

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

How 1959 Cuban Revolution ended US domination of island  
— PAGE 8

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 77/NO. 1 JANUARY 14, 2013

## Drive lays basis for expanding readership with door to door sales

BY LOUIS MARTIN

3,350!

This is how many subscribed to the *Militant* during the international campaign to expand circulation of the socialist newsweekly along with books on revolutionary working-class poli-

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### Fall 'Militant' subscription campaign

#### Final results

Country	quota	sold	%
UNITED STATES			
Claysville, PA*	15	19	127%
Redding, CA*	10	12	120%
Yakima, WA*	15	17	113%
Rio Grande V., TX†	25	27	108%
Los Angeles	200	213	107%
Houston	150	156	104%
Twin Cities	175	180	103%
New York*	460	472	103%
Seattle	210	215	102%
Washington	110	112	102%
Chicago	230	233	101%
Omaha, NE†	80	81	101%
Des Moines	180	182	101%
Miami	120	121	101%
Albuquerque, NM	3	3	100%
Denver*	7	7	100%
Greensboro†	5	5	100%
Lincoln, NE	35	35	100%
Longview, WA*	12	12	100%
Muscoda, WI	5	5	100%
Boston	110	101	92%
San Francisco	225	183	81%
New Orleans†	5	4	80%
Atlanta	185	145	78%
Philadelphia	150	103	69%
Tampa†	15	8	53%
Drayton, ND†	3	1	33%
Total US	2740	2652	97%
Prisoners**	13	16	123%
UNITED KINGDOM			
Manchester	80	94	118%
London	200	212	106%
UK Total	280	306	109%
CANADA*			
Montreal	133	138	104%
Vancouver	12	17	142%
Canada Total	145	155	107%
NEW ZEALAND	130	120	92%
AUSTRALIA	90	101	112%
Total	3398	3350	96%
Should be	3500	3500	100%

\*New to scoreboard \*Raised goal

## Dock workers' union suspends threat of strike, talks continue

Bosses agree to shelve some concession demands



AP photo/Steve Senne

Loading container at Port of Boston, Dec. 18. "Container royalties," an aspect of workers' pay, is among past gains of longshore union targeted by shipping bosses on East and Gulf coasts.

BY NAOMI CRAINE AND TOM BAUMANN

MIAMI—The International Longshoremen's Association agreed to a one-month contract extension Dec. 28, on the eve of a strike deadline

### SOLIDARITY WITH LONGSHORE WORKERS!

See editorial, p. 9

that could have shut down 14 ports from Maine to Texas. ILA President Harold Daggett said the union had reached agreement with the shipping bosses on one of the key issues in the negotiations.

The master contract, covering 14,500 longshore workers on the Atlantic and Gulf coasts, expired Sept. 30. Work, and negotiations with the participation of a federal mediator, had continued under a previous 90-day extension.

## FBI documents reveal US rulers' motives for spying against 'Occupy'

BY JOHN STUDER

Recently released FBI documents show the extent of its spying against "Occupy" protest activities, as well as the involvement of other police agencies and private cops in these operations, and their special concern about any support among Occupy activists for labor fights and other social struggles in the interests of working people.

After a year of stonewalling, the  
Continued on page 7

## Both sides of 'gun debate' target rights of workers

BY LOUIS MARTIN

The Dec. 14 killing of 26 elementary school students and staff at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newton, Conn., has sparked sharp debate among politicians and pundits from the left and right of bourgeois politics. But all the proposed "solutions," from gun control to expansion of armed cops in the schools,

### COMMENTARY

share a common target—the rights of working people.

Calls for more gun control have been led by liberal figures like New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Sen. Dianne Feinstein from California.

President Barack Obama asked Congress to reinstate an assault weapons ban that expired in 2004 and to pass legislation that would impose a background check on any person purchasing firearms from private sellers. Obama assigned Vice President Joseph Biden to lead the charge for restrictions on gun and ammunition purchases.

The *Journal News*, a suburban New York newspaper, published Dec. 24 a map with names and addresses of handgun permit holders in Westchester and Rockland counties.

From the other side of the bourgeois debate, Wayne LaPierre, National Rifle

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## Expanding US military presence, alliances in Asia aimed at China

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Washington is stepping up its military deployments, war games and alliances in the Asia-Pacific region, including with Tokyo where recent elections brought back into power the Liberal Democratic Party led by Shinzo Abe, who calls for taking a tougher line against China and remilitarizing Japan.

