

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Forewords to Indonesian editions of two classics on women’s liberation
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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Socialist campaigns for nat’l jobs plan – now!

BY RÓGER CALERO

NEW YORK—“Yes, if they just repaved the highways and built schools and hospitals, it would put millions to work,” said Marcel Ojuroungbe, a worker on strike against Verizon here. He was talking with Chris Hoeppepner, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Congress in the 9th District, in the special September 13 election. The socialist candidate visited the picket line August 17.

Hoeppepner and other SWP candidates and their supporters are putting the fight for jobs at the center of their campaign as millions are being forced into long-term joblessness as a result of today’s deep capitalist crisis.

Hoeppepner told Ojuroungbe that the

Continued on page 3

Rebel forces take Tripoli in Libyan civil war

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Rebel forces have taken control of most of Libya’s capital city of Tripoli as the *Militant* goes to press, ending nearly 42 years of the tyrannical regime of Moammar Gadhafi. Backed by thousands of other opponents of Gadhafi’s government, armed rebels stormed his fortress compound in the center of the city, holding most of it after a fierce, daylong battle, according to press accounts.

Since February Gadhafi’s bourgeois regime has brutally sought to crush a popular uprising and defeat rebel forces in a six-month-long civil war. Taking advantage of the situation to further imperialist economic and po-

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Sugar workers resolute in fight against lockout

Reach out for solidarity in Upper Midwest



Militant/Frank Forrestal

Rally in Moorhead, Minn., August 11 for workers locked out by American Crystal Sugar.

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

MOORHEAD, Minn.—Chanting “Who does the work? We do!” and “Stop the lies,” hundreds of locked-out workers and supporters rallied here August 11 outside American Crystal Sugar headquarters.

More than 1,300 workers have been locked out at five plants in Crookston, Moorhead, and East Grant Forks, Minnesota, and in Hillsboro and Drayton, North Dakota.

By a margin of 96 percent, members of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers, and Grain Millers union rejected the bosses’ “final” offer July

30. The company locked out workers two days later and hired Strom Engineering to bring in scab labor.

American Crystal is pushing for major concessions, including higher health-care costs and the right to contract out union jobs. For years the company has cut jobs through speed-up and new machinery, according to workers. “In 1990 we had 50 workers per shift, now it’s down to 26,” said Dee Middleton, a worker at the Drayton plant. “We had 15 mechanics per shift, now you’re lucky to get five.”

Many locked-out workers came

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Demonstrations shake Israel ... along with illusions about it



Gerrit De Vynck

A quarter million demonstrate August 6 in Tel Aviv, Israel, against high cost of living.

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Social protests over rising housing costs and declining living standards have swept Israel for more than a month. These mobilizations are dealing a blow to the false notion that class divisions and popular struggle against the country’s capitalist government are precluded because there is supposedly no basis in Israel for common struggle by working people from the Jewish majority and the oppressed Palestinian people.

Beginning in mid-July as a small tent protest in downtown Tel Aviv against rising rents, the actions quickly grew and spread to other cities, involving both Jews and Arabs.

On August 6 more than 300,000 took to the streets across Israel, including a quarter million in Tel Aviv, according to the *Jerusalem Post*. They demanded affordable housing, as well as lower prices, tax relief, and more child care.

The following Saturday, August 13, protest leaders organized actions in 18 smaller cities, not in Tel Aviv or Jerusalem, in order to highlight the spread of the protests. An estimated 50,000 to 70,000 people turned out in all.

The largest August 13 action was in the northern port city of Haifa, where more than 20,000 participated, according to the *Jerusalem Post*. Many

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Verizon strikers return to work, fight against takebacks is still on

BY CINDY JAQUITH

“We were out two weeks and everyone was strong,” said Verizon worker Mike Stucchio in New York. “And we could walk again if the deal’s not struck.”

Stucchio was one of 45,000 Verizon workers who went on strike August 7 against the company’s demands for across-the-board takebacks on everything from wages to pensions to health care. It was the largest strike in the United States in four years.

Officials of the two striking unions—the Communications Workers of America and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers—announced in a statement August 20 that workers would return to the job because “we have reached agreement with Verizon on how bargaining will proceed and how it will be restructured. The major issues remain to be discussed.”

Strikers interviewed as they prepared to return to work expressed a range of opinions.

“Verizon is willing to allow us to work under the old contract, when in the beginning they said no,” Pittsburgh IBEW member Adrienne Pope told the *Militant*. “We still have tons of issues the company wants in concessions that we’re in total disagreement with. This may take a while. Our efforts and solidarity from other unions

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Australia rulers debate ‘carbon tax’ on workers

BY RON POULSEN

SYDNEY, Australia—Prime Minister Julia Gillard is campaigning for a controversial new “carbon tax,” which goes into effect in a year.

Ostensibly to reduce carbon emissions into the atmosphere by taxing “the 500 big polluters,” the cost of the tax will be passed on to working people, adding to the already rising cost of living as the global economic crisis worsens.

Electricity and gas bills will increase by an estimated 15 to 20 percent after the tax is introduced. Food and transport costs will also rise. Truckers will face an extra levy on fuel after two years.

While diesel fuel for agriculture, forestry, and fisheries is exempted, working farmers will face extra costs for fertilizer, transport, processing, and grain storage. The National Farmers Federation predicts AU\$1,500 per year in extra costs for an average farm (AU\$1=US\$1.04).

A “carbon price” starting at AU\$23 per ton is to be levied on the content of fossil fuels—coal, petroleum, and natural gas. The carbon price is to be floated by 2015 as an emissions trading scheme, under which companies buy and sell permits to emit a certain quantity of pollutants.

Support for such a plan among the propertied ruling families is receding. International trade in sham “carbon credits,” initially at lucrative prices, has stalled since the 2008 financial crisis.

Support for the Labor Party government has fallen with the carbon tax and other unpopular measures. For instance,

a “flood levy” was imposed to cover compensation for those hit by the recent Queensland flood disaster in February.

The Liberal-led opposition to Labor has capitalized on this discontent, backing rallies against the carbon tax that have drawn thousands. A “Say Yes!” campaign—backed by celebrity film stars, union officials, and the Greens—has held similar rallies in support of Labor’s new tax.

Amid debate on its new tax, the Labor government moved to offer AU\$9 billion in subsidies for big business. Aluminum, zinc, and steel manufacturers will get 95 percent of their “carbon permits” for free. The government will grant hundreds of millions of dollars to big steel and coal corporations.

Gillard’s scheme also promises some tax relief and other “offsets” for “low income families.”

The 2008-2009 international recession was lessened here by renewed exports, mainly iron ore and coal to China, Australia’s largest trading partner. But despite a mining boom much of the Australia’s economy is stagnating, with manufacturing, retail, and tourism in a

Locked-out Pa. Steelworkers gain support



Militant/Janet Post

MARIETTA, Pa.—“As the lockout has gone on, we’ve gained support and the membership has pulled together,” said Sandi Cooper, who has worked here for Armstrong World Industries 35 years. The company locked out some 260 workers, members of United Steelworkers Local 285, Unit 441, on July 17 when they rejected a union-busting contract.

A semitruck driver turned his rig around August 20 when he saw the picket line, giving a donation to the picketers and buying a copy of the *Militant*. Two locked-out workers have gotten subscriptions.

—JANET POST

steep downturn.

The Australian voiced the rulers’ unease on this combination of “boom and gloom” in a July 26 editorial. “Rather than address the problems of the two-

speed economy, Julia Gillard has staked the country’s future on a carbon tax that will add to household costs and could threaten trade-exposed industries,” the paper wrote.

Ottawa threatens to deport 1,800 citizens

BY ANNETTE KOURI

MONTREAL—In a move to weaken working-class unity and further restrict rights, the Canadian government recently unveiled plans to revoke 1,800 Canadian citizenships and, in a separate move, established a hit list of 30

people to arrest and immediately deport.

According to Immigration Minister Jason Kenney, the 1,800 Canadian citizens are suspected of fraud in gaining citizenship, based on an ongoing, three-year investigation by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Kenney told the *National Post* the 30 men targeted for immediate deportation were involved in “war crimes or crimes against humanity.”

However, none of the 30 have ever been accused, much less convicted, of any criminal charges in Canada. Rather, the Immigration and Refugee Board, turned down their appeals for asylum, according to *Embassy* magazine. To date at least five from the list have been arrested and two deported.

