participants were welcomed by Grace Fu Hai Yien, senior minister of state in Singapore's government. After keynote addresses by professors Philip Kuhn of Harvard University and Tan Chee Beng of the Chinese University of Hong Kong—given in English and Mandarin, respectively—participants got down to the main work of the conference: a series of some 70 panel discussions, conducted in English

or Chinese. More than 200 papers were presented, some 90 of them in Chinese. Almost half of those were by participants from universities in China.

Along with the formal sessions, one of the most valuable aspects of the gathering was the many hours of informal discussion and exchange that took place—over meals, cultural activities, and a post-conference tour of Singapore—among the participants who had come together from around the globe.

Papers addressed a wide range of topics, from literary criticism and the changes in spoken Chinese among the diaspora, to the impact on overseas Chinese of industrial development and increasing class differentiation in China over the past two decades, to the conditions facing Chinese workers, small traders, students, capitalists, and others around the world, from Brunei to India, South Africa, and Peru.

### Chinese in Southeast Asia

A number of panels looked at the substantial Chinese populations in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and more broadly in Southeast Asia. With a total population of around 560 million, the region is home to about 30 million ethnic Chinese—about three-quarters of all those who live outside China.

The extent of Chinese settlement varies from country to country. About 29 percent of Malaysia's population of 28 million is Chinese. In Indonesia, Chinese comprise some 3 percent of the country's 240 million people. Most of the Chinese migrants to this region have come from the coastal regions in China's south, including the provinces of Fujian, Guangdong (historically known as Canton), and Hainan Island.

In many countries throughout the region, Chinese communities grew up over the centuries as trading outposts with settlers often subject to exclusionary laws and discriminatory practices, which today's propertied classes find useful to adapt. In Brunei, Malaysia, and Indonesia, land purchase by those



Militant/Martin Koppel

Participants in May 7–9 conference of International Society for the Study of Chinese Overseas at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore.

of Chinese descent continues to be limited, maintaining restrictions first imposed by the British and Dutch colonial powers.

The Suharto dictatorship in Indonesia—which came to power through the slaughter of hundreds of thousands, and a bloodletting that targeted the Chinese minority in particular—lasted from 1965 to 1998. It forbade the teaching of Chinese and the public display of Chinese culture, among many other brutally repressive measures. Indonesia's capitalist rulers, often acting through the military, have frequently set up the Chinese community, especially merchants, as scapegoats to deflect anger against their exploitative rule. Anti-Chinese pogroms, with a harsh toll of murders and rapes, occurred in the last years of Suharto's "New Order" regime and its aftermath.

Over the centuries many Chinese have, of course, married into and become part of the peoples and cultures of the region in which they settled. In Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia those of mixed ancestry and culture are known as Peranakan Chinese (*peranakan* is an Indonesian and Malay word referring to the offspring of a native woman and a foreign male). A collection of essays on the subject, *Peranakan Chinese in a Globalizing Southeast Asia*, edited by ISSCO president Suryadinata, was launched on the second evening of the conference. Teresita Ang See, from the Kaisa Heritage Center and Ateneo de Manila University, herself a former president of ISSCO, presented the book. She noted that in her home country, the Philippines, people of similar mixed ancestry and culture are called Mestizos.

### Impact of Chinese Revolution

Few presentations discussed, or more than incidentally touched on, the sharp class struggles throughout the modern history of the region—the capitalist colonial conquests and powerful 20th century independence struggles against European colonial powers; the national liberation wars against Japanese imperialism leading up to and through World War II; the socialist revolutions that overturned capitalist rule in China and parts of Korea and Indochina in the aftermath of that war; U.S. imperialist

domination in subsequent decades; and the historic victory of the Vietnamese people in 1975. World-shaking events such as the 1949 Chinese Revolution and the 1965 slaughter of workers and Communist Party supporters in Indonesia—led into the bloody trap by the class-collaborationist policies of the Indonesian CP guided by the Maoist regime in Beijing—were in most cases treated as backdrops to specific studies of Chinese communities and their relationships to their new and ancestral homes.

