

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

‘Unique History of Chinese in Cuba’

Presentation in Guangzhou, China

— PAGES 8–11

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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Workers fight lockout by American Crystal Sugar

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

HILLSBORO, North Dakota—“There’s nothing good in this contract. That’s why we rejected it,” said Adam Gettel, 26, as he picketed in front of the American Crystal Sugar factory here.

Gettel is one of 1,300 union workers locked out since August 1 at five sugar plants in the Red River Valley region of Minnesota (Crookston, Moorhead, East Grand Forks) and North Dakota (Hillsboro, Drayton). Workers are also locked out at two smaller processing plants in Chaska, a suburb of Minneapolis, and in Mason City, Iowa. American Crystal is the largest beet-sugar producer in the United States.

By a margin of 96 percent, more than 1,200 workers voted July 30 to reject the company’s “final” contract offer. The workers are members of

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‘Green shoots’ nipped in bud by capitalist contraction

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The latest eruption of global financial instability—marked by volatile swings in stock market prices, a downward spike in interest rates on long-term U.S. bonds, and a surge in gold prices—is rooted in a deep-going crisis of capitalist production and stagnating expansion of plant, equipment, and jobs.

FOR A FEDERAL JOBS PROGRAM NOW!

Editorial —p. 12

Standard & Poor’s downgrade of the U.S. government’s credit rating and the banking crisis sweeping Europe—from Greece, Ireland, and Portugal, and now to Italy, Spain, and beyond—are symptoms of an ongoing

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Maryland: nine days of actions defend women’s right to choose

BY SETH GALINSKY
AND PAUL PEDERSON

GERMANTOWN, Maryland—Supporters of women’s right to choose stood up here to actions organized by Operation Rescue, a rightist organization that seeks to criminalize abortion.

The group had proclaimed July 31 to August 7 the “Summer of Mercy 2.0,” targeting Dr. LeRoy Carhart’s Reproductive Health Services clinic here. Carhart is one of the few U.S. doctors

who perform abortions until the 24th week of pregnancy. He worked with Dr. George Tiller, who performed abortions in Wichita, Kansas, until his murder by a rightist in 2009.

The Summer Celebration of Choice called by Carhart and his clinic staff opened July 31 with a 1.3-mile walk around the neighborhood where the facility is located. More than 200 women’s rights supporters from as far as Illinois,

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Militant/Seth Galinsky

July 31 kick-off walk launches “Summer Celebration of Choice” in Germantown, Maryland, in response to “Summer of Mercy 2.0” actions by opponents of women’s rights.

45,000 strike against Verizon’s takebacks

‘They’re coming after all us workers’



Militant/Paul Mailhot

Verizon workers rally in downtown Manhattan July 30, a week before 45,000 union members went out on strike over company’s union-busting contract demands.

BY DEBORAH LIATOS

NEW YORK, August 10—Forty-five thousand Verizon workers from New England to Virginia went on strike August 7 to defend wages, pensions, medical care, and union rights won in past battles, which the company is determined to take back.

Strikers see their fight as part of what many workers, union and non-union, are up against as employers

drive to force them to bear the burden of today’s capitalist economic crisis.

“The stuff we fought for for 25 years, they are trying to take away,” Jim Steele, an employee for 24 years and member of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 827, told the *Militant* at a July 30 rally of thousands of Verizon workers and backers here a week be-

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UK gov’t boosts cops as police killing sparks street unrest

BY TONY HUNT

LONDON—Capitalist politicians have seized on outbursts of anger following the cop killing of a 29-year-old man here by beefing up the police force.

On August 6 a protest at Tottenham police station in north London against the shooting of Mark Duggan escalated into scuffles with cops after accounts that officers had clubbed a 16-year-old girl spread, reported the *Telegraph*.

Duggan was shot twice August 4 after the taxi he was riding in was pulled over by cops from a special unit on gun crimes in the black community. Police at first said Duggan

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Growth of interns part of attack on worker solidarity

BY SETH GALINSKY

The use of interns by private corporations, government agencies, and so-called nonprofits has stepped up since the sharpening of the world capitalist crisis in 2008.

Lance Choy, director of the Career Development Center at Stanford University, told the *New York Times* that in 2010 the number of unpaid internships on Stanford’s job board was more than triple the number two years before. Phil Gardner, research director of the Collegiate Employment Re-

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What workers can learn from 1990–91 capitalist crisis 7

Rally protests closing of yet another NY hospital

BY DAN FEIN

QUEENS, New York—Hundreds of hospital workers and neighborhood residents braved the rain here August 3 to protest plans to close Peninsula Hospital Center in Far Rockaway here. The rally was organized by Service Employees International Union Local 1199, which represents some 1,000 workers at the facility.

Hospital administrators submitted plans in late July to shut down the center. The move would leave only one hospital, St. John’s Episcopal, on the Rockaway Peninsula.

“It’s all about money,” said retired hospital worker Doris Hayes. “We need this hospital open for the community.”

“This hospital saved my life,” said Craig Young, who spent three months

in a diabetic coma.

Hospital closings have become frequent throughout the city and across the country. Since 2008 three hospitals have closed in Queens alone—Parkway, St. John’s Queens, and Mary Immaculate.

A warning letter was sent to all employees by CEO Robert Levine saying “unexpected inability to address adequately its financial problems” is one of the reasons for closure. The hospital will close October 25 unless “circumstances require an earlier shutdown.”

“I don’t know about the future,” said Minnie Scott, an assistant nurse with 15 years at Peninsula.

“Now where do we go?” asked Khadijah Rasheed, who depends on the hospital to provide medical care to her and her four children.



Militant/Dan Fein

Hundreds protest plans to close Peninsula Hospital Center in Far Rockway, Queens, August 3. Peninsula would be fourth hospital to shut down in the borough since 2008.

Alabama march stands up for immigrant rights



Militant/Amancia Alvarado

MONTGOMERY, Alabama—Some 500 people marched here July 30 for immigrant rights. In June the state legislature passed antiworker bill HB 56, which builds on anti-immigrant federal laws. Among its statutes, it requires public schools to check students’ immigration status and all businesses in the state to use the federal government’s E-Verify program when hiring.

—AMANCIA ALVARADO

World capitalist contraction

Continued from front page

worldwide contraction, not its cause.

Since 2008 any small uptick in monthly national income figures or employment has been pictured by capitalist governments, politicians, and the media as “green shoots” of a coming end to the crisis. But reality keeps nipping these shoots in the bud.

“Europe’s plan was to have growth fix the problem. America’s plan was to have growth fix the problem. And that’s not going to work,” lamented Harvard economics professor Kenneth Rogoff in the *New York Times* in early August.

The U.S. unemployment rate most widely publicized by Washington declined by one-tenth of a point to 9.1 percent in July. But that was mainly because 193,000 workers stopped looking for jobs that month. Peering more closely at Department of Labor figures, 117,000 jobs were added in July while some 25 million workers were seeking but unable to get full-time jobs. The so-called “U-6” jobless rate, tucked away toward the back of the department’s monthly report, was above 16 percent. (And counted the way the Labor Department used to before the Clinton administration gussied up the U-6 calcu-

lations in 1994, the jobless rate is close to 25 percent.)

The average duration of unemployment in the United States rose to an all-time high in July, above 40 weeks. This is now double where it was when President Barack Obama took office in January 2009. For those between the ages of 55 and 64, the average duration of joblessness is now more than a year.

In fact the longer you’re out of work, the harder the employing class is making it for you to get a job. “It is really a buyer’s market for employers right now,” Harry Holzer, an economist at Georgetown University and the Urban Institute, told the *Times*. “One consequence is that the long-term unemployed will rack up even more weeks of unemployment,” the paper noted.

Pointing to another indication of the truth about joblessness in the United States, *Times* columnist Paul Krugman reported August 5 that as recently as June 2007, shortly before the latest “official” recession began, some 63 percent of adults were employed. “In June 2009, the official end of the recession, that number was down to 59.4,” he wrote.

“As of June 2011, two years into the alleged recovery, the number was: 58.2.”

THE MILITANT

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Militant/Paul Mailhot

Striking building workers and supporters rally in Rockaway Beach, Queens, July 26.

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Telephone: (212) 244-4899

Fax: (212) 244-4947

E-mail: themilitant@mac.com

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Calif. rally protests cop killing of homeless man

BY JAMES HARRIS

FULLERTON, Calif.—Nearly 500 people demonstrated outside the police department here August 6 to protest the killing of Kelly Thomas, a 37-year-old homeless man who family members say was schizophrenic. It was one of several vigils and protests since Thomas died five days after a July 5 beating by six Fullerton cops.

Demonstrators displayed photos of Thomas’s bloodied, swollen, and unrecognizable face released by his father, Ron Thomas. Protesters carried hand-made signs demanding the arrest of the cops involved in the beating and the resignation of Michael Sellers, the Fullerton police chief.

“I am here to support humanity,” said Opal Marsico, a Cal State Los Angeles student. “This isn’t the first time, and it won’t be the last. My brother suffers from schizophrenia, and the police know him and harass him.”

Marisco’s friend Eric Allison said it’s “great news for this fight in Fullerton that five Louisiana cops were just jailed—you know, the ones who beat and killed people during Hurricane Katrina.”

The district attorney’s office is refusing to release surveillance video from the bus depot where Thomas was beaten, claiming that its release could taint witness testimony, according to the *Los Angeles Times*. Mark Turgeon, an eyewitness, told the *Times* he saw one officer on top of Thomas and another hitting him with a flashlight on the back of the head.

Turgeon said more officers arrived and Tasered Thomas multiple times, then hogtied him and slammed his face into the concrete. “They just beat and Tasered him until he stopped moving,” Turgeon said.

Videos posted online don’t show the cops but capture sounds of the beating. “You can clearly hear the Tasers going off and Kelly calling out ‘Dad,

Dad, Dad’ as they beat him,” said Ron Thomas August 5, standing near a spontaneous memorial for his son at the bus station. “You can hear witnesses saying ‘Why don’t they just handcuff him and arrest him. Why do they keep beating him?’”