On August 3 an immigration officer announced his decision to deport Dany Villanueva to his native Honduras. His brother, Fredy Villanueva, was shot and killed by Montreal police in 2008,

when he defended Dany, who was being ticketed for gambling in public because he was playing dice. Canadian authorities began action at that time to deport Dany, based on a previous conviction, but no action has been taken against the police for Fredy’s death.

Tribute to life of Eva Chertov

A celebration of the life and political contributions of Eva Chertov, a longtime member and then supporter of the Socialist Workers Party, will take place in New York City August 28. Chertov died August 7 at the age of 69 after a long battle with cancer.

The meeting will take place at St. Mark’s Church in the Bowery, Parish Hall, 131 E. 10th St., at Second Avenue. It begins with a reception at 2:30 p.m., followed by a program at 3:00 p.m.

THE MILITANT

Speak out against police brutality!

From New Orleans to Fullerton, California, police harassment and brutality are a daily occurrence in working-class communities. Only rarely do the cops face trial, much less punishment, for their crimes. Keep on top of this struggle in the pages of the ‘Militant.’



Militant/Arlene Rubinstein

Protest in Fullerton, California, August 6 after fatal beating of Kelly Thomas by six cops.

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Socialist campaigns for jobs

Continued from front page

socialist campaign explains the need for working people to fight for an immediate, government-funded national jobs program to “repair roads and bridges, expand railroads and public transportation, build affordable housing, and restore other infrastructure left to decay by the capitalist rulers. That can put millions of jobless back to work—*now*.”

“The Democrats and Republican politicians say putting workers back in jobs will cost a tremendous amount of money,” the socialist candidate said. “But the truth is that the labor of working people *creates* wealth, all the wealth. So let’s put the jobless to work building and repairing basic infrastructure working people need.”

“Fighting for a massive employment program also undercuts the bosses’ efforts to intensify competition for scarce jobs,” he said. “It increases class solidarity and helps strengthen the working class for coming battles.”

So long as capitalism exists, the socialist candidate said, working people will be hit by joblessness, bursts of ruinous price hikes, as well as racism, the oppression of women, and bloody imperialist wars. That’s why the SWP campaign is explaining the need to build a mass revolutionary movement to fight to overturn the capitalist government and replace it with workers power.

On August 20 Hoeppner campaigned at the Atlas Park Mall in the Glendale section of Queens, at the invitation of Kimberly Scelta, a student at Hunter College in Manhattan. Scelta had called the New York Board of Elections and then the *Militant* to get in touch with the socialist campaign and urged Hoeppner to visit her neighborhood. They were joined by Harry D’Agostino and Rebecca Williamson, SWP candidates in the 27th and 54th New York State Assembly Districts, respectively.

“So many people feel that we can’t do anything,” said Scelta, as she listened to SWP campaigners encouraging other working people to extend solidarity to striking Verizon workers.

“Nothing the politicians are doing is helping us,” Arnitha Webb told Hoeppner at the Atlas Park Mall. “They pretend to support working people,

but there is no relief.”

The SWP candidate replied that the capitalist government and their parties are closing down hospitals, libraries, post offices, claiming they aren’t profitable. “But these are basic services working people need,” he said.

After hearing the socialists’ call for an immediate end to Washington’s wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and elsewhere, an active-duty soldier who served in Iraq and Afghanistan asked Hoeppner if it was possible to do so. “How are you going to deal with the fat cats on Wall Street who would oppose anything you tried to do?” the soldier asked.

“The same way working people have before,” said Hoeppner. “The same way we ended the Jim Crow system of segregation in this country, the same way we opposed the Vietnam War—by fighting!”

Sara Lobman contributed to this article.

Congressional candidates air views on Queens TV



Congressional candidates in New York’s 9th District at taping session for public TV in Queens. From left: Chris Hoeppner, SWP; Republican Bob Turner; and Democrat David Weprin.

BY SETH GALINSKY

FLUSHING, New York—“The capitalists have created the crisis and they want to put it on the backs of working people,” Chris Hoeppner, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Congress, told Queens Public Television August 23.

The TV station interviewed the three candidates on the ballot in the September 13 special election for 9th Congressional District in parts of Queens and Brooklyn. Hoeppner, who works at an electronics factory, is calling on working people to break with the capitalist parties, the Democrats and Republicans, and help build a mass social movement to organize a revolutionary fight for workers power.

The Republican and Democratic candidates are Robert Turner, a retired cable TV executive, and David Weprin, an attorney and member of the New York State Assembly.

Among the questions asked by Vishal Persaud, a *Queens Courier* reporter who conducted the interviews, was what the candidates would do to create jobs in face of 9.1 percent unemployment.

Weprin called for an “infrastructure bank,” echoing a proposal by President Barack Obama to create a bank to loan money to finance road and railway building and repairs. Weprin said training programs should be set up to “make sure jobs are in the 9th C.D.” Turner called for “creating jobs with private nickels,” not government funds, includ-



Militant/Paul Mailhot

Chris Hoeppner, right, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress, campaigns at Verizon workers’ picket line August 17 in Manhattan. At left is Rebecca Williamson, SWP candidate for New York State Assembly in 54th District. “Yes, if they just repaved the highways and built schools and hospitals, it would put millions to work,” said striker Marcel Ojourongbe, center, in response to the party’s call for massive national jobs program.

working part-time against their will, he said, or those out of work for so long they’ve stopped looking for now.

Hoeppner called for a massive national jobs program “to build schools, hospitals, rail lines for public transportation, to put us to work on really useful things people need. Working people need solidarity not cutbacks,” he said.

“I joined the Verizon strikers on the picket line. I’ve joined marches for rights of immigrant workers, for legalization now,” Hoeppner added.

Persaud asked the candidates their views on gay marriage now that it’s been legalized in New York. Weprin said while he backed the New York law, “It should be done on a state-by-state basis.” Turner said he backs federal legislation to only recognize marriage between a man and a woman.

Hoeppner replied that he opposes any laws that deny to gays rights that are available to others and that perpetuate bigotry and unequal treatment of any kind.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

NEW YORK Manhattan

From Libya to Israel: What’s at Stake for Working People in the Class Struggle in the Middle East and North Africa? Speaker: Martin Koppel, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Aug. 26, 7:30 p.m. 307 W 36th St., 10th floor. Tel.: (212) 629-6649.

WASHINGTON Seattle

Video: Labor’s Turning Point—The 1934 Minneapolis Teamsters Strike. Speaker: Clay Dennison, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Sept. 2, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 5418 Rainer Ave. S. Tel.: (206) 323-1755.

CANADA Montreal

Hear Chris Hoeppner, Socialist Workers Party Candidate for U.S. Congress in New York’s 9th District. Sat., Aug. 27, 4 p.m. Forum to be followed by dinner. Donation: \$10. 7107 St-Denis, Suite 204 (Metro Jean Talon). Tel.: (514) 272-5840.

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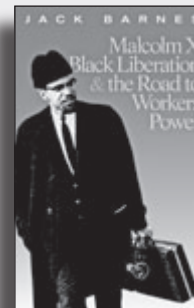
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Contact distributors on page 6—subscription rates on page 2



Pathfinder Press

Event in LA wins new support for Cuban Five

BY JAMES HARRIS

LOS ANGELES—"The struggle for the freedom of the Cuban Five should be part of the struggle of U.S. workers, because it is part of the same fight," said Mike Garcia as he welcomed more than 150 trade unionists and political activists to an August 13 solidarity event here. Garcia is president of Service Employees International Union-United Service Workers West in Los Angeles, which opened up its hall to an evening of political discussion, art, and music in support of the Cuban Five.

Speakers at the meeting included Tony Woodley, former president of Unite, the largest union in England; Cristina Vazquez, regional director of Workers United; and Alicia Jrapko from the International Committee for the Freedom of the Cuban Five.

Many of those at the meeting were hearing about the case for the first time.

Antonio Guerrero, Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, René González, and Fernando González are Cuban revolutionaries who were arrested in September 1998 in Miami.

Cuban court upholds term for US agent

BY CINDY JAQUITH

The People's Supreme Court of Cuba has rejected the appeal of Alan Gross, a U.S. citizen sentenced March 12 to 15 years in prison for "acts against the territorial independence or integrity of the state."

Gross was arrested for distributing sophisticated satellite equipment in Cuba to counterrevolutionaries as part of U.S. operations to create a covert, high-speed network there.

He worked for Development Alternatives Inc. under the U.S. State Department's USAID program, whose stated purpose is "furthering America's foreign policy interests in expanding democracy and free markets."