One session did sketch the impact of the 1945–49 Chinese civil war on the Chinese population in Singapore and the class polarization around these revolutionary events. Jason Lim of the National University of Singapore noted that as the Red Army, led by the Chinese Communist Party, won ground against the imperialist-backed Kuomintang (Nationalist Party) forces, some prominent bourgeois figures and one major newspaper were neutral or even sympathetic to the Communist Party forces. At one point, he said, some 120 organizations claiming 100,000 followers called an action against Kuomintang leader Chiang Kai-shek.

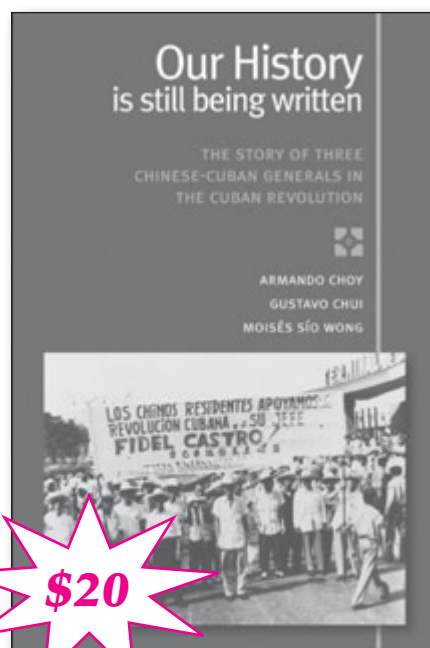
In the same panel discussion, John Wong Teck Yenn, from Nanyang Technological University, noted that the attraction of the Chinese Revolution led one successful restaurant owner in the 1950s to dub his Hainan Chicken dish "Communist Chicken" in expectation that its popularity would increase!

In a talk entitled "Communists, China Missionaries, and Chinese New Villagers: Battle for 'Hearts and Minds' in Malaya," Lee Kam Hing of the University of Malaya described how during the late 1940s and the '50s, the British colonial rulers of what is now Malaysia acted brutally and effectively to cut off links between Chinese peasant villages and the pro-Beijing Malayan Communist Party. Half a million people, most them Chinese, were forced into virtual prison camps called "New Villages." The move helped to cut off "food supplies and information to insurgents operating at the fringes of the jungle," Lee observed, and became the prototype for similar tactics used by

Continued on page 9

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# Trotsky's answer to Stalin's 'socialism in one country'

Printed below is an excerpt from The Third International after Lenin, one of Pathfinder's books of the month for May. It presents Leon Trotsky's defense of the proletarian course of the Russian Revolution that triumphed in October 1917 under the leadership of the Bolshevik Party led by V.I. Lenin. In 1919 the Communist (or Third) International was founded to advance this revolutionary internationalist course. By the time of Lenin's death in 1924, a privileged petty-bourgeois social layer—whose leading representative came to be Joseph Stalin—had gained the upper hand in the Communist Party and Soviet state apparatus. It justified its actions with the anti-Marxist slogan of building "socialism in one country." This book presents Trotsky's 1928 criticism of this perspective, which was laid out in the

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

draft program presented by Nikolai Bukharin and Stalin to the Communist International's Sixth World Congress held that year in Moscow. Copyright © 1957 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

### BY LEON TROTSKY

The new doctrine proclaims that socialism can be built on the basis of a national state *if only there is no inter-*



Delegates to Second International Conference of Communist Women held in Moscow, June 1921. Communist International in early years reached out to toilers worldwide with an internationalist program, helping to build communist parties capable and willing to lead fight of working people to take power. Privileged bureaucracy led by Stalin reversed this course.

vention. From this there can and must follow (notwithstanding all pompous declarations in the draft program) a collaborationist policy towards the foreign bourgeoisie with the object of averting intervention, as this will guarantee the construction of socialism, that is to say, will solve the main historical question. The task of the parties in the Comintern assumes, therefore, an auxiliary character; their mission is to protect the USSR from intervention and not to fight for the conquest of power. It is, of course, not a question of the subjective intentions but of the objective logic of political thought.