The Pentagon has begun a five-year program to deploy stealth, radar-evading warplanes to bases within striking range of China. This includes Air Force F-22s and B-2s and Marine Corps F-35s, reports *Wired.com*.

The U.S. Army is also ramping up exercises in the Pacific with "as many as 15,000 soldiers to train in places such as South Korea, Japan, India, New Zealand and Australia," reported the *Army Times* Dec. 12. "And that's just the beginning."

Among exercises in the works are Balikatan, involving about 2,850 U.S. soldiers in the Philippines in April;

and Gema Bhakti, to be conducted for the first time with the Indonesian Joint Forces in June. The Army is also seeking to undertake a battalion-sized field exercise in Bangladesh and is conducting "land force talks with Vietnam," the *Times* reported.

As part of long-term efforts to  
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# India: Rape, killing sparks protests for women's rights

BY EMMA JOHNSON

The gang rape and killing of a 23-year-old student in India has sparked protests there against abuse of women on a scale not seen before. Government authorities—taken off guard by the scope of public outrage, media coverage and international attention—responded with attacks and restrictions on demonstrations.

Six men raped the young woman, whose name has not been released, in a bus in New Delhi Dec. 16. Using an iron rod they beat her and a male friend, a software engineer. The assault went on for an hour before the two were dumped in a ditch. The woman, suffering massive internal injuries and brain damage, died Dec. 29.

In the days following the assault, thousands of people took to the streets, protesting in front of parliament and police headquarters. University students set up roadblocks across the city, causing massive traffic jams.

"There has been a huge reaction, almost like an eruption," Sudha Sundararaman, general secretary of the All India Democratic Women's Association, told the *Militant* in a phone interview from New Delhi. "I think the sheer brutality of the assault was one of the reasons people reacted. It was barbaric." Her group has been one of the organizers of the demonstrations.

Organizers of the protests demanded that the courts speed up the progress of some 100,000 rape cases; that the police register rape complaints promptly; that parliament hold a special session on laws against rape, sexual harassment

and child abuse; and that the Delhi police commissioner be fired for his handling of the protests.

Reactionary calls for making rape punishable by death and beefing up police patrols have also been part of the protests.

Prem Shankar Jha, former editor of *Hindustan Times*, told the *New York Times* Dec. 23 that there are more than 80,000 human rights complaints filed in India against police officers every year. That represents a small fraction of the actual number of crimes committed by officers, most of which are sexual assaults against women, he said.

Indian police arrested six people in connection with the attack, five men and a youth.

A police source told Reuters Jan. 1 that the cops are seeking the death penalty for murder against four of the accused men, and that they likely will also be charged with gang rape, abduction and destruction of evidence.

The young woman had her roots in a village in the state of Uttar Pradesh, but lived in New Delhi, where she was studying to become a physical therapist. "This is one of the few options for our young women to better their situation in life," Sundararaman said. "Her family had made big economic sacrifices to make this possible for her."

City authorities responded with a ban on protests. Government officials pleaded on national TV for people to stay away from the streets. Demonstrations, especially in middle-class areas, continued despite the ban and peaked Dec. 23. Police fired tear gas and water cannons,



Daniel Berehulak/Getty Images

Protest in New Delhi Dec. 22 against rape of woman who was attacked week before and died from injuries Dec. 29. Women "demand their place in public life without victimization," said Sudha Sundararaman, general secretary of the All India Democratic Women's Association.

beat protesters with bamboo sticks and arrested dozens.

"This is how they are responding," Kulsoom Rashid, 27, said to the *New York Times* Dec. 23 after being tear-gassed. "Hundreds of rapists are running scot-free, and the entire Delhi police is standing here to stop people like me." By late afternoon, political parties had joined the crowd and clashes with police intensified.

After the woman's death, authorities deployed thousands of cops, closed 10 subway stations and banned vehicles from the main roads in the heart of Delhi to stop further protests. Despite the cordoning off of the city center, more than 1,000 people gathered at two locations. Marches also took place in Mumbai, Hyderabad, Bangalore and other cities around the country.

Sundararaman said the anger has been building up over a period. "When this happened it all came together, it became too much. Earlier we organized a big protest in Haryana, a state bordering Delhi, after there were 17 rapes within three weeks in October."