Development Alternatives paid Gross more than \$500,000 for his work over a short period setting up connections for what the State Department claimed were "marginalized groups" in Cuba. Gross says these were primarily Jewish social organizations, a wholly unsubstantiated claim. When former President James Carter met with leaders of the Jewish community in Cuba in March he said, "They say they have complete freedom to worship and adequate internet communication with the outside world, and that they had no substantive contact with Alan Gross."

Gross has received regular visits from his family and U.S. officials, *Granma International* reports. This stands in contrast to Washington's treatment of the Cuban Five, Cuban revolutionaries imprisoned in the United States since 1998 on frame-up charges. The wives of Gerardo Hernández and René González—Adriana Pérez and Olga Salanueva respectively—have been denied U.S. visas to see their husbands.

They were convicted on frame-up charges ranging from "conspiracy to act as unregistered foreign agents" and "conspiracy to commit espionage," to "conspiracy to commit murder" in the case of Hernández. They were given harsh sentences and remain in prison. (See story below on Hernández's fight for a new evidentiary hearing.)

The five were in the United States to gather information on right-wing Cuban exile groups in Florida with a history of carrying out violent attacks on the Cuban Revolution, with the complicity of the U.S. government.

The event here was organized as part of a traveling exhibit of Hernández's cartoons, titled *Humor from My Pen*. There was also a video of actor Danny Glover, a prominent supporter of the five; a video of the campaign of the British unions in support of the five; and entertainment.

"Every day we fight against injustice and one of our biggest struggles has been for the reunification of families and immigration reform," said Vazquez. The fight of the Cuban Five "is no different from that," she added. "We need to be the voice of the families of the Cuban Five. We need to be the voice here for the people of Cuba who want their heroes back."

"Make no mistake about it, this is an historical event," Woodley said. "The Cuban Five enjoy a great deal of support on the international level but that is not the case inside the United States. The solidarity is absolutely crucial in this case and the political struggle will be decisive for the return of the five to Cuba."

Cuban Five prisoner files for new hearing

BY CINDY JAQUITH

Attorneys for Cuban Five prisoner Gerardo Hernández have filed further arguments for a new evidentiary hearing because of the improper legal representation he received from a court-appointed public defender and because of Washington's payments to journalists who wrote scurrilous articles about Hernández and four other Cubans that prejudiced their trial in 2001.

The Cuban Five—Hernández plus Antonio Guerrero, Ramón Labañino, Fernando González, and René González—had been tracking the activities of Cuban American paramilitary groups in Miami with a long history of armed attacks against Cuba, activities tacitly supported by Washington.

Hernández was sentenced to a double life term plus 15 years on murder conspiracy charges for the Cuban government's decision on Feb. 24, 1996, to shoot down two hostile aircraft that had repeatedly and provocatively violated its airspace, despite repeated warnings from Havana. The planes were flown by the counter-revolutionary Cuban American group Brothers to the Rescue. The other four are serving sentences of between 15 and 30 years.

The new brief answers the government's refusal to grant Hernández a new, separate trial on the murder conspiracy charge requested in March. It expands on the arguments his attor-



Militant photos/Bill Arth

Above: Participants in August 13 event in Los Angeles for freedom for the Cuban Five view political cartoons by one of them, Gerardo Hernández. Inset: From left, Alicia Jrapko, International Committee for the Freedom of the Cuban Five; Tony Woodley, former president of Unite union in United Kingdom; Cristina Vazquez, regional director of Workers United; Mike Garcia, president of Service Employees International Union-United Service Workers West; and Natasha Hickman, editor of *Cuba Si!*, a U.K. union publication.



Aura Canti, one of several workers involved in a fight to win union representation for janitors at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, came to the meeting. She told the *Militant*, "I knew nothing of this case before the meeting but now I am going to learn more about it. I am also going to be a part of this fight."

This was the latest in a series of

events in southern California that shows the potential to win much wider support for the freedom of the five. In June an exhibit of Hernández's cartoons at the Social and Public Art Resource Center in Venice drew 75 people to the opening. In July, 275 people turned out in Santa Monica for a showing of the documentary *Will the Real Terrorist Please Stand Up?*

neys made then and elaborates upon Washington's propaganda efforts that tainted the trial.

Hernández's attorneys present evidence that "counsel failed to properly understand, investigate, and present a proper defense," including failing to call key witnesses and submit important evidence. Paul McKenna, his public defender, did not move to separate out the murder conspiracy charge for a separate trial, nor explain to Hernández his right to do so. A separate trial would have allowed Hernández and other defendants to testify on his behalf. If Hernández was given the opportunity to testify he would have been able to present evidence that he had no way of knowing the Cuban government would shoot down the planes.

Along with the new brief, McKenna filed an affidavit supporting Hernández's request for a new trial: "I believe that the Government's case against my client was exceptionally weak, and that my errors at before and during the trial allowed the Government to convict my client even though it had no direct evidence of criminal intent on his part."

The brief also contends that the government paid hundreds of thousands of dollars to journalists in Miami—where the government insisted the trial take place despite defendants' request for a change of venue—to create prejudicial publicity. This "constitutes an unprecedented violation of a criminal defendant's right to a fair

trial, and calls out for a remedy," say Hernández's attorneys. The government has refused to acknowledge its unconstitutional media campaign, despite a 2006 front-page article in the *Miami Herald* that exposed it titled "10 Miami Journalists Take U.S. Pay."

Mara Verheyden-Hilliard, executive director of the Partnership for Civil Justice Fund in Washington, D.C., also submitted an affidavit in support of Hernández that details the government's withholding of information on its payments to the journalists.

In an August 1 statement, the Cuban National Assembly said, "Now is the time to redouble our actions" in defense of the Cuban Five. The assembly demanded the U.S. government release the facts on its secret campaign to prejudice the trial by paying journalists to spread lies and that it turn over satellite images of the shootdown of the Brothers to the Rescue planes.

The statement also noted that Hernández is now facing new obstacles to consultation with his attorneys. One of the attorneys, Richard Klugh, told the *Militant* there have been increased delays in circulating legal documents between the attorneys and Hernández and holdups in gaining authorization to visit him in prison. "Every inmate faces these kind of problems," he added, "but in Gerardo Hernández's case, it's much worse."

ON THE PICKET LINE

Locked-out Illinois workers: 'This is not just about wages'

HENRY, Ill.—“They want to make slaves of the workers. They want to dictate your every move,” said Steve Scobee while grilling hamburgers at the weekly cookout held by members of Teamsters Local 627. Forty members of the local have been locked out of Emerald Performance, a chemical plant just outside of Henry, since March 21.

Chief Steward Brett Wiedman said Steelworkers, Chemical Workers, and Teamsters unions at other Emerald plants in Ohio, Washington, and Illinois have formed the Emerald Unions Council.

In a statement the council said, “What brought us together is an unprecedented attack on the livelihood of our members.” Workers refuse “to accept a 30 percent cut in pay, the outsourcing of the quality control lab, and the elimination of the Environmental Health and Safety Operator position, amongst other things.”

Dave Hastings, who has worked 20 years at the plant, said the contract proposes to outsource his job as a quality lab operator. “This is not just about the wages,” he said. “You will not have any control of your work schedule. They propose eliminating all of our sick days.”

Donnie Dickerson, 34, had worked in the plant for five weeks when the lockout began. He said the proposed wage cut would reduce his hourly pay by \$1, but “I’m not going to cut an older guy’s throat to save \$1. I wouldn’t want him to do that to me.” Many workers would have their pay cut from \$30 an hour to \$20.

“There used to be a team, now there is no team, there is us and them,” said Bill Russell, who has worked at Emerald for 33 years. He said there is a lot of community support for their fight. When a local car dealership refused to

allow its lot to be used to park replacement workers cars, the company got use of the county fairgrounds. “Then the union went to the board and got that stopped,” Russell said.

—Alyson Kennedy

Minnesota grocery stores picketed over stalled contract talks

ST. PAUL, Minn.— More than 50 people picketed outside the Kowalski’s grocery store here August 17. The company has pulled out of negotiations with Local 1189 of the United Food and Commercial Workers and imposed its last offer to the union. A similar picket was held simultaneously at another Kowalski’s store in White Bear Lake.

Kowalski’s “is attempting to destroy the grocery pension plans by withdrawing from all of them and starting their own 401(k),” the union said on its website. In addition, the company is seeking to impose a wage freeze and to replace full-time workers with part-timers.