Thomas said the cops probably expected to get away with it because they didn’t think a homeless schizophrenic would have any support, “but he does. This was his community. These people knew him, and Kelly had a family.”

“This is very wrong,” said Shabby Shaw, 25, pointing to her sign of Kelly Thomas’s brutalized face at the August 6 protest. “If this is what the police have to offer, maybe we should run things ourselves.”



Militant/Arlene Rubinstein
Protest in Fullerton, California, August 6 against fatal beating of Kelly Thomas by six cops.

5 New Orleans cops convicted for 2005 shooting

BY JACQUIE HENDERSON AND STEVE WARSELL

HOUSTON—A federal jury in New Orleans convicted five city police officers August 5—four of them for shooting six unarmed people in September 2005 and covering up the crime, and a fifth for aiding the cover-up. Two people were killed and four seriously wounded in the incident, which occurred on the Danziger Bridge in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

Sgt. Kenneth Bowen, Sgt. Robert Gisevius, Officer Anthony Villavaso, and former cop Robert Faulcon were convicted of federal civil rights violations for killing 17-year-old James Brissette and shooting four others. Faulcon was found guilty of shooting 40-year-old Ronald Madison, and Bowen for stomping Madison as he lay dying.

“When I heard the verdict, I was so happy I could have dropped my walking stick and danced on the roof of the federal building,” Rebecca Glover, a retired nurse, told the *Militant* by phone from New Orleans. Her nephew, 31-year-old Henry Glover, was killed by police September 2, a couple days before the Danziger Bridge shootings. In December 2010, two cops were convicted in connection with Glover’s killing. Officer Greg McRae was sentenced to 17 years in prison, and Officer David Warren to more than 25 years.

“It’s good this has been shown for what it is,” Glover said. “This kind of thing has been going on for quite a while, you know. When I was a girl, my parents didn’t want to talk about it.”

According to the indictment, police officers drove up to the bridge in a Budget rental truck and opened fire, killing Brissette and seriously wounding several others. Susan Bartholomew lost her right arm in the shooting. Her husband Leonard was shot three times, and their teenage daughter Lesha four.

Jose Holmes, the Bartholomews’ nephew, was shot several times and had to have a colostomy.

Police then turned their guns on brothers Lance and Ronald Madison. Ronald was shot in the back trying to flee. Officers sought to frame Lance Madison and Holmes for shooting at them, a claim proven false by evidence and eyewitness testimony, including from police officers.

During the social disaster in Katrina’s wake, government officials emboldened cops by painting New Orleans working people, largely left to fend for themselves, as dangerous criminals. On Sept. 1, 2005, Louisiana governor Kathleen Blanco told the press that Arkansas guardsmen sent to “restore order” to the city “know how to shoot to kill . . . and I expect they will.”

The five officers were found guilty on 25 counts, including obstructing justice, fabricating witnesses, lying to federal investigators, and planting evidence. The four involved in the shootings were convicted on weapons charges and civil rights violations.

According to the *Times-Picayune*, U.S. Attorney Jim Letten said Faulcon is looking at a minimum of 60 years in prison. The other three convicted in the shootings face a mandatory minimum of 35 years. All four have been in custody since their indictment. Retired sergeant Arthur Kaufman, who headed the police investigation and is out

on bail, faces a maximum 120 years for his part in the cover-up. Sentencing is set for December 14.

“Any guilty verdict against the cops is good, but this doesn’t end here,” Rev. Raymond Brown, a local civil rights leader, told the *Militant* in a phone interview. “People around the country need to know that police brutality continues in New Orleans.”

The victims, their families, and others organized a broad political campaign for justice. “Without the support and hard work of my family I would still be in jail, imprisoned on false charges,” Lance Madison said at a press conference outside the courthouse that was posted to the *Times-Picayune* website. “The truth about what happened on the Danziger Bridge might never have been known.”

Capitalism’s World Disorder WORKING-CLASS POLITICS AT THE MILLENNIUM by Jack Barnes



“The purpose of the cops is to keep workers in line, to make an example of you if you come from the wrong class—and more so if you happen to be the wrong color or the wrong nationality.” \$25

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UK gov’t boosts police force

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shot at them and an officer responded. But initial findings by the Independent Police Complaints Commission indicate that both bullets discharged at the scene appear to have been fired from police weapons, including one that apparently ricocheted and struck a radio worn by one of the cops.

On August 6 two police cars were set on fire, followed by looting of local businesses, according to press accounts. Over the following days street unrest escalated in areas of Greater London and other cities. Stores were ransacked and burnt down, homes destroyed, and vehicles torched. A police station was set ablaze in Handsworth, a district of Birmingham.

More than 700 had been arrested

as of August 9, according to the BBC. Scotland Yard invoked special powers August 7 to stop and search residents in the London boroughs of Lambeth, Haringey, Enfield, and Waltham Forest. For the first time police deployed armored vehicles in the city and announced that they are prepared to use plastic bullets.

Politicians from the bourgeois parties responded with calls for heavier policing, curfews, and use of water cannons. The government readied one army unit for possible intervention. Prime Minister David Cameron increased cops on the city’s streets from the usual 2,500 to 16,000 by August 9. Former Labour Party mayor of London Kenneth Livingstone told the BBC that planned cuts in the Metropolitan Police should be reversed.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

GEORGIA

Atlanta

Support Workers’ Resistance to Capitalist Offensive. Speaker: Janice Lynn, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Aug. 19, 7:30 p.m. 476 1/2 Edgewood Ave. SE Tel.: (404) 525-5200.

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis

Maestra film showing about the 1961 literacy campaign in Cuba. Fri., Aug. 12, 8 p.m. 1311 1/2 E. Lake St., 2nd floor. Tel.: (612) 729-1205.

TEXAS

Houston

New Orleans Cops Convicted in Danziger Bridge Killings: Victory for Working People. Speaker: Jacquie Henderson, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Houston City Council At-Large. Fri., Aug. 19, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 4800 W 34th St., Suite C-50L. Tel.: (713) 688-4919.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

Defend Right to Choose Abortion. Speaker: Felicity Coggan, Communist League. Fri., Aug. 19, 7 p.m. Donation: \$5 waged, \$2 unwaged. 4/125 Grafton Rd. Tel.: (09) 369-1223.

—CALENDAR—

FLORIDA

Miami

Vote Socialist Workers Party. Attend Campaign Open House. Meet Naomi Craine, SWP candidate for Miami City Commission, District 2. Sat., Aug. 20, 6 p.m. 719 NE 79th St. Tel.: (305) 757-8869.

Illinois uranium workers: ‘We fought a good fight’

BY JOHN HAWKINS
AND ALYSON KENNEDY

METROPOLIS, Illinois—Some 200 workers locked out by Honeywell at its uranium processing plant here will begin returning to work August 15 after voting to approve a new contract.

Honeywell locked out the 228 members of United Steelworkers (USW) Local 7-669 in June 2010 after they voted down a union-busting contract proposal and offered to keep working under the current contract. Honeywell refused.

The company demanded elimination of seniority and retiree medical benefits, pension cuts, and a 10 percent wage decrease over three years.

About 190 local members turned out August 2 to vote on the three-year agreement. A week earlier the negotiating committee had sent a proposal back to Honeywell without a vote, following a packed union meeting where many workers objected to the company’s return-to-work plan. The contract workers approved contained some improvements on the plan, union members report.

Midway through the vote, union officials answered reporters’ questions. Asked what he himself thought about the contract, Local 7-669 president Darrell Lillie responded, “I don’t like it. We had to give concessions, and any time you have to do that, you don’t like it. But there comes a time when the member-

ship has to decide. The members of this local have stood strong for 13 months. That’s a long time.”

During the daylong balloting, the *Militant* spoke to workers who said they had voted for and against the contract.

“The union has got a lot to be proud of,” said Stephen Lech. “A small union moved a big corporation. We are a better union for it. We maintained seniority and retiree health care. That’s what the fight was about. We kept overtime being paid after each 8- or 12-hour shift. These are things we preserved.”

“No union person has anything to hang their head about, because we fought a good fight,” said Marcalene Holt, a 15-year operator in the plant. “I actually think it made the union stronger. There is more solidarity and more togetherness now.”

Steve Glidden, a trustee and member of the local’s Strike and Defense Committee, said he is “a changed person” because of this 13-month-long battle. “Before I never even went to union meetings. We thought that the young members would run, but they have been the backbone of the fight.”

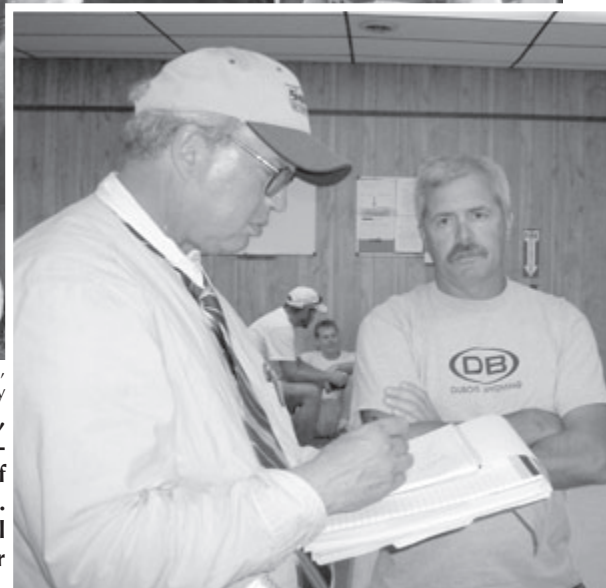
Steven Allen, a maintenance mechanic at the plant, said, “I hope the contract is rejected, because that would show the unity of the ranks. We all went out together, we should all go back together.”

A young worker who preferred not to give his name, said, “We gave up too



Militant photos: above, Maura DeLuca; right, Alyson Kennedy

Above: June 25 rally in Metropolis, Illinois, marking one-year anniversary of Honeywell’s lockout of Steelworkers Local 7-669 members. Right, local union president Darrell Lillie talks to reporter August 2 after workers accepted contract.



much. The company eliminated entire departments and now has the right to contract out those jobs.”