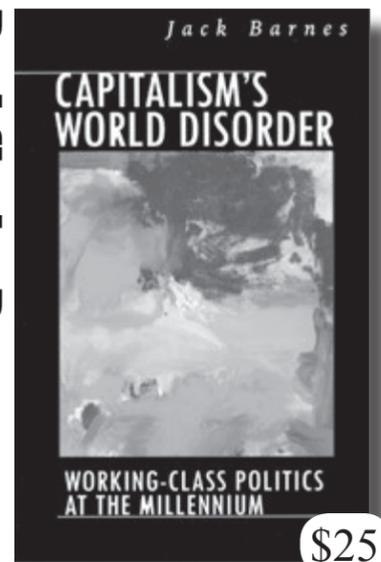
Reported crimes against women are on the rise as many leave their homes and villages to join the workforce. According to the National Crime Records Bureau, a woman is raped every 20 minutes across the nation. The reported number has increased 10 per-

cent in the last 10 years, with a great proportion going unreported.

According to Sundararaman women are stepping forward, especially young women. "They demand their rights, they don't accept being blamed for abuses done to them. They demand their place in public life without victimization."

Four of the accused live in Ravi Das Camp, one of New Delhi's working-class slums. Area residents told *Reuters* they joined in speaking out against the brutal attack. Meena, a 45-year-old neighbor of one of the accused youth, said she wanted to join the street protests, but was too scared to do so.

PathfinderPress.com



## THE MILITANT

**Fight police brutality and killings**

*More than 100 inmates in Illinois are fighting convictions based on forced confessions extracted under cop torture. The 'Militant' covers this fight and struggles by working people worldwide against cop brutality, killings and frame-ups.*



Cathy McMillan  
Protesters in Chicago demand freedom for prisoners tortured to make "confessions."

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## The Militant

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Submissions to the *Militant* may be published in the newspaper in print and digital format. By submitting, authors represent that their submissions are original and consent to publication in this manner.

Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant's* views. These are expressed in editorials.

# Expanding readership

Continued from front page  
tics among working people.

Congratulations to all *Militant* readers and distributors whose efforts during the fall drive won more readers than similar campaigns over the last two decades!

And a warm welcome to all our new readers!

The campaign puts the communist movement on a strong footing to maintain steady weekly distribution of the paper with a focus on selling door to door in working-class neighborhoods—the bedrock of the drive.

“The center piece of the campaign was just knocking on as many doors as possible,” Edwin Fruit wrote from Seattle. “We did it in nine different working-class neighborhoods here and in nearby Tacoma, Wash.” Readers in Seattle sold 215 subscriptions, about half of them door to door.

A striking feature of the drive was the number of readers who joined for the first time.

High school student Jesus Landeros participated in almost every Saturday sale as well as in several weekday outings in Los Angeles. “I found going door to door was the best way to get to know people and follow up with them,” he said.

He also organized for three prisoners in a local jail to begin receiving the paper, helping to more than triple our initial goal of five subscriptions sold to workers behind bars, another major achievement of the campaign.

Mekye Simms, 28, is a teaching as-

sistant in Manchester, England. She has been reading the *Militant* since the summer of 2011 and decided to join the subscription campaign, including door to door.

“The majority of people we speak to are in the same boat as us, working long hours, pay freezes, and so on. I hadn’t expected this to be so widespread. Quite a few say something needs to be done,” she said, describing her experience. “The first time I did a sale, I hadn’t expected to be invited into someone’s house to talk about the *Militant*. Some people have similar views to us, but others not at all.”

A couple of years ago at an immigrant rights demonstration in New York construction worker Mario Oztzyo Chocojay bought the *Militant* and a copy of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party.

“Before that I didn’t know there was a socialist party in the U.S.,” he said. “When I joined going door to door now I thought there would still be people who see socialism or communism with a stigma. While many people were not interested, others were and got subscriptions.”

“It was an eye-opening experience to see the breadth of interest Minneapolis workers have in alternative politics,” said Cameron Slick, a 26-year-old hotel worker. He joined sales teams four or five times going door to door in that city, in addition to selling subscriptions to a coworker and



Militant/Jacob Perasso

Meta Felt, left, signed up for subscription as Maura DeLuca, SWP candidate for mayor of Omaha, Neb., campaigned door to door Dec. 11. Felt bought the four books on special offer.

an acquaintance. *Militant* readers sold 65 percent of their subscriptions door to door in Minneapolis and the surrounding region.