The pickets, many carrying signs saying “We support Kowalski’s workers,” were warmly received by people driving by the store. This was not the case with bosses inside the store. Many of them came outside, including the owner, and debated Don Seaquist, president of UFCW Local 1189, which represents 5,000 workers in the metropolitan area. Seaquist told them, “You want to talk to me now, after pulling out of the talks. Come back to the table, then we can talk.”

Carrying signs that said “Stop the war on U.S. workers,” members of Teamsters Local 120 joined the picket line, along with about 20 members of UFCW locals who were in town in negotiations with Hormel. These included meatpacking locals in Georgia, Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, and Wisconsin.

Negotiations with St. Paul grocers, including Cub, Jerry’s Foods, Rainbow Foods, Festival Foods, and Lunds/Byerly’s, are ongoing. These grocers agreed to contract extensions on June 23.

—Frank Forrester

Chicago meat packers win settlement on plant shutdown

CHICAGO—Meat packers fired nearly 10 years ago have won a vic-



Militant/Frank Forrester

Pickets outside Kowalski’s grocery store in St. Paul, Minn. Company has walked out of contract talks with United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1189.

tory in a class-action lawsuit against the American Meat Packing Corporation.

Bosses at AMPAC, Chicago’s last hog slaughterhouse, closed their doors in November 2001 without giving nearly 300 workers 60 days notice, a violation of the Workers Adjustment and Retraining Act. Most were members of the United Food and Commercial Workers union.

Workers who were on AMPAC’s payroll as of Oct. 31, 2001, are receiving checks. The settlement, available to the public at the U.S. District Court here, bars AMPAC workers and their attorney from making public comments on it.

After the shutdown, a couple dozen AMPAC workers met in the Latino Union, a center for temporary workers, and decided to demand two months severance pay, extension of medical benefits, and unpaid vacation pay. They won support from churches and community groups. On Christmas Eve 2001, 50 AMPAC workers protested in front of the plant, carrying signs in Polish, Spanish, and English.

Four months later another 50 workers rallied when the lawsuit was filed in Federal District Court. Messages of support were received from UFCW Local 789 in South St. Paul, and workers at ConAgra Beef in Omaha, Neb.

—Ilona Gersh

West Virginia coal miner is killed in 13th US mine death

BY CINDY JAQUITH

Charles Hall, a miner at Arch Coal’s Mountaineer II Mine near Sharples, W. Va., was killed in a rock fall August 15. He was installing roof supports at the time in preparation for moving longwall machinery.

According to the Mine Safety and Health Administration, Hall’s death is the 13th for U.S. coal miners this year and the fifth in West Virginia. Another miner died at Mountaineer II in 2007 when he fell into an air shaft. The mine received more than 300 ci-

tations for safety violations last year, MSHA reports.

So far this year MSHA has issued 245 citations and orders at Mountaineer II, including for what MSHA calls “significant and substantial” violations of safety regulations and “aggravated conduct constituting more than ordinary negligence.”

In June Arch Coal acquired International Coal Group, the company that owned the Sago Mine in West Virginia where 12 miners died in a preventable explosion in 2006.

Recommended reading

Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay

by Leon Trotsky

Invaluable to the practical education of militant workers who are relearning today what a strike is and how it can be fought and won—militants who, in the course of such struggles, become interested in ideas of fellow unionists about how the entire system of capitalist exploitation can be ended.

—\$16

Featuring “Trade Unions: Their Past, Present, and Future” by Karl Marx

Introduction by Farrell Dobbs

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25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



September 5, 1986

The government has no right to use informers, disruption programs, or break-ins against political organizations, a federal judge has ruled.

The victory for constitutional rights came August 25 in a suit filed by the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance against the U.S. government.

Spying and disruption by FBI snitches and provocateurs is “patently unconstitutional,” ruled U.S. District Judge Thomas Griesa. Hundreds of proven burglaries by the FBI of party offices were “obvious violations of the Fourth Amendment.” The judge also held that the disruption program carried out by the FBI, known as Cointelpro, was illegal.



September 4 & 11, 1961

The United Auto Workers and the Big Three auto corporations have extended their contracts until Sept 6. UAW president Walter Reuther said he would be willing to settle with GM on the same basis that he settled with American Motors Corp.

Last week, when the union’s 40-man AMC bargaining committee was meeting to consider AMC’s “profit-sharing” offer, a worker who left the meeting told a reporter: “That’s a speedup technique.”

“Profit-sharing” is one of the surest ways to undermine militant unionism. By tying the workers’ income to the employers’ profits, it promotes speedup. It turns worker against worker.



December 12, 1936

Mass delegations representing the American Federation of Government Employees and the Workers’ Alliance stormed the San Francisco Headquarters Saturday to protest the wholesale lay-offs of W.P.A. employees.

A delegation from the AFGE of about 200 members walked in on James Hopper, head of the writers project, demanding the reinstatement of those laid off and withdrawal of the program for further curtailment of the personnel.

A delegation of 300 members of the Workers’ Alliance, locally composed of WPA laborers, carried on a demonstration.

Some 300 members stormed the office of State Supervisor Wakefield.

Why payments to bondholders are sacrosanct to US rulers

Below is an excerpt from Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium by Jack Barnes, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for September. The excerpt takes up the issue of bondholders and the "national debt." It's in response to questions raised following a talk by Barnes attended by some 400 people in November 1992, four days after William Clinton was elected U.S. president. Mentioned in the article is Ross Perot, a wealthy businessman and bondholder who ran as an "independent" against Clinton, receiving nearly 20 percent of the vote. Copyright © 1999 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY JACK BARNES

COMMENT: I was wondering if you could say something about the deficit and the national debt? Perot especially talked a lot about that during the election campaign. How significant are the deficit and the debt to the capitalist crisis? Is it really something that the ruling class is worried about? Or is it just another way that they try to justify attacking the working class?

RESPONSE: Yes, the U.S. rulers are worried about the budget deficit. When a government deficit remains very large as a percentage of overall production, one of two things (or some combination of the two) has to happen: either taxation



"The capitalist parties clamp down harder and harder on the working class and increase exploitation," says Jack Barnes. Above, rally in Lansing, Michigan, February 26 backing Wisconsin public workers' fight against antiunion legislation. One of biggest causes of growing government expenses is interest payments to holders of U.S. Treasury bonds, payments that will not be touched.

will increase, or the national currency is devalued. The capitalist class does not like either one to happen.

The propertied families do not like to raise taxes—especially income or wealth-related taxes—because taxation is a deduction from surplus value, so that puts further downward pressure on their profit rates. To most workers, it seems strange to say that taxes come out of surplus value. When we look at our pay stubs, it seems like a lot of taxes come out of our wages. And that perception reflects the social reality of regressive taxation under capitalism, whereby the *form* of all sorts of levies is a very real burden on workers. Socialists are for lifting all taxes from the shoulders of working people. From the origins of the modern communist workers movement, we have advocated a steeply graduated income tax that falls only on the capitalists and better-off professional and middle classes.

Scientifically, however, most of what are usually called taxes ultimately comes out of the capitalists' surplus value. Under a given relationship of class forces between capital and labor, if the government squeezes too much from our paychecks in the form of taxes, then the capitalists simply end up over time having to raise wages in order to compensate. So, the rulers do not like to see taxation go up more than absolutely necessary to maintain a government that can act to

defend the interests of their class.

The capitalists do not like to devalue the currency either. That makes it much more difficult and expensive for them to attract funds into the country that they can use as capital to make more profits for themselves and compete with their rivals. . . .

The great bulk of the wealth of the imperialist ruling classes today is held in debt. It is hard for workers to get comfortable with this idea, since it is so far-removed from our own experience with debt. Workers associate debt with economic pressure, not wealth. We say to ourselves: "I've got some debts. I owe MasterCard a couple of thousand dollars and my brother-in-law a few hundred bucks. What does that have to do with being wealthy?"

But alas! That is the difference between classes. That is the difference between those who live off surplus value and those whose labor produces it.

Interest-bearing bonds is the form in which the capitalists hold most of this debt. And what the bondholders fear above all is that the value of their bonds will be driven down by currency devaluation. . . .

One of the biggest causes of the growing deficit, of course, is interest payments to the holders of U.S. Treasury bonds. The big capitalists in this country and abroad who hold that government debt are paid some \$200 billion each year,

some 15 percent of the federal budget—more than all government spending on education, transportation, food stamps, housing, and aid to families with dependent children combined. But those payments will not be touched.

Instead, the capitalist parties clamp down harder and harder on the working class and increase exploitation. Above all, they are taking aim today at the social rights working people have won. As a by-product of the mass social movement that built the industrial unions in the 1930s, and then of the civil rights battles of the 1950s and 1960s, working people in the United States won the right to a minimum level of lifetime income security.