“I was disappointed the contract was ratified. I especially didn’t like the re-entry plan,” said Luckie Atkinson. “We were locked out as one, we should go back as one.”

Nonetheless, Atkinson said, the union fought to keep a lot of what Honeywell wanted to take away, such as medical

care for retirees and protection against contracting out jobs. “And at least the new hires will have some kind of a pension,” he said. “I don’t like what happened to our seniority. I’ll go back with a \$1.50 wage cut because they eliminated the job I used to do.

“But I’m proud of my union,” Atkinson said. “We put up a good fight. I’ll go back to work and do a good job, and I’ll continue to be involved in other people’s struggles, from Keokuk, Iowa, to Lancaster, Pennsylvania, where Armstrong Industries has locked out members of USW Local 285.”

Several months into the lockout, Honeywell began hiring “replacement workers.” Some were promised permanent jobs, unionists say. Prior to the lockout, Honeywell had 188 scabs in the plant for 30 days shadowing workers trying to learn their jobs. In September, one day after the scabs started up core production, a hydrogen blast rocked the plant. While Honeywell denied it, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission later confirmed the explosion.

The local organized solidarity rallies in August and October 2010 and a one-year anniversary rally in June 2011. They organized a town hall meeting open to any resident of the Metropolis area, where unionists explained the stakes in their fight, especially safety.

USW 7-669 members kept up a picket line for months, which not one member crossed. Members of the USW, United Mine Workers, and others made donations and joined picket lines. Local 7-669 members spoke at union meetings and labor events in Illinois, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and California, as well as in Germany and Belgium. They joined rallies of public workers resisting government antilabor assaults in Madison, Wisconsin, and Indianapolis. They went to Keokuk to back members of Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union Local 48G locked out by Roquette America.

“We fought one day longer on all the core issues and won them to our satisfaction,” said Local 7-669 president Lillie in a statement issued the day after the vote. “All of us who were locked out by Honeywell in June of last year who want to go back to work are doing so with union pride, a union contract, and union solidarity.”

Sugar workers fight lockout in Upper Midwest

Continued from front page

five locals of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union (BCTGM).

Asked why he voted no, Dan Miller said, “There’s not one issue, the whole package was rotten. It was 40-plus pages of takeaways.” He said the company “brought up wages at the end of negotiations and then tried to bribe us with a \$2,000 signing bonus.”

“That was aimed at the public, to make it look like a good offer,” added picket Stacey Agnew, with 26 years in the plant. “What we gain in wages—4 percent the first year, 3 percent the second, and 2 percent each following year—would be taken away by increases in the company’s proposed health-care plan.”

The union reports that higher premiums, out-of-pocket expenses, and larger deductibles would double health-care costs for members.

If that weren’t enough, the company has cut off medical coverage for locked-out workers. Picket Barb Wilison said that when she went to fill a prescription for heart medicine for her husband the evening of the con-



Picket line of workers organized by Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers in East Grand Forks, Minnesota, August 1, the day 1,300 workers at five American Crystal plants in Minnesota and North Dakota were locked out for rejecting company’s concession demands.

tract vote, she was told the next 90-day supply will cost more than \$500.

“We offered what we thought was a terrific contract,” Brian Ingulsrud, vice-president of American Crystal Sugar, told Associated Press. He said

the company is “shocked and surprised” at the vote results.

According to *Agweek*, tensions escalated in the plants after the company introduced “shadowers,” or scabs, to learn workers’ jobs as part of its “contingency plan.” On July 18 Ingulsrud notified union workers to clear out their lockers and workspaces. The next day workers were told that “non-union personnel would be on-site during the week to observe various positions,” *Agweek* reported.

On the first day of the lockout, American Crystal began bringing in vanloads of “replacement workers.” They were hired by Strom Engineering, an anti-labor, scab-supply outfit.

In the days and weeks leading up to the contract deadline, hundreds of

Continued on page 12

Leader of Roquette struggle backs sugar workers

Buddy Howard, a member of Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union Local 48G in Keokuk, Iowa, visited picket lines in Hillsboro, North Dakota, and Moorhead, Minnesota, of fellow BCTGM workers locked out by American Crystal Sugar. Howard, who is president of the Lee County Labor Council, was one of 240 workers locked out by corn-processor Roquette America between September 2010 and July 2011. He also visited two BCTGM organizing centers in North Dakota. While learning about the sugar workers fight, he shared stories about how workers in Keokuk reached out and won solidarity from working people in the region.

—MAGGIE TROWE

ON THE PICKET LINE

Steelworkers in Pennsylvania fight lockout by Armstrong

Some 260 members of United Steelworkers Local 285 have rejected concessionary demands by Armstrong World Industries at its plant in Marietta, Pennsylvania, and are fighting a company lockout.

Armstrong is pressing to eliminate pensions for all new hires, freeze pension benefits for current employees, gut seniority rights, and raise health-care premiums, explained local union president John Bevel in a phone interview with the *Militant*.

The Steelworkers voted down the company's contract offer in mid-June by a 90 percent margin. On July 13 Armstrong came back with a contract that was even worse. Workers chose not to vote on this "slap in the face" offer, said Bevel. The lockout began four days later.

Workers are maintaining 24-hour picket lines seven days a week. They've been getting a lot of donations, including snacks and Gatorade, and a lot of horns beeping in support, noted Bevel.

—Brian Williams

Workers demand unpaid wages as IQT Solutions shuts down

MONTREAL—More than 1,200 workers for call center IQT Solutions at three locations were told, without any notice, July 15 that the company had shut down in Canada. The company packed up its operations in Laval and Trois-Rivières in Quebec and Oshawa, Ontario, without paying the wages it owed.

Workers demonstrated in front of the closed job sites demanding back wages and severance pay.

Although government agencies did provide workers with some immediate financial assistance, they were denied unemployment compensation on the grounds that IQT Solutions has not

claimed bankruptcy.

IQT Solutions had planned to move to Nashville, Tennessee, but that fell through when a promised subsidy by the city government there was withdrawn.

—Annette Kouri

Minnesota: nurses in Bemidji authorize strike against cutbacks

Some 230 nurses at Sanford Hospital in Bemidji, Minnesota, July 28 overwhelmingly voted to reject the hospital's contract offer and authorized union officials to call a strike, according to the Minnesota Nurses Association (MNA).

The nurses are planning a one-day informational picket August 17 outside the hospital. The union contract expired February 28. One of the nurses' main concerns is patient-to-staffing ratios. They are also resisting company efforts to raise workers' health insurance payments and eliminate pensions for nurses younger than 46 and replace them with 401(k) plans.

"Staffing levels at Sanford Bemidji Hospital are so bad right now that the hospital has had to go on divert status and close its doors to new patients," said the MNA website.

On June 10, some 12,000 nurses held a one-day strike at 14 hospitals across the state around similar issues.

—Natalie Morrison

Walkout by hotel workers in Montreal remains solid

MONTREAL, August 6—The strike of 60 workers at the Marriott Residence Inn downtown here remains solid. Members of the Confederation of National Trade Unions voted 100 percent to strike and walked out July 24, demanding higher wages, better working conditions, vacations, benefits, and "just basic respect."

Strikers posted placards with their

48G," the picket shack at the plant's Fifth Street entrance, said she is one of more than a dozen workers who began training last week as new union shop stewards.

Corn-processing workers in Iowa discuss lessons of recent lockout fight

BY MAGGIE TROWE

KEOKUK, Iowa—Following a hard-fought battle against a 10-month lockout by Roquette America, corn-processing workers held a potluck dinner at the Labor Temple here August 5 for five retiring workers. The event provided a chance to discuss lessons from the lockout fight, including challenges when workers return to the plant. Some 100 unionists, supporters, family members, and friends took part.

The workers are members of Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union Local 48G. Since they approved a contract July 23 by a small margin, they have had to attend a week of company-organized classes before returning to jobs producing cornstarch and sweeteners. Workers said they had to sign off on procedures to operate equipment and listen to managers' lectures on improving the company's "culture."

"I call the classes 're-education camp,'" said Buddy Howard, a stalwart on the picket lines during the fight. Half a dozen workers declined to partake in Roquette's catered lunch each day, he said.

Cindy Runge, a regular at "Club



Militant/John Steele

Hotel workers on strike in Montreal picket August 7 in front of Marriott Residence Inn. Unionists are demanding improved wages, benefits, working conditions, and "basic respect."

demands in French, Spanish, Creole, and English.

The owner of the franchise has refused to negotiate and, according to the strikers, went on vacation the first day of the walkout and brought in strike-breaking replacement workers.

"We have to clean entire apartments and do 13 in eight hours," housekeeper Irma Espana told the *Militant*. "It's too much."

"We're here till we get what we need," added local union president Jorge Ahomada.

—John Steele

Seattle: hundreds rally to back hotel workers' contract demands

SEATTLE—Several hundred hotel workers and supporters rallied July 22 in front of the Westin Hotel here to press their contract demands around wages, job security, safety, and respect on the job. Another 150 workers demonstrated in front of the Doubletree Hotel near the Sea-Tac airport 15 miles south.

Union contracts covering some 1,400 workers at hotels and restaurants in the area have expired this summer, according to UNITE HERE Local 8.

"We are going to fight until we have our jobs, our union, and a fair contract,"

said Aracely Cerezo García, a worker at the Hilton who spoke at the rally. She explained that the Hilton Seattle was being sold with no guarantee that the new owners will recognize the union.

—Edwin Fruit

Maritime strike on Great Lakes ends with union pact extended

MINNEAPOLIS—The American Steamship Company, which operates 14 vessels on the Great Lakes, agreed August 5 to extend its contract with the American Maritime Officers union through at least the end of the 2011 shipping season. The agreement ends a strike by some 140 deck and engine officers and stewards that began August 1 when their contract expired.

Union members voted 99 percent to reject the company's last-minute proposal, which included eliminating at least 14 jobs, with the option of laying off more than one-third of the workforce, as well as cuts to health care, pensions, and training benefits.