During the campaign, *Militant* readers and distributors sold hundreds of copies of four books on revolutionary working-class politics that were and still are offered at reduced prices with a subscription. (See ad on this page.)

And dozens of subscribers, readers and other workers contributed hundreds of dollars to the Socialist Workers Party fund drive. A revolutionary workers’ party, the SWP depends on contributions like these and others to finance its work, which includes circulating the *Militant*.

## Well received by union fighters

The subscription campaign was well received by workers involved in union battles against the bosses.

During the drive, “we sold 16 subscriptions to strikers at the Pioneer Flour Mill in San Antonio, nine of them renewals,” Amanda Ulman wrote from Houston. Members of Teamsters Local 657 have been on strike since April 2011 against an attempt by the company to jack up their health care costs.

Diana Newberry reported that 16 workers involved in a fight against American Crystal Sugar signed up, including nine renewing their subscriptions. In August 2011 the company locked out 1,300 employees at its plants in Minnesota, North Dakota and Iowa in a concerted effort to impose a major concession contract.

Clayton Bronson, an American Crystal worker in Drayton, N.D., sold one of the subscriptions. He joined the campaign at the end of November.

The *Militant* calls on its readers and distributors to take advantage of the momentum of the last five weeks of the campaign and what it confirms about the interest among working people to pursue regular, weekly door-to-door sales of the socialist newsweekly. A good place to start would be in neighborhoods with a concentration of new subscribers.

This effort will be complemented and reinforced by local Socialist Workers Party and Communist League elec-

tion campaigns. Already under way are campaigns in Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles and Omaha, Neb.

Distributors can ask new readers who value the paper to join in expanding its readership and introduce others to books published by Pathfinder Press.

The *Militant* will continue to promote the special book offers with a subscription, including to recent subscribers who would like to take advantage of them.

As circulation director, I urge you to continue sending your reports, quotes and experiences. This column will keep providing weekly coverage of the international effort to continue expanding the *Militant*’s readership.

If you want to join, you can order a bundle or subscription blanks at the-militant@mac.com or (212) 244-4899.

## Special offers

### The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning by Jack Barnes

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

\$2 with a subscription to the *Militant* (usually \$3)

### Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution by Vilma Espín, Asela de los Santos, Yolanda Ferrer

“About the millions of working people—men and women, of all ages—who have made the socialist revolution, and how their actions transformed them as they fought to transform their world.”

\$10 with subscription (usually \$20)

### Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power by Jack Barnes

Why the “revolutionary conquest of state power by a politically class-conscious and organized vanguard of the working class—millions strong—is necessary.”

\$10 with subscription (usually \$20)

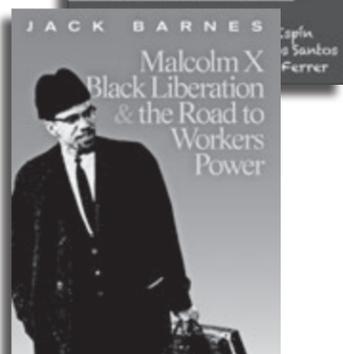
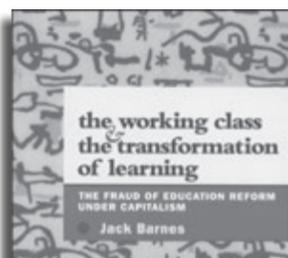
### The Cuban Five: Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should Be Free

Articles, interviews from the *Militant*

“We know that right is on our side, but to win we need a jury of millions throughout the world to make our truth known.”—Gerardo Hernández

\$3 with subscription (usually \$5)

See distributors  
on page 8



## —MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

### CALIFORNIA

**San Francisco**  
From Bangladesh to the U.S. Coal Mines: The Fight for Safety on the Job. Fri., Jan. 11, 7:30 p.m. 5482 Mission St. Tel.: (415) 584-2135.

### TEXAS

**Houston**  
The Working-Class Alternative in the Texas Senate District 6 Election. Speaker: Jacquie Henderson, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Texas Senate. Sat., Jan. 12. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. Donation: dinner \$5, program \$5. 4800 W. 34th St., Suite 50L-C. Tel.: (713) 688-4919.