What became known as the Social Security system in the United States was the opposite of any kind of charity, which is all that most workers previously had to rely on once meager family resources were spent. It was the opposite of what is called "welfare" today—paltry sums doled out to working people on the basis of degrading means tests and invasion of privacy by so-called social workers. Social Security was something different. It was a social wage paid out over a worker's entire lifetime in the form of jobless benefits, disability pay, and a pension. Workers and other toilers who produce society's wealth began to look at such things as social rights.

This is what Ross Perot openly takes aim at. As usual, he does it demagogically. "I'm a multimillionaire," he says. "Why should I and others in my situation get Social Security free and clear? Shouldn't I at least have to pay taxes on it?" But workers need to think carefully about where Perot's populist-sounding argument actually leads. It heads back toward charity, toward means-tested welfare, toward the workhouse, the poorhouse, the flophouse, and the orphanage. It is only the *universal* character of social security programs—their quality as social *rights* enjoyed by all, like public education—that stamps them as lasting social conquests of the working class and other toilers. . . .

[T]his social wage is among the capitalists' central targets. But the rulers find it politically difficult to attack these gains head-on, since tens of millions of working people, and many in the middle classes, now consider these gains to be universal social rights.

September BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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Demonstrations shake Israel

Continued from front page

were Arabs, who comprise 20 percent of Israel's population. Speakers addressed the crowd in Hebrew and Arabic.

More than 10,000 rallied in the southern city of Beersheba. Among the demands there was an end to state demolition of "unrecognized villages" where tens of thousands of Arabs live, reported the *New York Times*. Other actions occurred in Afula, Ashkelon, Dimona, Eilat, Nahariya, Netanya, and Tikva.

Facing falling support for his government, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu seized on shootings and bombings near Eilat in southern Israel on August 18 to try to quell the protests with nationalist appeals to the country's Jewish majority for "unity." Six civilians and two Israeli soldiers were killed in the attacks, which no one claimed responsibility for but Tel Aviv ascribes to the Popular Resistance Committees.

Over the next few days, the Israeli government launched airstrikes along the Egyptian border and in Gaza, and the Popular Resistance Committees and Hamas fired rockets into Israeli towns.

While protests against the high cost of living subsided after the attacks, some organizers say they will keep pressing their demands. The National Union of Israeli Students, for example, called off a rally set for Jerusalem August 20. But Lilach Meir of the group's department of foreign affairs told the *Militant* in a phone interview that "We will continue with demonstrations to achieve our demands. Everything here is more expensive. It's very hard to live."

Some 4,000 demonstrators joined a silent candlelight march in Tel Aviv August 20. "Many of the marchers said they had turned out not only to be heard on social issues but also to express solidarity with residents in

the south," reported *Haaretz*. A sharp exchange ensued when some demonstrators raised demands in support of Palestinians in areas occupied by Israel since the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

'System is not working'

While the official unemployment rate in Israel is nearly 7 percent, about 40 percent of Israelis between 15 and 64 years old are not working, according to Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development figures. Almost one-quarter of the population lives below the government's poverty line; for Arabs living in Israel the figure is more than 50 percent. Housing prices have increased about 40 percent in the last three years, according to Bloomberg News.

Protests against these conditions began July 14 after Daphni Leef, a 25-year-old Israeli film school graduate, announced on the Internet that her new home would be a tent in central Tel Aviv along the city's fashionable Rothschild Boulevard. She invited others to join her. Leef had received an eviction notice and couldn't afford the higher rent her landlord was demanding. By the end of the week some 5,000 people had moved into tents there and across Israel, she said.

"I am a teacher but with my salary I cannot even finish the month without going into debt," Adi Peleu, 30, who took up residence in one of these tents in Tel Aviv, told the *Financial Times*. "The system is not working for us. It's not just about housing but also about



Protesters carry signs in both Hebrew and Arabic during housing protest in Jaffa, Israel, August 13. Arabs are 20 percent of Israel's population. Rally in Beersheba the same day demanded end to demolition of "unrecognized villages" where Arabs live.

taxes, which are very high; it is about gasoline, which is very expensive, and about the cost of food."

Signs in both Arabic and Hebrew on a tent titled "48" (short for the year 1948, when the state of Israel was founded) created quite a "buzz" when it was set up in the heart of Tel Aviv, reported *dailykos.com*. Mixed Arab-Jewish tents have been set up in the Jaffna section of Tel Aviv, and in northern Galilee a mixed Orthodox Jewish and Arab site was erected, according to Al Jazeera.

Hundreds of retirees on pensions rallied by one of the busiest traffic intersections in Tel Aviv August 15. A "stroller march," demanding the government provide free public child

care starting at three months instead of three years of age, took place July 28 in Tel Aviv.

Six days later thousands of dairy farmers marched through the central part of the city protesting government plans to lower the price they would get for their milk and increase imports of dairy products, reported *Haaretz*.

In face of the protests, Netanyahu called on city officials not to evict the tent campers. Hoping to appease demonstrators and buffer the destabilizing impact on his cabinet, the prime minister set up a government panel to come up with "solutions that are economically sound."

The committee is supposed to submit its recommendations in September.

Protesters in Syria defy murderous regime

BY SETH GALINSKY

Workers and farmers across Syria continue their mobilizations for political rights, refusing to back down despite the deaths of some 2,000 people at the hands of the government of President Bashar al-Assad over the last five months. More

than 350 civilians have been killed during the first three weeks of August, according to UN figures.

Thousands took to the streets August 19 in Deir al-Zour in eastern Syria, Daraa in the south, Latakia on the northwest coast, in Damascus suburbs, and elsewhere.

On August 22, a UN delegation sent to Homs with the regime's agreement to "assess the need for food and medicine" was met by hundreds of protesters. "The people want the overthrow of the regime," they chanted, and "We will never give up until we get our freedom." Officials ordered the delegation to leave. Two people were later shot dead by government agents, according to the London *Guardian*.

On August 12 the government assaulted opposition strongholds in Latakia, the country's main port. A central target was Ramleh, home to more than 10,000 Palestinians as well as other working people, many of them fishermen or laborers at the port. Residents' reports of being fired on by gunboats, corroborated by witnesses, were denied by Syrian officials. Troops also used tanks and automatic weapons.

There are more than 460,000 Palestinians in Syria, mostly refugees from what is now Israel and their descendants. For decades the ruling Baath party has cynically proclaimed Syria a "fortress of resistance" for the Palestinians and the fight against imperialism. It kept up this pretense even as Syrian-backed forces attacked refugee camps in Beirut, Lebanon, in the 1970s and '80s.

"We will not accept to be a bargaining chip for the Syrian regime," Abu Ammar, a Palestinian refugee living in Yarmouk, a refugee camp in a Damas-

cus suburb, told *globalpost.com*. "I think most Palestinian refugees in Yarmouk now moved from being neutral to being on the side of the Syrian protesters."

President Barack Obama, after months of calling on Assad to "advance a meaningful reform agenda," issued a statement August 18 imposing stiff new sanctions and saying "the time has come for President Assad to step aside."

Under pressure from Washington, regimes in the region are taking their distance from Assad. The rulers of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Bahrain recalled ambassadors to Damascus in August. Ankara, seeking to establish Turkey as the main bourgeois power in the region, is calling on Damascus to soften its stance. Tehran, also in the U.S. rulers' gunights, is backing Assad.

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Capitalism's Long Hot Winter Has Begun by Jack Barnes

in *New International* no. 12

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'Workers consider speedup bonus a bribe'

Over the past months communist workers from Atlanta to Des Moines, Iowa, have sent "blood money" contributions to the Socialist Workers Party's Capital Fund. The fund helps finance long-term projects of the party.

Blood money is a term communist workers use to describe so-called bonus payments handed out by employers as bribes to try to get workers to accept speedup, wage cuts, concession contracts, and dangerous work conditions.

Jacob Perasso sent in \$339 he received as the company implemented a 10 percent speedup in production of all-terrain vehicles at a plant in the Atlanta area. "The time we had to do our jobs was cut from 78 seconds to 69," he wrote.

"In the area where I work the radiator-fill machine has sprayed anti-freeze on five people in the last month. A coworker told me that the reason the company doesn't fill the radiator off the line, after production, under less pressure is that the fluid, which is toxic, could damage the body of the vehicle. It is evident that the company cares more about damage to the vehicle than damage to us."