The ships transport taconite, coal, cement, and rock across the Great Lakes. Once off the ships, workers were setting up pickets at the ports of Duluth, Minnesota; Toledo, Ohio; and Green Bay, Wisconsin.

—Tony Lane

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



August 29, 1986

With much of South Africa still in revolt, top apartheid officials gathered in Durban in mid-August for a federal convention of the governing National Party. President Pieter Botha stressed that there would be no scrapping of residential segregation or other key apartheid policies.

Since the state of emergency was imposed June 12, nearly 250 people have been killed, the bulk of them Blacks shot down by police or right-wing vigilante squads. This has brought the death toll over the past two years to more than 2,200.

Since mid-July, several hundred thousand Black primary and secondary schools students have been boycotting classes.



August 21 & 28, 1961

President Kennedy and his Pentagon advisors are callously stoking the fire under the international powder keg of Berlin. They are deliberately risking the outbreak of World War III and the nuclear devastation which would result.

They are trying to sell people the idea that it is reasonable and patriotic to accept the prospect of general atomic war and the basements of city buildings, with a little preparation and a supply of food, can save a majority of Americans from nuclear destruction.

Kennedy called for a \$3.5 billion increase in military outlay. This was his third upward revision of the arms budget in a half-year in office.



December 12, 1936

On August 20 this year the entire wholesale grocery section of Local 544 was forced out on strike by the refusal of grocery bosses to meet with the union. The Citizens Alliance had decided to have a show-down with the chief force that threatens its power in this state. For forty-eight days running, the usual boss' devices were brought into play. But all to no avail.

On Oct. 7 the grocery bosses completely capitulated, granting union recognition, seniority, a shorter work week and approximately a 20 percent increase in wages. And in the process, the employer-employee board, that graveyard of strikes, was blown sky-high.

Socialist in NY campaigns for jobs, workers power

BY PAUL MAILHOT

BROOKLYN, New York—"Workers need candidates who will stick with low-income people," said Lloyd Wright to Chris Hoepfner, Socialist Workers Party nominee for U.S. Congress in the 9th District here. Wright, who works with Hoepfner at a nearby electronics plant, stopped to talk with the socialist candidate when he was campaigning at the Sheepshead Bay subway station.

Hoepfner said the jobs crisis is tearing apart the working class. "I'm using my campaign to present a jobs program, something no capitalist politician, Democrat or Republican, is seriously talking about," he told Wright.

"We need a massive, federally funded public works program putting millions of unemployed to work in productive labor. This is something the working class can fight for to defend us from the consequences of this crisis."

Hoepfner said the capitalist system must be replaced. "Workers need to fight to take political power from the class of propertied families who exploit us. Once we do that, we can use that power to address all questions from the point of view of what benefits the vast majority of humanity."

Wright and Eye Liwn, another co-worker who stopped by, agreed with the socialist candidate that a jobs program has to be fought for. "I hope you'll come into work early and discuss these ideas with other workers in the plant," Wright said.

Carlos Palomino, an electrician, also spoke with Hoepfner. Noting the recent stock market plunge, Palomino said that to solve the crisis "we need to bring back the factories" to the United States. He said he liked a lot of what the socialist candidate was saying but was worried "so many jobs are leaving this country, going to China."

"Capitalists invest where they think they'll make the most profit," Hoepfner said. "That's why they're not opening

new factories. Workers are never going to be able to fight if we scapegoat one another for problems created by the capitalist system. The bosses want us fighting each other, to divide us. Solidarity with struggles of toilers all over the world is our only effective means to fight."

This has been a busy week for Hoepfner and the socialist campaign. The candidate marched with hospital workers and people from the Far Rockaway community protesting the closing of Peninsula Hospital Center August 3. He also joined picket lines of Verizon workers, who began a strike August 7 against the company's assault on their living standards and job conditions.



Militant/Ruth Robinett

While campaigning August 9 in Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn, Chris Hoepfner, right, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress, 9th District, talks with electrician Carlos Palomino about need for public works program to provide jobs.

Growth of interns part of attack on solidarity

Continued from front page

search Institute, says the number of college graduates taking internships "ballooned" in 2010, according to Reuters.

"Christmas may be the most wonderful time of year for many, but for managers, it's summer that often brings the greatest joy," wrote *Business Week's* Bruce Weinstein in his column in May 2010. "After all this is when millions of college students and recent graduates offer their services for little or no pay. What could be better for business than voluntary unpaid labor?"

The capitalist class in the United States has expanded its use of interns massively over the past two decades, as students are pressured to apply as a way to pretty up their "résumés" and increase their chances for a better-paying job in the future.

According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), 50 percent of graduating college students in 2008 held some kind of internship while in school, up from 17 percent in a 1992 Northwestern University study. More than a million people are estimated to work as interns each year.

"Our survey found that 48 percent of student interns are unpaid," Edwin Koc, director of research at NACE, said in a phone interview, "including 38 percent of those" at what he called "profit-making companies." NACE works with both corporations and universities to promote internships.

A 2010 study by Intern Bridge, Inc., found that 48 percent of government internships are unpaid, and 57 percent of those at foundations, "NGOs," universities, and so on.

Pushes down wage levels

The growing number of unpaid and low-paid interns pushes down wages across the country, already falling due to record long-term unemployment and employers' use of temporary agencies to avoid hiring permanent workers.

A 1947 Supreme Court decision set six criteria for unpaid labor of "trainees" to be legal under the federal Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938. Training must be "similar" to that in a vocational school and be "for the benefit of the trainee." Trainees must not "displace regular employees," and bosses supposedly should derive "no immediate advantage."

By giving interns academic credit, universities provide cover to employers to claim they meet at least some of these criteria. Meanwhile, universities often charge thousands of dollars in tuition, while providing no teachers or classroom space.

In April last year, after a spate of news articles reporting illegal practices around interns, the Department of Labor promised stiffer enforcement, at least for what it calls "for-profit" employers. "There aren't going to be many circumstances where you can have an internship and not be paid and still be in compliance with the law," said Nancy Leppink, acting director of the Wage and Hour Division.

Such statements troubled university administrators. An April 2010 letter to Labor Secretary Hilda Solis urged "great caution in changing an approach to learning that is viewed as a huge success." It asked her to "reconsider" regulation of internships. The letter was signed by 13 university presidents, from New York University to the University of California.

Not to worry. One year later there's no sign of even token enforcement. In an e-mail reply to the *Militant*, John Chavez, Boston/New York regional spokesper-

son for the Labor Department, wrote that "it's my understanding that the Wage and Hour Division does not track any enforcement data related to the employment of interns."

"We have not received a single complaint from an intern about violations of the law," another department spokesperson said in a telephone interview.

The Fair Labor Standards Act was adopted by Congress and signed into law by President Franklin Roosevelt in 1938. It was a concession by the capitalist class in hopes of stemming the mass working-class-led social movement of the 1930s that was fighting to defend the interests of working people.

For the first time, the law set a minimum wage and legal workweek at 40 hours, as part of establishing "fair labor standards in employment" in "interstate commerce." Farm labor, retail and restaurant employees, domestic workers, and others were not covered by the law.

The initial minimum wage of 25 cents an hour was half what most workers were getting on federal work projects in the north, themselves miserably paid.

An editorial in the June 11, 1938, *Socialist Appeal*—a newsweekly produced and sold by communist workers in the United States at the time—noted that the new law provided "an abysmally low wage level" and was "hedged around with restrictions, modifications and exceptions."

In 1995 Congress exempted itself from the law when hiring interns.

An apology to readers

The article "Explosion of 'interns' is attack on wages, solidarity" by Seth Galinsky in the July 25 *Militant* quoted Roger Hodge, a former editor of *Harper's* magazine, from an issue of *Bookforum*. Hodge said interns in Washington, D.C., not only do clerical and other tasks but "sexually gratify more established political figures."

The scurrilous claim that interns provide sexual favors as part of their unpaid labor has nothing in common with journalistic integrity in any publication, let alone in a socialist newsweekly published in the interests of working people. The *Militant* apologizes to readers for repeating this anti-working-class slur.

—Steve Clark, editor

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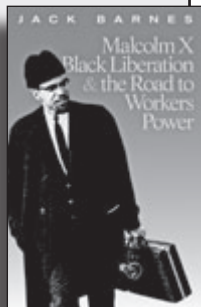
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Pathfinder Press

What workers can learn from 1990–91 capitalist crisis

Below is an excerpt from The Eastern Airlines Strike: Accomplishments of the Rank-and-File Machinists, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for August. It is from the chapter "Capitalism's March Toward War and Depression," based on talks given in late 1990 by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party.

Barnes's description of the causes of the 1990–91 recession, and of resistance to the employers' stepped-up assaults on wages and job conditions, hold lessons for workers in face of today's world capitalist crisis. Copyright © 1991 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY JACK BARNES

As the working class in the United States goes into the current recession, it has already been the victim of a more than decade-long offensive by the employing class against our living and working conditions. Workers' real wages dropped by 8 percent in the 1980s. In fact our buying power has dropped so sharply that it is now at the same level as in 1961. Since 1980 our pensions, health benefits, and insurance protection have dropped about 15 percent on average in real money terms. . . .

With unemployment already rising sharply, only one-third of those out of work in this country are currently receiving jobless benefits, largely because



Militant/Marc Lichtman

Picket line by supporters of New York *Daily News* workers, December 1990. Company management did not anticipate that they could use scabs to write, print, and transport paper after locking out workers, but not get working people to buy it. The 148-day strike was example of what Barnes noted are rich lessons "on how to forge unity, overcome divisions, and wage an effective struggle" against bosses in spite of obstacle of union bureaucracy.

of major government slashes in the form of stiffer eligibility requirements. This contrasts to more than three-quarters of jobless workers during the 1974–75 recession and about half during the deep capitalist downturn in 1981–82. . . .