"The difference in views lies in the fact," says Stalin, "that the party considers that these [internal] contradictions and possible *conflicts can be entirely overcome* on the basis of the inner forces of our revolution, whereas Comrade Trotsky and the Opposition think that these contradictions and conflicts can be overcome 'only on an international scale, on the arena of the worldwide proletarian revolution.'" (*Pravda*, no. 262, November 12, 1926.)

Yes, this is precisely the difference. One could not express better and more correctly the difference between national reformism and revolutionary internationalism. If our internal diffi-

culties, obstacles, and contradictions, which are fundamentally a reflection of world contradictions, can be settled merely by "the inner forces of our revolution" without entering "the arena of the worldwide proletarian revolution" then the International is partly a subsidiary and partly a decorative institution, the congress of which can be convoked once every four years, once every ten years, or perhaps not at all. Even if we were to add that the proletariat of the other countries must protect our construction from military interventions, the International according to this schema must play the role of a *pacifist* instrument. Its main role, the role of an instrument of world revolution, is then inevitably relegated to the background. And this, we repeat, does not flow from anyone's deliberate intentions (on the contrary, a number of points in the program testify to the very best intentions of its authors), but it does flow from the internal logic of the new theoretical position which is a thousand times more dangerous than the worst subjective intentions.

As a matter of fact, even at the Seventh Plenum of the ECCI [Executive Committee of the Communist International], Stalin became so bold as to develop and defend the following idea:

"Our party has no right to fool [!]

the working class; it should declare openly that the *lack of assurance* [!] in the possibility of building socialism in our country leads to the abdication of power and to the passing of our party from its position as a ruling party to the position of an opposition party." (*Minutes*, vol. 2, p. 10. Our emphasis.)

This means that we have only the right to place assurance on the scanty resources of national economy but that we must not dare to place any assurance upon the inexhaustible resources of the international proletariat. If we cannot get along without an international revolution, then give up the power, give up that October power which we conquered in the interests of the international revolution. Here is the sort of ideological debacle we arrive at if we proceed from a formulation which is false to the core!

The draft program expresses an incontrovertible idea when it says that the economic successes of the USSR constitute an inseparable part of the worldwide proletarian revolution. But the political danger of the new theory lies in the false comparative evaluation of the two levers of world socialism—the lever of our economic achievements and the lever of the worldwide proletarian revolution. Without a victorious proletarian revolution, we will not be able to build socialism. The European workers and the workers the world over must clearly understand this. The lever of economic construction is of tremendous significance. Without a correct leadership, the dictatorship of the proletariat would be weakened; and its downfall would deal a blow to the international revolution from which the latter would not recover for a good many years. But the conclusion of the main historical struggle between the socialist world and the world of capitalism depends on the second lever, that is, the world proletarian revolution. The colossal importance of the Soviet Union lies in that it is the disputed base of the world revolution and not at all in the presumption that it is able to build socialism independently of the world revolution.

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### SWEDEN

**Stockholm:** Bildhuggarvägen 17, 12144 Johanneshov. Tel: (08) 31 69 33. E-mail: kfstockholm@tele2.se

### UNITED KINGDOM

**ENGLAND: London:** First Floor, 120 Bethnal Green (Entrance in Brick Lane). Postal code: E2 6DG. Tel: 020-7613-2466. E-mail: clondon@onetel.com

**SCOTLAND: Edinburgh:** Second Floor, 105 Hanover St. Postal code: EH2 1DJ. Tel: 0131-226-2756. E-mail: cledinburgh@talktalk.net

8 The Militant May 31, 2010



# Oppose assault on workers rights

Working people should oppose recent government moves to curtail workers rights in the name of fighting “terrorism” and protecting the public from “dangerous” individuals.