"Many coworkers said they consider the bonus a bribe," Perasso continued. "A coworker with many years in the plant showed me a display in one of the break rooms with a photo of a worker killed on the job in 2003. The equipment that electrocuted him needed to be fixed and everyone knew it but the company refused because of the cost."

In Des Moines, Chuck Guerra sent in \$50, the cash equivalent of a gift card he received from the company for showing workers from another site how to run the mail insertion machine he operates.

"This is an example of a crumb thrown to a worker to try to buy our loyalty and get us to compete among ourselves to curry favor with management," he wrote. "I'm glad to turn the money over to the Capital Fund where it will help produce the publications we need to build a movement to bring down the system that pits workers against each other and in which we're supposed to be grateful for any little 'bonus' we get."

—BRIAN WILLIAMS

‘Political ammunition for practical battles’

Forewords to Indonesian editions of two classics on road to women’s emancipation

Reprinted here are the forewords to the Indonesian editions of *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* by Frederick Engels and *Woman’s Evolution* by Evelyn Reed. The books were published in Indonesia as a boxed set by the Jakarta-based organization Kalyanamitra (Women’s Communication and Information Centre). In April Kalyanamitra held a public meeting celebrating the publication of *Woman’s Evolution* (see story in July 18 Militant). Copyright © 2011 by Pathfinder Press. Translations are by Pathfinder; reprinted by permission.

‘Origin of the Family’

The book title *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* by Frederick Engels was published more than a hundred years ago. Now this book is regaining popularity. This is connected to the rise of the women’s liberation movement in the United States and Canada during the late 1960s. Along with organizing activities and mobilizing mass actions to eradicate and eliminate the deep-rooted discrimination women face, women began asking how their oppression originated and whether it has always been the case since ancient times. Eventually many feminists turned to read this classic by Engels. This book serves not only to arm the movement theoretically, but also to inspire with confidence that the liberation of women can be won.

In the context of Indonesia, Frederick Engels’s writing becomes important because it sheds new light and shows a new path, especially for women, but for all of us in general. This kind of literature is rare and it could be considered difficult to find in Indonesia. When the New Order was in power, books containing critical views were banned from publi-

cation or distribution because they were perceived as a danger to the state and an inspiration to people to take a revolutionary path to change the authoritarian government and system. But even during the Old Order,¹ the progressive publisher Jajasan Pembaharuan, which often published books with a critical viewpoint, also didn’t manage to translate the writings of Frederick Engels.

The Kalyanamitra Foundation is pleased to celebrate the publication of this book as an enthusiastic reminder to activists, academics, social movements, and society as a whole about it. Hopefully this book will fill a void in the women’s movement and in the social development of Indonesia, providing an ideological and theoretical framework which becomes ammunition in practical, day-to-day resistance and battles.

Like a beacon in the dark, we hope this book can illuminate the steps in our struggle to forge a better, unified nation and bring about gender justice. In the midst of chaos in our social and political system and our culture at this time under the rule of the reform regime—while women continue to be oppressed and exploited—the inspiration within this book should encourage the women’s movement and other social movements to go forward. End the darkness, let there be light! And the light will guide our struggle to victory!

Happy reading and enjoy this book.

‘Woman’s Evolution’

The social phenomena that place men above women in all aspects of life are often bewildering. When did the process of marginalization of women occur in our social transformation in many places in this world? Why did this exclusion happen? What social powers were at work in this process with such strength to oppress women down to today? There are many more questions that we could ask to expose the reality



Women in Central Java, Indonesia, harvest peanuts, 2009. Inset: April 26 book launch of Indonesian translation of *Woman’s Evolution* in Jakarta. “Evelyn Reed helps us understand the history of women’s oppression and how to overcome it,” says foreword.

of the history of this oppression.

This bewilderment has been compounded by the limited references and preferences to guide us, while the discourse that developed hasn’t fully explained the key problem.

This book, as a fundamental work, explains clearly many key questions about social phenomena over hundreds and even thousands of years in the development of society that were accepted without question. Now it is clear for us how patriarchal values arose in our society even though it was through a long process. Evelyn Reed’s work clearly explains the fundamental questions surrounding the historical mystery of women’s oppression. It can help us to picture and focus more sharply on the reality of this oppression.

In any event, the existence of this book will help in the process of epistemological and logical thought that’s clear and distinct. With the anthropo-

logical evidence she provides, Evelyn Reed helps us to understand and digest the reality of the history of women’s oppression down to today and how to develop a strategic course for us to overcome the many sides of this oppression.

Hopefully the publication of this book, together with the printing of the work by Engels which we have also published, will help to educate us and all those who want to understand and comprehend the history of women’s oppression, and hopefully in turn we can make the decision to unite together in determination and action to change the social reality that’s oppressing us. That’s because the abolition of oppression against women means the abolition of injustice against humanity itself. As Karl Marx said, “We need not only to interpret the reality, what’s important is how to change it.” Hopefully!

Enjoy this book!

1. The Old Order refers to the bourgeois nationalist regime of Sukarno that arose following the upsurge of workers and peasants that won Indonesian independence from Dutch colonial rule in 1945. The New Order is the three-decade Suharto military dictatorship, which stripped Sukarno of power in a 1965 coup and then slaughtered hundreds of thousands of members of the Indonesian Communist Party, thousands of ethnic Chinese, and others. Suharto was forced out of office by massive mobilizations in 1998.

—Militant

Nicaraguan gov’t and bishops uphold abortion ban

BY RÓGER CALERO

Nicaraguan president Daniel Ortega and the Catholic Church hierarchy have rejected any change in the law that denies women the right to choose abortion, even in cases of rape, incest, or danger to the woman’s health.

The president “is in favor of life. We have internalized truth, the teachings of faith, of Christianity,” said Rosario Murillo August 2. Murillo is Ortega’s campaign manager in the upcoming elections, and also his wife. Her comments were reported in Managua’s *El Nuevo Diario*, which recounted similar statements by prominent Catholic bishops.

Nicaragua is one of a tiny handful of countries that ban abortion under all circumstances, according to the Center for Reproductive Rights. Women obtaining abortions face up to two years in jail, and abortion providers can be sentenced to eight years’ imprisonment.

According to the Guttmacher Institute, Nicaragua has a very high maternal death rate—170 per 100,000—while the average in the region is 99 per 100,000. Many of these deaths are due to illegal abortions done under unsanitary conditions.

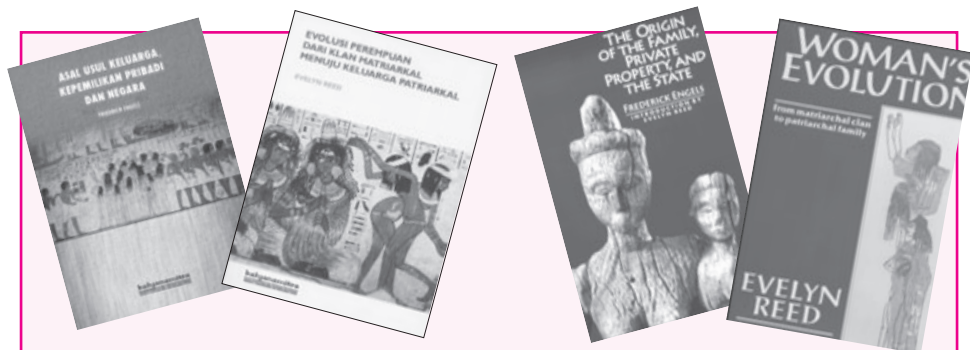
Days before Murillo’s statement, an Amnesty International delegation visited the country to press for le-

galization of abortion in cases of the mother’s health, rape, or incest. They asked to meet with the five presidential candidates of the country’s main political parties in the November elections. While none of the candidates favors lifting the abortion ban, Ortega, running on the Sandinista National Liberation Front ticket, was the only one to refuse.

During the November 2006 presidential elections, representatives of the FSLN and other bourgeois parties in Nicaragua’s National Assembly tightened restrictions on the right to abortion, which at the time was allowed for a few medical reasons.

The fight for women’s right to choose became an issue in Nicaragua after the FSLN-led revolution in 1979 that overthrew the U.S.-backed Somoza dictatorship. Women played a leading role in the revolution and entered more deeply into the workforce and politics. By the mid-1980s growing numbers saw the ban on most abortions, carried over from the Somoza era, to be in con-

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Chicago: Hundreds protest gov't attack on immigrants

BY BETSY FARLEY
AND LAURA ANDERSON

CHICAGO—More than 500 people protested at a public hearing here August 17 against the U.S. government's Secure Communities program, under which the status of anyone fingerprinted by local police is reviewed by federal immigration authorities for possible deportation. Smaller protests also took place in Miami, Atlanta, Houston, and Charlotte, N.C., reported the *New York Times*.