The capitalists are weighed down under an enormous debt structure that reached historic heights during the 1980s. Investment in new, capacity-expanding plant and equipment stagnated throughout the decade. Meanwhile, there was an explosion of real estate speculation, debt-financed buyouts and mergers, and junk bonds, plus growing instability on the stock and commodities markets. The Third World debt continued to climb to staggering levels, devastating the workers and peasants in those countries and putting new strains on the imperialist banking structure. The banks, savings and loan institutions, and giant insurance companies in the United States—as well as the funds today available to government agencies that supposedly protect depositors and beneficiaries—are in their weakest condition in many decades.

Sudden breakdowns or partial crises on any one or more of these fronts—all of which are more vulnerable given today's capitalist downturn—threaten to turn a recession into a collapse of the

international banking system that can plunge the world into a major depression and social crisis.

The employers, their government, and the Democratic and Republican party politicians continue to press their anti-working-class, union-busting offensive. The ultimate solution to all the country's economic problems, they insist, is to guarantee workers the "right" to work in a "union-free environment." More and more they act as if the only good worker is a "permanent replacement" worker.

The bosses continue to demand take-back contracts—such as the recent pacts accepted by the United Auto Workers officialdom—that deepen divisions in the working class by agreeing to trade off wages, conditions, and job opportunities for younger workers and new hires in return for the will-o'-the-wisp of "job security" for a declining number of higher-seniority union members. The employers continually push to gut health and pension benefits, speed up production with less union control over safety on the job, and ravage the environment.

City and state governments around the country—as in the mid-1970s—are complaining of "declining tax revenues" and "tightening budgets," and "reluctantly" point to the need to sharply cut

the rolls of public employees and impose takeback contracts. Governors and mayors are slashing expenditures on basic health services, education, child care, and other social programs that millions of working people depend on. Bridges and roads continue to deteriorate dangerously. . . .

The U.S. working class and labor movement have suffered blows; our unions have been further weakened by the class-collaborationist and proimperialist course of the labor officialdom; and we have been put on the defensive by the accelerated onslaught of the employers in the 1980s.

But we have not been defeated. The labor movement has not been shoved out of the center of politics in this country. Our capacity to resist has not been broken.

Since the middle of the 1980s, as resistance by the working class and unions in the United States has evolved, a pattern has emerged. Despite the difficulties, despite the blows, workers and unionists in the United States pushed to the wall by the employers' assaults have found ways to fight. Layer after layer of workers have managed to avoid simply being handcuffed, chained, and prevented from organizing to defend themselves. They have done so even when the bosses and labor bureaucrats have combined to block them from using standard union tactics that have brought victories throughout the history of the labor movement—that is, even when they are blocked from organizing union power and solidarity to shut down production. . . .

Important experiences with rich lessons on how to forge unity, overcome divisions, and wage an effective struggle have begun to be accumulated by a small vanguard of fighters in the labor movement. These defensive efforts are waged from a position of weakness. The ranks are not in a strong enough position to push aside the current labor officialdom and replace it with another leadership that has an alternative, class-struggle strategy. Their efforts have to take place largely within the limits of the strategy imposed by this ossified bureaucracy. But this fact makes these experiences no less important as the arena where rank-and-file fighters find each other and test each other.

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The unique history of Chinese in Cuba: from

Presentation at Guangzhou, China, conference on 150-year continuity of str

The following talk was presented by Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press, to a June 27, 2011, conference in Guangzhou, China, on the history of Chinese in Cuba.

Some 50 people attended the event, hosted by the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of Guangdong province and the Cuban consulate in Guangzhou, the city historically known as Canton outside China. The meeting was held at the Overseas Chinese Museum of Guangdong, which documents worldwide migration of Chinese from that province.

The other speakers were Raúl Rojas, the Cuban consul in Guangzhou, and Lin Lin, deputy director of the provincial Overseas Chinese Affairs Office. Minghui Wang, director of the Overseas Chinese Museum, welcomed participants. An article on the meeting appeared in the July 25 issue of the Militant, along with the remarks by Rojas.

Waters is the editor of *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*. The book is published in Spanish and English by Pathfinder Press and in Chinese by the Intellectual Property Publishing House in Beijing. Waters's remarks are copyright © 2011 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the Militant.

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

Thank you all for the opportunity to be here today. It is a pleasure and an honor.

I especially want to thank Deputy Director Lin Lin of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of Guangdong province,

Director Minghui Wang of the Guangdong Overseas Chinese Museum, and Cuban Consul Raúl Rojas, who have made this meeting possible.

It is an opportunity not only to exchange views, but for us to learn from you about another facet of the history of the 200,000 Chinese—all but a handful men—who came to Cuba between 1847, when the first shipload of indentured workers arrived, and the early 1950s. Our discussion will help all of us better understand what is unique and noteworthy about that history.

Havana's Chinatown transformed

Today one thing above all distinguishes Chinese in Cuba from Chinese who settled elsewhere in the world: that is the near-total absence of discrimination, or even prejudice, against Cubans of Chinese descent.

Interest in the culture and arts Chinese immigrants brought with them to Cuba, and pride in this rich history, are increasing across the island. At the same time, Havana's Barrio Chino—its world-famous Chinatown, once the largest in Latin America—bears little resemblance to its former self. Outside Cuba it is not unusual to hear people lament this as a “great loss.” But these changes are rooted in the progress of Cuban working people over the last half century made possible by the socialist revolution that tens of thousands of Cubans have given their lives for.

If Havana's Chinatown has been transformed, it is because there is no longer any pressure for Chinese Cubans to live crowded into a restricted district. There is no need for the safety of con-



Speakers at Guangzhou, China, conference on history of Chinese in Cuba. From left: Minghui Wang, director, Overseas Chinese Museum of Guangdong; Cuban consul Raúl Rojas; Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder; and Lin Lin, deputy director, Guangdong Overseas Chinese Affairs Office.

centrated numbers in face of repeated acts of violence, discrimination, and racism. There are no longer occupations that are typically “Chinese,” whether as shopkeepers and peddlers or working in laundries and restaurants. Cubans of Chinese descent are found throughout Cuban society today, in all occupations, and at all levels of responsibility. These include the Central Committee and Political Bureau of the Cuban Communist Party, the highest ranks of the Revolutionary Armed Forces, the leadership of the mass organizations of farmers, workers, women, artists, students, and beyond.

These are conquests to celebrate, not mourn, as the unique history and proud mestizo culture of the Cuban nationality continue to be enriched. On the streets of Cuba it is not unusual to be told that the nation itself was forged in battle from three intertwined roots—one African, one Chinese, one European. The Chinese heritage can be seen everywhere, in faces of every hue.

General Moisés Sío Wong, until his recent death the president of the Cuba-China Friendship Association, was the Cuban-born son of parents who came from Zengcheng—then a small village—a few miles from where we are sitting today. He often joked that if he were a T-shirt, the label on his neck would say, “Made of Chinese raw material, manufactured in Cuba.”

Cuba's revolutionary continuity

The unique experience and trajectory of Chinese in Cuba is born of the 150-year continuity of revolutionary struggles in which Chinese Cubans shouldered weighty responsibilities from the start—interlinked struggles for independence, sovereignty, human dignity, the abolition of slavery and indentured labor of every form, and an end to all social relations built on the exploitation of one human being by another.

As most of you are aware, the largest single wave of Chinese migration to Cuba took place during the quarter cen-

tury between 1847 and 1874. It became notorious the world over as the “coolie trade.” Shipping records here in China indicate that more than 140,000 Chinese set sail for Cuba during those years, the large majority from Guangdong province, with a much smaller number from Fujian. They belonged to the first of the great waves of global labor migration that have marked the entire capitalist era.

Cuba was then the world's largest sugar producer. The decision by landowners and the Spanish colonial regime to bring tens of thousands of Chinese indentured laborers to the island was driven by three factors.

1) The eagerness of the landlords and mill owners to mechanize the refining process and expand production to take advantage of the growing consumption of sugar in Europe and America. Between 1850 and 1868, Cuban sugar production tripled.

2) Fear of what property owners saw as a dangerously large number and concentration of African slaves on sugar plantations across the island. The specter of “another Haiti” haunted them.

3) The opportunity to drive down labor costs.

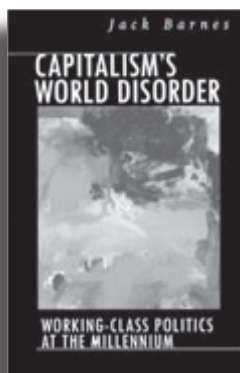
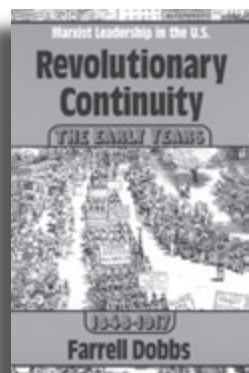
Between 1830 and 1855 the price of an adult male slave in Cuba roughly tripled, from 300–400 pesos to 1,000 or more. This was largely due to the increasing costs—from payoffs to faster sailing ships—of circumventing international treaties banning the slave trade.

The contract for an indentured worker from China, on the other hand, cost the owner less than 400 pesos on average, with another

Bottom left, Chinese Racism against Blacks Reconstruction,” says from Harper's Weekly, Ramón Estrada, Chinese outstanding leaders in combatants born outsi



From Pathfinder



Our History Is Still Being Written

The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution

Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui, and Moisés Sío Wong—three young rebels of Chinese-Cuban ancestry—threw themselves into the great proletarian battle that defined their generation. They became combatants in the 1956–58 revolutionary war that brought down a U.S.-backed dictatorship and opened the door to socialist revolution in the Americas. Each became a general in Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces. Here they talk about the historic place of Chinese immigration to Cuba, as well as more than five decades of revolutionary action and internationalism. **\$20**

Revolutionary Continuity: The Early Years 1848–1917

By Farrell Dobbs

How successive generations of fighters joined in the struggles that shaped the U.S. labor movement, seeking to build a class-conscious revolutionary leadership capable of advancing the interests of workers and small farmers and linking up with fellow toilers worldwide. **\$20**

Capitalism's World Disorder

By Jack Barnes, preface by Mary-Alice Waters

Social devastation and financial panic, coarsening of politics, cop brutality, and imperialist war—all are products not of something gone wrong with capitalism but of its lawful workings. Yet the future can be changed by the united struggle of workers and farmers increasingly conscious of their capacity to wage revolutionary struggles for state power and to transform the world. **\$25**

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m independence wars to socialist revolution

uggle underlying Cuba's proletarian revolution and its worldwide example



Bohemia

"With the victory of the Cuban Revolution in 1959," Waters said, "domination of Chinese associations by the wealthiest capitalist families was broken. . . . Chinese-Cuban workers, farmers, and students organized themselves." **Above**, Contingent of Chinese New Democracy Alliance demonstrates in support of revolution in Havana, July 10, 1960. U.S. government had just slashed sugar imports from Cuba. Banner reads, "Homeland or death."