Cops questioned Faisal Shahzad, a U.S. citizen accused of attempting to bomb Times Square, for hours before informing him of his Miranda rights—the right to remain silent and be represented by a lawyer. Attorney General Eric Holder argued this violation of Shahzad’s rights was in the interests of “public safety.” A similar argument has been made to justify the executive order by President Barack Obama to assassinate U.S. citizen Anwar al-Awlaki, a Muslim cleric the government says communicated with Maj. Nidal Hasan before he killed 13 soldiers at Fort Hood, Texas, last November.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court upheld the authority of the federal government to arbitrarily keep prisoners in custody long after they have served their sentences. The ruling, involving inmates deemed “sexually dangerous,” sets a bad precedent for unionists and other fighters the government also considers “dangerous.”

The Miranda ruling was part of the expansion of

constitutional protections against government encroachment on rights won by working people in the course of the Black struggle beginning in the 1950s. These also included guaranteed access to an attorney for any worker accused of a crime, prohibition on using illegally seized “evidence” in court, and abolition of the death penalty.

Today the capitalists have succeeded in eroding many rights by taking advantage of acts that have nothing to do with the fight against class exploitation and oppression, such as the Times Square bomb attempt.

As the capitalist economic crisis deepens on a world scale, the employers will widen their wars abroad and deepen their assault on workers rights, working conditions, and living standards at home. This will inevitably breed working-class resistance.

The rulers want as many things in place as possible to bolster their military and police powers and to limit the ability of workers to organize and defend themselves from government attack. Our answer must be to oppose Washington’s wars abroad and its assault on the rights of working people and their organizations.

## Singapore conference on overseas Chinese

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the U.S. military in Vietnam.

Numerous panels also looked at the impact of the Chinese diaspora in other parts of the world. Three examined recent Chinese immigration to a number of African countries, including Mozambique, Tanzania, Namibia, Lesotho, and Zambia. The expanding presence of Chinese traders throughout vast areas of southern Africa and the growing numbers of Chinese construction and mining companies, along with substantial numbers of workers brought under contract to Africa by Chinese companies as a ready-trained low-paid workforce, are phenomena that have stoked resentments among local populations and are often played on by demagogic bourgeois politicians in those countries.

Another session, entitled “Interconnection between Chinese Overseas,” included descriptions of Chinese neighborhoods in Boston around the turn of the 20th century, and the Chinese community of about 8,000 in India’s Calcutta, which has historically been centered on the tanning industry.

In her talk at that session on “The Intertwined History of Chinese in Cuba and the United States,” Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press, discussed the impact of the introduction of large numbers of Chinese workers into both countries during the mid-19th century. She outlined the bourgeois-democratic revolutions that marked the following decades in the two countries—the wars for independence and abolition of slavery and indentured servitude in Cuba, and

the Civil War and subsequent period of Radical Reconstruction that crushed the slavocracy in the United States—and the place of Chinese laborers in both.

Waters pointed to the lessons that Cuba’s socialist revolution provides today for working people around the world seeking to defend their class interests—lessons presented in Pathfinder’s book, *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*.

Along with a few other Pathfinder titles, this book—in English, Chinese, and Spanish—was available to conference participants in the display area. Publishers and booksellers represented there also included the Chinese Heritage Centre, Select Books bookshop, and the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, all based in Singapore, as well as the Netherlands-based Brill publishing house.

At the ISSCO membership meeting that concluded the conference, Leo Suryadinata and Teresita Ang See were reelected president and secretary-treasurer of the organization, while Tan Chee Beng, editor of ISSCO’s *Journal of Chinese Overseas*, was elected vice president.

Suryadinata announced that regional ISSCO conferences are planned in Hong Kong for June 23–24, 2011, and in Seoul, South Korea, in June 2012. He reported on tentative plans to hold the next international conference in either Vancouver or Toronto, Canada.

*Martin Koppel, Mary-Alice Waters, and Linda Harris contributed to this article.*

## LETTERS

### Tesoro refinery deaths

On April 25 United Steelworkers Local 12-591 held a memorial for the seven employees killed from the April 2 Tesoro refinery explosion in Anacortes, Washington. Some 800 family members, coworkers, friends, and neighbors filled the auditorium at Anacortes High School to commemorate their lives.