Similar hearings were recently held in Dallas and Los Angeles. A couple hundred demonstrators walked out of the one in Los Angeles, according to the *Times*. Another hearing is scheduled for Washington, D.C., August 24.

"I will not sit idly by as ICE [Immigration and Customs Enforcement] terrorizes my community, my family, and strips us of our dignity," Carla Novoa told the *Militant* at the Chicago hearing. Novoa, who came to the U.S. from the Philippines at age 5, is now a student at the University of Illinois at Chicago and an organizer with the Immigrant Youth Justice League.

Workers, students, and immigrant rights activists were the overwhelming majority of those who turned out for the hearing held at the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers union hall. It was organized by an advisory task force to the Department of Homeland Security.

The Secure Communities program was initiated in 2008. In early August the Barack Obama administration declared the program would be expanded nationwide by 2013, after several state governments notified the White House that they would no longer cooperate.

In June, Massachusetts announced it was pulling out of the program, the third state to do so after New York and Illinois. Department of Homeland Security officials responded by stating that the program was not optional, is backed by the Obama administration and Congress, and would continue to be expanded.

State and local governments have been under pressure from cop organizations, many of whom argue that Secure Communities has made residents in immigrant communities less trustful and less cooperative with police.

Organizers of the hearing tried to close the doors soon after the meeting began to prevent people who arrived late from participating. The meeting was suspended as participants chanted, "Let the people in!" until the doors were opened.

A few people presented statements to the task force. Mario De la Rosa, of Waukegan, said he is fighting deportation proceedings after he was pulled over by Waukegan police in February for a broken taillight. De la Rosa, who is from Mexico, said he spent 12 days in custody before a federal immigration judge granted him a temporary release to care for his 24-year-old disabled son. His next court date is August 30.

A Mexican-born woman said Chicago police arrested her husband after a mix-up over some broken car windows. He ended up in deportation proceedings. The woman held up a federal order for him to board a flight back to Mexico.

"It used to be when we organized

unions you wanted a union card *but* you didn't have to worry about being carded," said Jim Cusak, a retired union carpenter who traveled from Milwaukee for the hearing. Half the people he worked with were immigrants he said. "And we built things together."

One man who supports the Secure Communities program spoke on how an "illegal immigrant" ran over his brother with a car and killed him.

After a few speakers, Alaa Mukahhal, who stood in the front of the room with a half a dozen others from the Immigrant Youth Justice League, called on people to walk out of the meeting in protest. "We are sick of hearings and waiting for justice!" she announced. Members of the group encouraged the majority to march out to the street to continue the protest. Later in the evening 10 demonstrators were arrested in a civil disobedience action.

Immigration officials boast that Secure Communities has led to the deportation of more than 86,000 immigrants



Militant/Laura Anderson

Government-sponsored hearing in Chicago August 17 on anti-immigrant Secure Communities program. Speaker at mike is from Immigrant Youth Justice League, which urged people to walk out to protest federal measures attacking immigrant rights.

convicted of crimes. Many of these are minor offenses. The program has also snared thousands who were booked and fingerprinted but never convicted.

"It is an attack on immigrant workers, not a way to catch criminals," Carlos Arango, director of Casa Atzlán told the *Militant*. "You can be arrested and turned over to ICE now for violations

like not having a driver's license. We call on the government to end this program."

A day after the hearing, the Obama administration announced that undocumented students and other "low-priority immigration offenders" will not be targeted for deportation under enforcement programs.

Verizon strikers return to work, fight takebacks

Continued from front page
have been a major factor."

"We weren't prepared for a long strike," said Craig Ross in New York. "But I'm not happy about not having a contract. I hope the company isn't planning to use this as an opportunity to have us come in, clean up the workload, and then start playing hardball again."

Joe Urban, a central office technician in New York, was on strike against Verizon in 1989 for 17 weeks. "The company may not be making the profits they want, but we know there is enough to pay for our benefits

from the millions they are making," he said.

Urban rejected the idea that the workers were greedy for demanding no cuts to their benefits, while other workers have seen big cuts to theirs. "I tell people we have good benefits and you should too!"

Other working people, both union and nonunion, quickly identified with the strikers, glad to see someone finally put up a fight against the relentless drive by the employers against wages, benefits, and job conditions in the last three years.

At an August 20 rally of 400 in

Pittsburgh to support the strike, a number of workers from other unions turned out to show solidarity. "This is not just about Verizon," Jim Bonner, a member of the Amalgamated Transit Union, told the *Militant*. "There were 140 bus drivers laid off in April. People can't get to work. No politician is helping us."

"We are here because our contract is up November 1," said Larry Rinney of Service Employees International Union Local 32BJ. "We have to show the rich that we are united."

John Vignovic, chief steward for CWA Local 13500, gave an example of the solidarity the strikers received. "When it was raining a bus pulled up to the picket line and donated a box of umbrellas left by passengers," he said.

Verizon strikers also spoke about some of their experiences during the
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Abortion ban in Nicaragua

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tradition with the revolution's goals of ending exploitation and inequality. A public debate opened.

The FSLN government at the time refused any change in the law. Ortega explained why at a 1987 meeting marking the 10th anniversary of the Sandinista-led national women's organization, covered by *Militant* reporters in Nicaragua at the time.

Ortega sought to rationalize this position by pointing to the U.S.-sponsored counterrevolutionary war and its impact on Nicaragua's small population. "The ones fighting in the front lines against this aggression are young men," he said. "One way of depleting our youth is to promote the sterilization of women in Nicaragua—just imagine what would happen then—or to promote a policy of abortion."

"The problem is that the woman is the one who reproduces. The man can't play that role," Ortega continued. Some women, he said, "aspiring to be liberated," decide not to bear children. "A woman who does so negates her own continuity, the continuity of the human species."

This stance was one registration of the FSLN leadership's growing aban-

donment of the revolutionary government's proletarian course in the early years following the overthrow of Somoza. The workers and farmers government had begun to take far-reaching measures in the interests of the producing majority. By the mid-1980s, however, the FSLN leadership began retreating from mobilizing working people to fight for their interests. Instead, it relied more and more on alliances with sections of the capitalist class. The current FSLN leadership has sought to carve out for itself a place in capitalist ruling circles, and to use its political influence to expand lucrative business interests as well.

FSLN leaders have allied with figures in the Catholic Church hierarchy, including some like retired Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo who were staunch opponents of the revolution in the 1980s. Obando y Bravo was even invited this year to open the celebration of the 32nd anniversary of the triumph of the 1979 revolution.

"We are very happy that both the evangelical and Catholic churches and the state closed rank in defense of life," said Monsignor Bismarck Carballo, another outspoken opponent of the revolution.

for further reading

New International no. 9

The Rise and Fall of the Nicaraguan Revolution

by Jack Barnes, Larry Seigle



\$16

Recounts achievements and worldwide impact of the workers and farmers government that came to power in Nicaragua in 1979. Also traces the political retreat of the Sandinista National

Liberation Front leadership that led to the downfall of the revolution in the closing years of the 1980s.

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Israel not exempt from class politics

Widespread demonstrations against sky-high rents and deteriorating living conditions that have shaken Israel since mid-July expose just how false is the notion that—unlike other countries, including in the Middle East—Israel is somehow exempt from the laws of the class struggle. That Arab and Jewish workers in Israel and the region have no basis for united action against the capitalist rulers and their government in Tel Aviv.

The huge outpourings show that Israel is not isolated from the consequences of the capitalist crisis wracking the lives of hundreds of millions of working people worldwide. That social catastrophe fueled aspirations among workers and youth to throw off tyranny and win freedoms to organize and act that bore fruit in the toppling of oppressive regimes in Tunisia and Egypt and are right now rocking Libya and Syria to their foundations.

Working people of different nationalities and convictions have been impelled into the streets—Jews, Muslims, Christians, those with no religious beliefs; Arabs, Kurds, Berbers, and more. Bourgeois rulers, with imperialist backing, pit toilers against each other in order to stay in power and preserve their privileged lives.

In Israel, during the recent actions, signs in both Hebrew and Arabic decorated a tent called “48,” which

was part of the protest encampment in Tel Aviv. “48” stands for 1948, the year the State of Israel was founded and Palestinians dispossessed of a homeland.