384 pesos in wages spread out over eight years.

Cuban historian Juan Pérez de la Riva estimates that after 1865, as much as 75 percent of the annual labor shortage in the sugarcane fields was covered by Chinese indentured workers. The toll in human lives was enormous. During the quarter century of the coolie trade, some 16,000 died before even reaching the shores of Cuba. The best estimates indicate that between 50 and 55 percent of the Chinese laborers who landed did not live to complete the eight years of their "contract."

The infamous conditions of servitude they faced are well documented, including by the 1874 commission sent by the

Chinese imperial government to record the testimony of the Chinese laborers themselves.

What I want to emphasize here, however, is not the horrors of the coolie trade. Others have done that justice. The important history lies in what is usually ignored: the proud record of struggle and resistance to exploitation by the Chinese in Cuba, the actions through which they asserted their human dignity and worth.

Wars of independence

Two decades after the first shiploads arrived, Chinese plantation workers massively joined in the first war of independence against Spain. In 1868 Carlos

Manuel de Céspedes, revered as the father of the Cuban nation, freed his slaves and welcomed them into the ranks of the newly formed liberation army. From that moment, the struggle to throw off colonial domination was inextricably intertwined with the battle to abolish not only slavery but all forms of indentured servitude.

A registry of the Chinese population made by the Spanish colonial regime in 1872, four years after the war began, showed that some 20 percent of Chinese indentured laborers had fled the plantations to which they were bound. Thousands of these "fugitives" joined the *mambises*, as the combatants of the liberation army were called. Accounts of

numerous battles cite the participation of hundreds of Chinese combatants. By 1874, it is estimated that some 2,000 of the 7,000 regular forces of the liberation army were Chinese, with a similar number in the rear.

Organized in their own units of the revolutionary army, they were among the fiercest and most courageous of the fighters—and the best spies behind enemy lines.

One famous battle in the first independence war has gone down in history as "the Chinese attack." In 1873, under the command of Antonio Maceo, a carefully selected unit that included many Chinese infiltrated the city of Manzanillo in eastern Cuba, with orders to attack the Spanish garrison. Not only did the Chinese mambises fight with exemplary courage and tenacity. They were the ones who led the infiltration of the city, breaching the defense lines the Chinese themselves had been forced by the Spanish colonial regime to build. No map was needed. They knew those fortifications like the back of their hand.

The famous words of independence leader General Gonzalo de Quesada are carved on the monument erected in 1946 that stands in the center of Havana today honoring these Chinese *mambí* forces: "There was not one Chinese-Cuban traitor, there was not one Chinese-Cuban deserter." This was referred to earlier today by our host, Deputy Director Lin Lin, who noted it is part of the proud history of Guangdong province.

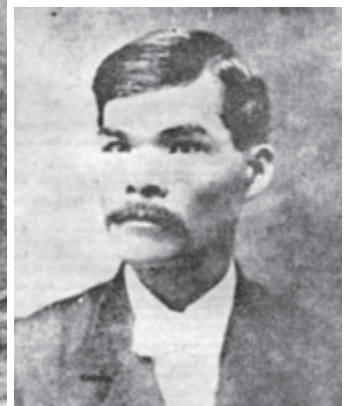
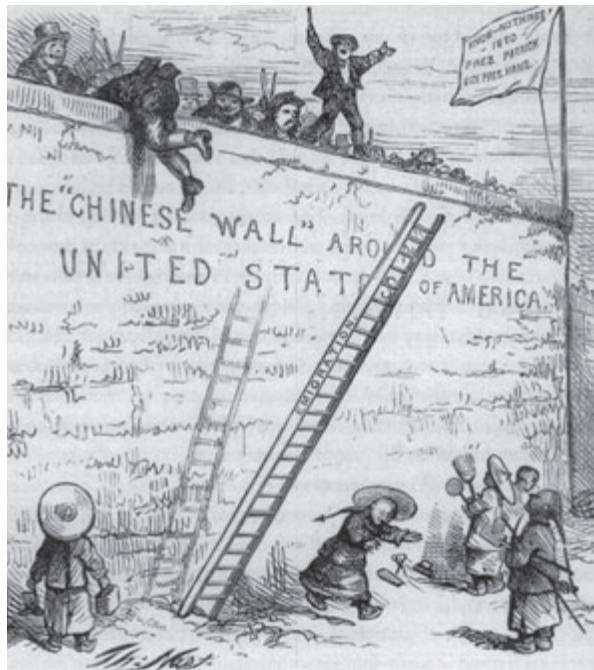
Slavery, bonded labor abolished

In 1871 the Spanish government suspended further introduction of Chinese contract labor into Cuba. The reason was not humanitarian concern over the virtual enslavement the Chinese faced. The Spanish crown was seeking to stanch the flow of reinforcements to the liberation army. The revolutionary struggle of these toilers themselves decided their future.

When Cuba's first war of independence ended without victory in 1878, one concession wrung from the colo-

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laborers built most dangerous section of transcontinental railroad in United States in 1860s. **Bottom right**, and Chinese "was inseparable from the ongoing bloody post-Civil War counterrevolution against Radical Waters. "It was a foundation of rising finance capital, as U.S. imperialism emerged on a world scale." Cartoon July 1870, derides rising anti-Chinese racism and violence in United States. **Right**, clockwise from left to right, se-Cuban combatant in Cuba's independence struggle; Lt. Col. José Bu Tak (Hu De) and José Tolón (Lai Wa), Cuba's three wars of independence between 1868 and 1898. Both natives of China, they were two of only four de Cuba whose military record earned them the right to serve as president of newly independent republic.



Chinese Cubans

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nial power was written into the infamous Zanjón Pact: a provision granting “freedom for slaves and Asian contract laborers today in the ranks of the insurrectional forces.”

It was a recognition of reality. These men and women had conquered their freedom. They would never go back.

The two Chinese Cubans best known for their outstanding record in the independence struggle were Lieutenant Colonel José Bu Tack and Captain José Tolón (Lai Wa). Fighting in all three liberation wars, both bore Cuban arms for more than ten years, thus earning the right, inscribed in the constitution of 1901, to be eligible to serve as president of the newly independent country. That honor was granted to only two other combatants born outside Cuba, Generals Máximo Gómez, a Dominican by birth, and Carlos Roloff, born in Poland.

Gold Rush and railroads

The second major wave of Chinese immigration to Cuba came by way of the United States.

In the quarter century between 1848 and 1873, the number of Chinese who immigrated to the United States was roughly equivalent to those who set out for Cuba. They were first drawn by the 1848 discovery of gold in the mountains on the Pacific coast of the North American continent. Their numbers were then augmented by contract laborers brought to build the most difficult sections of the new transcontinental railroad through the high mountain reaches.

By the late 1860s and early 1870s, the illusion that the Gold Rush would bring instant wealth to many was largely exhausted. The epic feat of railroad building that foreshadowed the rise of the United States as a Pacific power was completed in 1869. With the financial crisis of 1873, anti-Chinese discrimination and violence accelerated and anti-Asian exclusion laws were being put forward in more states. Increasingly virulent racism, directed against Blacks above all, was inseparable from the ongoing bloody post-Civil War counter-revolution against Radical Reconstruction. This racism was a foundation of rising finance capital, as U.S. imperialism emerged on a world scale.

Class differentiation

In response to these changing economic and social conditions, between 1865 and 1875 some 5,000 Chinese left



José Wong (Huang Taobai), native of Guangzhou who was Cuban revolutionary working-class leader in 1920s. He was arrested in 1930 and assassinated on orders of dictator Gerardo Machado.



Class divisions among Chinese in Cuba deepened in opening decades of 20th century. **Above**, Reception at Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Havana to welcome minister from Kuomintang (Nationalist Party) dictatorship of Chiang Kai-shek, 1940s. **Right**, Chinese laundry worker in Havana, 1950. “There are no longer occupations that are typically ‘Chinese’ whether as shopkeepers and peddlers or working in laundries and restaurants,” said Waters. “Cubans of Chinese descent are found throughout Cuban society today.”



the United States for Cuba, most of them traveling through Mexico or departing from the port of New Orleans. The *californianos*, as they were known in Cuba, were mostly from a different class than the peasants, rural laborers, and urban workers who made up the vast majority of the indentured workforce in the cane fields. These “Californians” originated primarily from Guangdong province also, but they were largely traders and merchants, some with access to substantial capital in China, Hong Kong, and the United States. With their arrival, Havana’s Barrio Chino began to be transformed into a center of trade, commerce, and banking that rapidly became second in the Americas only to San Francisco’s Chinatown. The first Chinese association in Cuba, the Kit Yi Tong, was founded in 1867.

Class differentiation among Chinese in Cuba accelerated rapidly. The californianos organized former indentured compatriots into work gangs, called *cuadrillas*, which they contracted out as agricultural laborers, stevedores, construction workers, or whatever was demanded. By the end of the 1880s, wealthy Chinese were investing capital in sugar. Two mills in Las Villas, one in Sagua la Grande and another in Santo Domingo, were soon Chinese-owned. The 1899 census records forty-two Chinese plantation owners.

According to official figures, the Chinese population in Cuba peaked in 1869 at just under 60,000. With the 1871 cut-off of new contract labor, and the deadly toll taken by war, famine, disease, and Spanish repression during Cuba’s thirty-year independence struggle, that number had fallen to 15,000 by the end of the century.

U.S. imperial dominance in Cuba

The third substantial wave of Chinese immigration to Cuba came with the U.S. government’s entry into World War I and Washington’s war-driven need to expand sugar production.