In April 2009 Washington State inspectors cited Tesoro’s Anacortes

refinery for a number of “serious” safety violations and more than 130 lesser violations. Washington State allowed the refinery to continue operations after Tesoro appealed the citations.

*Cecelia Moriarity  
Seattle, Washington*

### Point of view is refreshing

I’m a prisoner on 24/7 lockdown and was very fortunate to run across

a recent issue of your weekly. I was awed at the angle, perspective, and its interpretation of everyday news. Your point of view is so refreshing and left me wanting to know more. My *Newsweek* and *Times* subscriptions are very narrow-minded!

Is there any way I can receive this literature for free until I am able to happily pay?

*A prisoner  
Florida*

**The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.**

## Crisis in Europe

Continued from front page

tured, deeply lowering the value of their bonds,” said the *Times*. Banks and financial institutions in France and Germany each hold more than \$200 billion of Spanish bank debt.

With U.S. banks holding a similar amount, the Federal Reserve has reinstated a program to provide short-term credit to the European Central Bank.

“The debt mountain that brought down some of the world’s biggest banks and dragged the international financial system to the brink of disaster has simply shifted to governments,” noted Marketwatch in an article titled “The second debt storm.” These governments “may be no more capable of repaying their debts than the banks and insurance companies they saved.”

### Austerity measures in Spain

With the 12th largest capitalist economy in the world, Spain had a public debt of more than 50 percent of its gross domestic product at the end of 2009, with figures rising rapidly. Its budget deficit is 11.2 percent of GDP, substantially above the 3 percent limit set by the EU.

Spanish prime minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero announced a 5 percent cut in wages of public-sector workers this year and a freeze on them next year. Pensions will be frozen and payment of a \$3,170 “baby check” to families for each newborn child will be eliminated. Other public spending cuts include reductions in payments for health care and to people caring for elderly parents. Zapatero called these measures “fair and justified.”

“We’re a Socialist government and therefore cutting salaries and freezing pensions is something we only do because we have to,” Spain’s finance minister, Elena Salgado, told the *Financial Times*. “There is a moment when you have to do it, and we did it.”

The day before the package was announced, President Barack Obama telephoned the Spanish premier to urge him to take “resolute action” to “build market confidence.”

The official unemployment rate in Spain is 20 percent, the second-highest rate in the European Union, ranking only behind Latvia. According to EU statistics, half the jobs eliminated throughout the euro zone over the past two years have been in Spain.

In response to the austerity moves, leaders of Spain’s two largest union federations called for a strike by public workers June 2. Officials from the Unión General de Trabajadores (UGT) said the work stoppage would be preceded by a series of protest actions beginning May 20.

Labor union officials hope these actions will blow off steam over the assault on workers’ rights. Neither federation is calling for all workers to join the protests. Ignacio Fernández Toxo, leader of Comisiones Obreras (CCOO), the largest federation, told the media that he opposed a full general strike that included the private sector because it was “the last thing the country needs at a time like this.” He added, “The behavior of the trade unions has been and is impeccable during these times of crisis and will continue to be so.”

The *Financial Times*, in a May 11 editorial titled “Zapatero finally wields the axe,” praised the government slashing while noting that even deeper attacks on workers will be needed. “Spain’s most urgent task now is to gain credibility with bondholders,” the editorial stated, “without losing sight of the need to reform a rigid labour market that hinders growth from taking root.”

“It’s not certain this will work,” the editorial concluded. The deficit could “end up wider than hoped.”

Raising similar concerns, the *Wall Street Journal* noted that the announced measures “do not on their own do anything to reduce the totality of debt weighing on euro-zone economies. Rather, they shift the burden from one area to another as if the transfer of risk were the same as its reduction.”

The day after the moves taken in Spain, Portuguese prime minister José Sócrates announced new austerity measures there, including tax hikes and pay cuts for some state employees.

### ‘Militant’ Prisoners’ Fund

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