The events in Israel are an affirmation of the power of the struggle for a democratic secular Palestine. That struggle will emerge over time out of battles for land and water rights; an end to religious tests for jobs, services, or other aspects of social and political life; decent wages and conditions; women’s equality; and an end to brutal operations by Tel Aviv’s cops, troops, and commandos.

The reality that class battles in Israel will be waged by both Jewish and Palestinian working people can now be seen more clearly. It is along this line of march that the forces of a revolutionary struggle for workers power will be forged and capitalist rule ended in Israel.

As elsewhere in the world, the working class in the Middle East—from Israel and the occupied territories, to Libya, Syria, and beyond—confronts a political crisis of revolutionary proletarian leadership. But working people can welcome developments across the region this year. They are harbingers of small but important steps toward opening the political space in which workers and farmers can organize and act to fight for their common class interests.

Locked-out sugar workers resolute

Continued from front page

to the rally on union buses, joining a motorcycle caravan of workers from Hillsboro and East Grand Forks. Honking trucks and cars greeted them.

“It’s great to see all this solidarity,” said worker Ryan Hjelmstad. “I’m from a third generation of sugar workers”—his grandmother, aunt, and uncle.

“I went on strike 30 years ago against American Crystal for a month,” said John Rott, a 33-year veteran at the Moorhead plant. “But this time, it will be much tougher. They’re out to break the union.”

Speakers included the presidents of the North Dakota and Minnesota AFL-CIO. Tom Ricker, president of United Steelworkers Local 560 from Gwinner, North Dakota, said workers needed solidarity and handed over \$5,000.

Workers from other unions joined the noon rally, including postal workers, boilermakers, public workers, and two from Delta Airlines in Minneapolis. Locked-out workers are getting support from local residents and businesses. The Zoo Bar and Lounge in Drayton donated a pallet of water, said worker Gary Melland.

As of August 21, no union members had crossed the picket line. Charles Ross had worked only four weeks at the Moorhead plant after moving from Texas to take a job offer there. “After my son and I were hired, the company asked our class of new hires if we’d continue working in a labor dispute,” he said. “Well, here I am on the picket line. There’s no way we’d cross.”

Twenty-seven workers are also locked out at the company’s storage facility in Mason City, Iowa. “So far Teamster truck drivers and train crews have refused to come into the plant,” Tom Johanns, president of BCTGM Local 269G, told the *Militant* August 6. Nonunion trucks are entering, with managerial staff loading the sugar.

Dee Middleton from Drayton and other workers from North Dakota told the *Militant* they’d received letters denying them unemployment benefits.

Locked-out workers have spoken on radio stations and written letters to local papers to get out their side of the story.

By overwhelmingly rejecting the contract, workers have sent “a strong message that we are now into it for the long haul,” Keith Hasbargen wrote in the August 5 issue of the *Hillsboro Banner*. “We will stand together . . . to show our community that we will not give in.”

Ken Lamberson, a boiler fireman in East Grand Forks, told the *Militant* that American Crystal had asked his family to be in a promotional video to show how the company is family oriented. “It’s really degrading,” he said. “They asked our family to make this video, then locked us all out six months later.” The video was shown to workers at “team communication”

meetings in May, said Neil Keena from Drayton.

Harvest season, a critical juncture, is just around the corner. The company will use scab labor to try to minimize workers’ leverage. Pre-piling of sugar beets begins in September. By October the harvest will be a 7-day, 24-hour operation, the start of what is known as the “campaign.”

In the past, union workers often worked vacation days to help out on the harvest. Not this year.

“American Crystal is owned by approximately 3,000 shareholders who raise 500,000 acres of sugar beets in the Red River Valley of Minnesota and North Dakota,” says the company website. It’s called a farmers’ coop but “it’s a big corporation,” said Local 269G president Johanns, himself a farmer.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture said in 2000 that “very large family farms,” with sales of \$500,000 or more, produce the biggest share of sugar beets in the Red River Valley.

“The farmers who own American Crystal Sugar Company Cooperative thought long and hard about the very difficult lockout decision, and we understand and support it since we have \$400 million to \$500 million invested in the crop waiting to be harvested,” wrote Bill Hejl, a sugar beet farmer in North Dakota, in a letter widely run in area newspapers.

Hejl, who’s on the company’s board of directors and was president of the World Association of Beet and Cane Growers, is far removed from working farmers who hold down jobs to make ends meet and can identify with workers’ struggles.

Many beet farmers in the valley have as much as 10,000 acres, said Dave Pokrzywnski, shop steward at the Drayton plant, but others have smaller operations. “It would be good to find a way to get the smaller farmers on our side.”

During the first three weeks of the lockout, some 35 workers in the Red River Valley have subscribed to the *Militant*.

Subscriber Kari Sorenson said before the lockout she wasn’t interested in union activity. “Do you have any books to recommend? I’ve been browsing amazon.com,” she told Maggie Trowe, a socialist worker who introduced her to the paper. She ended up buying *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics* by Jack Barnes, Socialist Workers Party national secretary, and *Teamster Rebellion* by Farrell Dobbs, a central leader of the 1934 Teamsters strikes in Minneapolis and the SWP.

Donations can be sent to the Sugar Beet Workers Fund, 175 Aurora Ave., St. Paul, MN 55103. Write checks to Minnesota AFL-CIO, with “BCTGM Lockout 2011” in the memo line.

Helen Meyers contributed to this article.

Libya rebels

Continued from front page

litical interests in the region, governments led by Washington, London, and Paris launched a military assault on Libya in March with the aim of replacing Gadhafi with a government more to their liking. Planes under NATO command had conducted some 7,500 airstrikes as of August 20.

Opposition forces that day took the key oil refinery town of Zawiyah, some 30 miles west of Tripoli. They then rapidly moved toward the capital, meeting virtually no resistance and capturing a base on the edge of the city of one of Gadhafi’s top military units. More than 300 prisoners were freed, reported Al Arabiya.

Mahmoud al-Ghwei, 20, joined the rebel convoy on its way to the capital. “Now we’re going to get rid of Gadhafi and get our freedom,” he told Al Arabiya. In the industrial suburb of Tajoura, residents set up a field hospital and joined others, arms in hand, to beat back assaults by Gadhafi loyalists, the *Wall Street Journal* and wire services reported.

Rebel fighters swept into Tripoli August 21, holding a rally in Green Square, where daily pro-Gadhafi rallies had been staged. “Jubilant residents honked horns, set off fireworks and stomped on posters of Gadhafi,” reported the *Washington Post*. The next day government forces struck back in parts of the city but suffered a decisive blow when Gadhafi’s compound was largely taken.

Mustafa Abdel Jalil, chairman of the opposition Transitional National Council based in Benghazi in eastern Libya, has said the council is ready to take control. He, like some other council members, was part of Gadhafi’s government until breaking earlier this year. The council has supported the massive NATO air assaults, collaborating with French and British special forces and CIA operatives on the ground to organize the attacks.

NATO stepped up bombardments in and around Tripoli, hitting 22 targets August 20, with assistance of six armed U.S. Predator drones, reported the *Post*. According to Pentagon figures, Washington—which since April has organized key military support but left most airstrikes to London and Paris—nearly doubled air attacks on Libya August 11-22, compared to sortie strikes the previous four months.

According to the *New York Times*, an unnamed senior U.S. military officer said that “small teams of American military and other government weapons experts” are making “contingency plans” to enter Libya to take control of “weapons stockpiles.”

“An international force . . . is likely to be needed for some time to restore and maintain order,” wrote Richard Haas, president of the Council of Foreign Relations, in the August 22 *Financial Times*. French Foreign Minister Alain Juppé has called for a special meeting of the Contact Group on Libya—led by the imperialist governments conducting the airstrikes—to discuss their next steps.

Verizon workers

Continued from page 9

two-week walkout.

“I’m enjoying the strike, fighting for our rights and everything we believe in,” said Tony, who had never been on strike before. He asked his last name not be used.

Derek Timm, a cable splicer in Philadelphia, told *Militant* correspondents he was one of 200 strikers on the “Flying Squad.” These workers drove around the city observing and photographing Verizon bosses doing struck work. “In particular we were on the lookout for safety violations and hazardous conditions created by the strikebreakers,” he said. Timm is on the union safety committee.

Safety was also on the mind of technician Brian Williams, a CWA member. “Verizon has cut the installation workforce so we are forced to one-man crews,” he said. “This is a safety issue. We are climbing ladders alone in all kinds of weather.”

Róger Calero, Ruth Robinett, and Sara Lobman in New York; Janet Post in Philadelphia; and Alyson Kennedy in Chicago contributed to this article.