When Cuba won its independence from Spain in 1898, the fruits of that victory were snatched by the rising imperialist colossus to the north. Washington’s military occupation of the island, and the establishment of a protectorate in all but name, accompanied the voracious acquisition of virtually all capital assets in Cuba by America’s Sixty Families.

With this U.S. domination came stepped-up anti-Chinese discrimination as well.

One of the decrees of the U.S. military forces during their first occupation

of Cuba was Order No. 155, issued May 15, 1902. Modeled on Washington’s 1882 exclusion act that applied to the entire United States, it banned all Chinese immigration to Cuba. As in the United States, the ban remained in effect until World War II, when a change was dictated by the diplomatic needs of the allied imperialist powers to seal an anti-Japanese accord with the government of Chiang Kai-shek.

In Cuba, however, the ban was set aside for five years in 1917, when Washington entered the interimperialist war among the European powers, joining the alliance against Germany. An expanded labor force to increase wartime sugar production came first, and that’s what the U.S. rulers organized.

By 1931 the Chinese population of Cuba had once again grown substantially, reaching nearly 25,000. The greatest flowering of Chinese arts and culture occurred during these interwar years. Music, theater, Cantonese opera, martial arts, Chinese-language newspapers—and the lion dance—all were part of life in Havana and across the island.

Fighting Machado dictatorship

These were also the years of world capitalism’s greatest economic crisis in the twentieth century, marked in Cuba by the second great wave of revolutionary struggle and the fall in 1933 of the dictatorship of General Gerardo Machado. The revolutionary upsurge in Cuba was not an isolated phenom-

enon. Among tumultuous struggles by working people elsewhere around the world, it coincided with the deepening revolutionary movement here in China against Japanese imperialism’s invasion and occupation of Manchuria, as well as sharpening class battles between workers and peasants and the bourgeois dictatorship of the Chiang Kai-shek-led Nationalist Party, the Kuomintang. Revolutionary-minded Chinese in Cuba saw all these as part of the same worldwide struggle.

The outstanding Chinese-Cuban leader of the popular revolutionary struggles against the Machado dictatorship was José Wong (Huang Tao-bai). Born in Guangzhou in 1898, he arrived in Cuba in the early 1920s, already a product of the revolutionary democratic struggles that in 1911 put an end to millennia of imperial rule in China. Together with Julio Antonio Mella, José Wong founded the Cuban Anti-Imperialist League in 1925, and soon joined the newly formed Communist Party of Cuba. In 1927 he helped establish the Revolutionary Alliance for the Protection of Chinese Workers and Peasants in Cuba, founded on a platform of opposition to the dictatorships of both Machado and Chiang Kai-shek, and became the first editor of its paper, the *Gunnun Hushen* [Workers and Peasants Voice].

Arrested in 1930 by the dictatorship, Wong was assassinated on Machado’s

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Militant/Martin Koppel

From left, Moisés Sío Wong, Armando Choy, and Gustavo Chui during February 2002 interview with Waters for *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*. “How is it possible that you, a descendant of Chinese, occupy a high government post and are a general of the Revolutionary Armed Forces?” Sío Wong was asked more than a decade ago. “The difference,” he explained, “is that here a socialist revolution took place that ended discrimination based on skin color. Above all it eliminated the property relations that create economic and social inequality.”

Chinese Cubans in revolution

Continued from page 10

orders, strangled to death in a cell at Havana's infamous Castillo del Príncipe prison.

The 1930s also registered the high point of the Barrio Chino as a center of commerce and capitalist organization. A 1932 study carried out by the Chinese Chamber of Commerce recorded nearly 4,000 Chinese-owned businesses in Cuba, from laundries to groceries, bakeries, restaurants, hotels, fruit stands, and vegetable gardens, just to mention the most numerous.

Three Chinese-Cuban generals

The 1952 military coup of Fulgencio Batista was followed quickly by the opening of the third great wave of revolutionary struggle in Cuba under the leadership of Fidel Castro. By then the class divide among Chinese Cubans was greater than ever.

These class divisions were demonstratively expressed in March 1957 when many prominent Chinese businessmen in Havana personally went to the presidential palace to cravenly express to Batista their relief that he had survived an assassination attempt organized by José Antonio Echeverría and other revolutionary-minded students, most of whom were killed during the attack or hunted down and murdered in the following days.

Meanwhile, young Chinese-Cuban combatants exemplified by Moisés Sío Wong, Armando Choy, and Gustavo Chui—whose stories are told in the interviews published as *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*—were already deeply involved in the mass popular struggle that less than two years later brought down the U.S.-backed tyranny and opened the road to proletarian revolution in the Americas.

Theirs is the story of three very different individuals—three different personalities, with different family backgrounds, from three different regions of Cuba. Each of them belongs to the generation of Cubans who simply refused to submit to the indignities and brutalities of the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship. As other roads of struggle were closed to them, they took up arms to put an end to that dictatorship. As teenagers, each joined the clandestine July 26 Movement in the cities and then the Rebel Army units fighting in eastern and central Cuba.

More than 20,000 Cubans gave their lives in that struggle to overthrow the Batista dictatorship, and thousands more have done so in the battles of the last fifty years to defend Cuba's independence and sovereignty and extend the hand of

proletarian solidarity to anti-imperialist forces around the world.

The three Chinese Cubans whose story is told in *Our History Is Still Being Written* all rose to be leaders of that revolutionary struggle and generals of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba. Each has a long history of responsibilities shouldered, nationally and internationally, at the highest levels of the Cuban government.

Uncompromising popular measures

Like many others of their generation, they didn't set out to make a socialist revolution. With Batista out of the way, they took the steps necessary to meet the immediate needs of the toiling millions of Cuba, and followed that course without wavering.

Working people and their new revolutionary government carried out a land reform. They organized a hundred thousand young people in a drive that in one year wiped out illiteracy. They made discrimination against Cubans who were black or Chinese illegal—in employment, education, and all public activities—and enforced it. They opened the door to women's participation in society. They made access to education and health care a right, available to all. When factory owners attempted sabotage, they kept production going and took control over the organization of work. By their deeds, they made clear their readiness to fight alongside others confronting imperialist domination and dictatorial regimes throughout Latin America and elsewhere around the world.

It was these uncompromising, popular steps that precipitated a head-on confrontation, not only with Cuba's small capitalist class, but above all with the U.S. imperialist ruling-class families who owned or controlled the overwhelming majority of productive property in Cuba in the 1950s. Ninety percent of the cultivated land, 90 percent of the mineral wealth, 80 percent of the utilities, two-thirds of the oil production and refineries, and more than 40 percent of the sugar production.

As the U.S. property owners' determination to overturn the new government intensified, the Cuban people refused to back down from this revolutionary course. They held their ground, despite sabotage, invasion, assassination attempts, embargo, and blockade. Each step by imperialism and their Cuban allies was not only rebuffed, but met with a counterstep by the Cuban people. That is the origin of Washington's implacable hostility to the toilers of Cuba and their government. That remains the reason for it to this day. Nothing will satisfy the U.S. rulers short of crushing Cuba's ex-

ample—for the people of Latin America especially, but for others throughout the world as well.

This is why five Cuban revolutionaries are now behind bars in the United States, having spent nearly thirteen years in U.S. federal prisons. They are being held hostage—to punish the Cuban people for refusing to abandon their popular proletarian course, for refusing to adopt whatever "democratic changes" the U.S. rulers demand.

The class struggle within the Chinese commu-



In opening years of revolution, Cuban workers, farmers, and students of Chinese descent organized the José Wong Brigade of Revolutionary National Militia to break domination of Chinese community by Chinese-Cuban capitalists and defend gains of working class.

nity of Cuba was no different from the struggle that unfolded among the rest of the Cuban population. With the victory of the Cuban Revolution, domination of the Chinese associations and organizations by the wealthiest capitalist families was broken. Their ties with organized crime syndicates, gambling, drugs, and prostitution rings were shattered. The Kuomintang political machine was unseated. For the first time, the flag of the People's Republic of China flew alongside the flag of Cuba in the streets of Havana. In September 1960, Cuba became the first country in Latin America to establish diplomatic relations with Beijing.

None of this came from outside the Chinese community. It came from within, from the Chinese-Cuban workers, farmers, and students who organized themselves as the José Wong Brigade of the National Revolutionary Militia, from men and women like Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui, and Moisés Sío Wong. It was Chinese Cubans who fought and won the great majority of their numbers to support Cuba's revolutionary course and leadership.

'Difference is socialist revolution'

If the story of the Chinese in Cuba is still being written, one thing *has* been settled by the last half century of struggle. This truth has been eloquently told by General Moisés Sío Wong.

More than a decade ago, during a Havana conference focused on the history of overseas Chinese communities in Latin America, Sío Wong was asked, "How is it possible that you, a descendant of Chinese, occupy a high government post, are a deputy in the National Assembly, and a general of the Revolutionary Armed Forces?" That ex-

perience is not matched by the descendants of Chinese immigrants elsewhere around the world.

Sío Wong responded, "The answer doesn't lie in the degree of Chinese participation in the war of independence. That is worth studying, since nothing similar happened in any other country where Chinese indentured workers were taken. But here too, before the triumph of the revolution, we Chinese were discriminated against. . . .

"The difference is that here a socialist revolution took place. The revolution eliminated discrimination based on the color of a person's skin. Above all, it eliminated the property relations that create not only economic but also social inequality between rich and poor."

And Sío Wong concluded, "To historians and others who want to study the question, I say you have to understand that the Chinese community here in Cuba is different from Peru, Brazil, Argentina, or Canada. And that difference is the triumph of a socialist revolution."

That record of struggle, told in *Our History Is Still Being Written*, has been met with a deep sense of pride by Chinese youth in the United States, Canada, and elsewhere around the world who find themselves confronting their own battles against racist discrimination in immigration, employment, and education. As each generation fights to defend its rights, they draw strength from knowledge of the battles fought by those who went before them.

The exchange we are having here today will deepen our understanding of the place of the Cuban Revolution in the proud history of the people of Guangdong. It will broaden our horizons. We thank you for that opportunity.



National Library of Cuba

Monument in Havana honoring Chinese who fought in Cuban independence wars. Inscribed are famous words of General Gonzalo de Quesada: "There was not one Chinese-Cuban deserter. There was not one Chinese-Cuban traitor."



Militant/Emily Paul

Audience at meeting on *Our History Is Still Being Written* at University of California, Los Angeles, November 2006. Record of struggle told in book, Waters said, "has been met with a deep sense of pride by Chinese youth in the United States, Canada, and elsewhere around the world who find themselves confronting their own battles against racist discrimination. . . . They draw strength from knowledge of the battles fought by those who went before them."

For a federal public works program

A federally funded public works program to create millions of jobs is needed immediately. That stark reality—one many working people have known *and lived* for years—is underlined by the latest government unemployment figures. The U.S. Labor Department reports that in July only 58.1 percent of the working-age population had jobs, down from a year ago.

The “stimulus” plans of the bipartisan Congress and current Democratic White House and its Republican forerunner have done *nothing* to put jobless workers back to work. But Washington could launch an emergency public works program to create productive jobs repairing roads and bridges, expanding railroads and public transport, building affordable housing, and constructing schools and other infrastructure needed by working people.

This should be the immediate demand of class-conscious workers today, not a “Shorter workweek with no cut in pay,” the front-page headline on the *Militant’s* August 1 issue. It took the massive, working-class-led social movement that forged the industrial unions in the 1930s to win the 40-hour workweek, codified in the federal Fair Labor Standards Act adopted by Congress and signed by President Franklin Roosevelt in 1938. (The brutality under capitalism of tens of millions forced to toil far more or fewer than 40 hours against their will is another matter.)

It will take working-class battles on that scale or

greater to force the U.S. rulers to concede a shorter workweek with no cut in pay. Such a measure would slash deeply into their profit rate.

Another *Militant* article, in the August 8 issue, quotes Chris Hoeppe, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress in New York’s 9th District, as saying funds for such a jobs program “would come out of the bosses’ profits, which they take from the wealth working people produce with our labor.”

This inadvertently gives the tip of a finger to the capitalists’ mystification that a federal jobs program is an enormous *cost* to social wealth, one that—whether pro or con—reinforces “big government.” The truth, as SWP candidates explain, is that putting millions back to work would *create* value on a massive scale.

By doing so, the surplus wealth workers, farmers, and other toilers create with our social labor can be used to reverse capitalism’s inevitable rotting out of infrastructure needed by the vast working majority.

Fighting for such a program would undercut the bosses’ efforts to get working people to compete with each other for scarce jobs. It would strengthen the unity of our class for coming battles.

It would advance building the kind of revolutionary working-class movement that can fight for workers power, opening the road to battles to end, once and for all, the exploitation, oppression, and wars spawned by the crisis-ridden dictatorship of capital.

45,000 Verizon workers go on strike

Continued from front page

fore the strike began. “Every contract after that will get worse. They’ve been thinking about this for a long time.”

“We saw them attack the teachers union in Wisconsin,” said Fitz Boyce, a technician picketing in Manhattan. “That was a signal they’re coming after all of us.” Boyce said Verizon is out to break the IBEW and Communications Workers of America (CWA), the two unions that organize Verizon workers.

“The best thing we can do is deny labor to them,” said striker Vinny Galvin, on the picket line at Verizon’s corporate headquarters on Wall Street. He’s been at the company 34 years. “It’s time we turned this around. Labor’s got to fight back.”

The battle affects 35,000 CWA and 10,000 IBEW workers. Almost all are in Verizon’s landline division; Verizon Wireless remains almost entirely nonunion. Five years ago Verizon serviced 47 million land phone lines and today has just 25 million, reports CnnMoney. Company owners want workers to bear the costs of the declining landline business.

In negotiations, Verizon demanded an end to contractual wage increases, with supervisors instead recommending who should get a raise. It called for freezing pensions of current union employees and having none for new hires, who would be offered a 401(k) plan instead. Future employees would get no sick days, and

current employees would be limited to five a year.

For the first time, union members would have to pay part of health-care premiums; a family plan could cost as much as \$6,800 a year, the CWA says. Verizon wants contract language making it easier to lay off workers without offering severance pay. Since 2006 the company has eliminated 56,000 jobs.

Some “existing contract provisions, negotiated initially when Verizon was under far less competitive pressure, are not in line with the economic realities of business today,” said Verizon chief executive Lowell McAdam in a note to employees quoted by the *Wall Street Journal*. “As the U.S. automobile industry found out a few years ago,” he pointedly added, “failure to make needed adjustments—when the need for change is obvious—can be catastrophic.”

“Everyone who is union or has ever been in a union needs to get down here,” said Peter Miralle, picketing a call center in Queens. “We need to reach out to wireless workers, too. We are not against them, but the company.” Boyce said the strikers are getting support from some nonunion Verizon workers.

Workers belonging to CWA Local 1101, the only ones in the wireless division who are organized, also joined the strike.

Debbie Lazar, Sara Lobman, and Tamar Rosenfeld contributed to this article.

Sugar workers fight lockout in Midwest

Continued from page 4

sugar workers organized protests in towns where the plants are located.

American Crystal is also demanding the ability to outsource work, to replace union work with nonunion contract workers, and to erode seniority. “The company would have sole discretion on seniority rights,” Ross Perrin, chief steward at the Moorhead plant, told the *Militant* in an interview in the basement of Howard Johnson’s, a temporary union headquarters in Fargo, North Dakota.

Workers at American Crystal are organized into two tiers: year-round employees and so-called campaign workers, who work from the fall harvest through the beet-slicing campaign the next spring and receive worse wages and benefits. There are currently about 1,000 full-time and 263 campaign workers.

Under the prior contract, a worker qualifies as full time after working 75 percent of scheduled workdays in a year. The company is now seeking to raise the bar

to 85 percent for all future workers.

That would mean “a widening of the two-tier system,” said Doyle Heden, a locked-out union member.

Support for the locked-out BCTGM members is visible at the picket lines, both from union and non-union workers. People driving by honk and give the thumbs up. Some donate water and food. In Moorhead a worker stopped his car in front of the pickets, rolled down his window, and yelled: “My union, the IBEW, called me and told me to come join the picket line.”

In Hillsboro signs expressing solidarity are up in the town’s bars. The owner of a block of stores donated an empty storefront to the union, which is now its headquarters.

In a letter to all locals in Teamsters Joint Council 32, covering Minnesota, Iowa, and North and South Dakota, council president Susan Mauren wrote: “We are asking that Teamsters do not provide services or make deliveries to any of the American Crystal Sugar facilities during this lockout.”

Pro-choice actions

Continued from front page

Kansas, California, and Montreal joined the action.

“You have no right to deny someone a safe abortion, that’s ridiculous,” said David Ballard, 23. This was his first action defending the right to choose.

Supporters of choice maintained a presence at the complex for eight days from 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Honks, thumbs-up, and shout-outs defending abortion rights from passersby far outnumbered hostile gestures. Some stopped by with water and food.

At times Summer of Mercy participants tried to provoke pro-choice supporters, entering their line or taunting them. But training sessions by Summer Celebration of Choice organizers paid off. Clinic defenders stayed disciplined and calm all week.

Dr. Carhart closed the clinic for the week but reopened it Sunday, August 7. That day Operation Rescue held its largest mobilization. More than 600 antichoice protesters formed a human cross along two roads near the clinic, while about 100 women’s rights supporters maintained the picket line at the entrance to the office complex.

“I think women should have a choice,” said Jordan Parker, 18, who lives in the neighborhood. He came with a friend to defend the clinic on Sunday and came back the following day. “I’ve seen the antichoice side here for the last three months and wanted to voice my support for the other side.”

“If a woman doesn’t have the right to choose whether and when to bear children, then who makes that choice for her?” said Linda Mahoney, president of the National Organization for Women in Maryland. “And what sort of status does she have in our society?”

When the clinic opened at 6:00 p.m., antichoice protesters met patients entering the office complex with signs saying “Abortion kills a human life” and “It’s a child not a tissue.” Pro-choice defenders outnumbered them with signs welcoming people to the clinic. Operation Rescue extended its protests through Monday. Some 40 clinic defenders helped escort patients, while 300 opponents massed nearby but didn’t try to physically impede entrance.

State laws restrict access

“It’s sad to see laws being enacted that restrict the right to choose, even though most people support a woman’s right,” Sheri Laigle, 47, said. “We need to be more visible.”

According to the Guttmacher Institute, states enacted 80 restrictions on the right to choose so far this year, more than double the 2005 record of 34. Many new laws target abortions performed after 20 weeks unless the woman’s life is in danger. Some ban later abortions even if the pregnancy would cause “irreversible physical impairment” to the woman. The antichoice laws have passed with votes from Democratic and Republican legislators alike.

At a Summer of Mercy rally in Gaithersburg, Maryland, July 30, Rev. Patrick Mahoney, an Operation Rescue leader, said their goal is to push for more such laws and to pressure Maryland officials to shut down Carhart’s clinic. “We can’t live in the past,” Mahoney said, explaining that the group could not repeat its 1990 Summer of Mercy, which mobilized thousands to block access to clinics in Wichita, Kansas.

Joining the week’s pro-choice events were many who have volunteered as escorts at clinics; high school and college students; activists from the Feminist Majority Foundation, National Organization for Women, NARAL, and Planned Parenthood; Unitarian Church youth group; the Socialist Workers Party; and World Can’t Wait and Summer of Trust.

Kira Baughman, who works in Carhart’s clinic and was an organizer of the Summer Celebration of Choice, told the *Militant* that responding to Operation Rescue “these past eight days helped pro-choice activists from around the country come together, get to know each, and talk about what we need to move forward.”

Omari Musa in Washington, D.C., and Beverly Bernardo from Montreal contributed to this article.

See you in two weeks!

This is a two-week issue of the *Militant*. We will resume weekly publication with issue 31, mailed out August 25.