## —CALENDAR—

### NEW YORK

**Manhattan**  
Cuba and Puerto Rico: Two Wings of the Same Bird. An Evening of Culture, Solidarity and Celebration of the Cuban Revolution and the Freedom of the Cuban and Boricua Political Prisoners. Keynote address by new Cuban ambassador to the U.N. Sat., Jan. 5. Reception, 6 p.m.; program 7 p.m. Casa de las Americas, 182 E. 111th St. (between Lexington and 3rd Avenues). Tel.: (718) 601-4751.

## \$100,000 Party-Building Fund over the top!

Contributors around the country have taken the fall Socialist Workers Party fund over the top, with \$104,053 sent in by the end of the year—exceeding the \$100,000 goal for the nine-week drive. A final scoreboard and wrap-up article on the fund will appear in the next issue of the *Militant*.

—Susan LaMont, director of the 2012 SWP Party-Building Fund

# Texas: SWP takes campaign for state senate door to door

BY STEVE WARSHHELL

HOUSTON—Supporters of the Socialist Workers Party in Houston have begun campaigning door-to-door for Jacquie Henderson, the party's candidate in the special election called for the 6th Texas Senatorial District on the East Side of Houston. Henderson is a factory worker in the electronics industry.

The election was set by Texas Gov. Rick Perry after the incumbent, Mario Gallegos, died shortly before being elected in November.

Henderson is running against a field of four Democrats, two Republicans, one candidate with no party affiliation listed, and a Green Party candidate. The entire campaign will last five weeks, barring a run-off election if no candidate wins a majority of the vote on January 26.

Door-to-door campaigners have met up with scores of workers who have bought the *Militant* newspaper.

"For immigrants like me," Patricio Minoso, a carpenter from Honduras, told campaign supporters, "these elections here didn't help at all. I know almost a dozen people who were deported from Houston this year for nothing more than traffic tickets. That's why I like to see a party talk about legalization."

Campaign supporters have been canvassing new readers who signed up for the *Militant* in recent weeks to discuss the worsening conditions they face on the job and in society. They find that workers want to talk about what they can do to take on attacks from the bosses and the government.

"I am excited about Henderson's campaign," said Christy Mendoza, a member of the Revolutionary Socialist Alliance at University of Texas-Pan American in the Rio Grande Valley.

"It is refreshing to see a candidate who is a part of the struggles of working people and who stands alongside, fighting discrimination, low wages, and the overall exploitation of the working class." Mendoza and other members of the RSA are planning to campaign with Henderson in Houston.

Supporters also took the campaign to workers at the port of Houston Dec. 29 and spoke with members of the International Longshoremen's Association who are facing attacks from the shipping and stevedoring bosses. The day before, their fight for a new contract had been extended another 35 days.

"I'm concerned about a strike because we're all in debt and, with the economy the way it is, there's nowhere else to work," longshoreman Felix Ramirez told campaign supporters at the ILA Local 24 hiring hall. "But we have to stand together. This fight is about keeping what we've fought for: guaranteed hours, pay

from the container royalty, and safety. All the bosses care about is production; to them we're a dime a dozen."

Supporters are working to get the *Militant* into the hands of more and more people in Houston's working-class neighborhoods to publicize the political demands Henderson supports.

The campaign is calling for workers to fight for a government-funded program to create millions of needed jobs. It demands legalization for all immigrants and supports struggles against all forms of discrimination and attacks against the rights and living standards of working people worldwide.

Out of these fights, Henderson says, workers will advance solidarity and transform themselves on the road to taking political power out of the hands of the propertied rulers and building a workers and farmers government.



Jacquie Henderson, SWP candidate in special election for Texas Senate District 6.

## Talks between ILA, shipping bosses extended

Continued from front page  
more than 600 percent.

At the Port of New York and New Jersey, the busiest East Coast port, there are 3,500 longshoremen today, down from 35,000 in the 1960s.

According to a Dec. 20 ILA statement, the royalties are set at \$4.85 for each ton of containerized cargo. Union members who work a minimum number of hours each year get some of the royalties as a wage supplement; some of it is paid to the union's health care fund.

The bosses were demanding to cap the royalties at 2011 rates. The union statement says the bosses' ultimate goal is to get rid of the payments altogether.

Many workers believe the bosses insistence on capping the royalty payments has to do with the anticipated expansion of the Panama Canal in 2015, which they say would mean increased tonnage at container ports.

"I believe once the Panama Canal expansion opens, royalties are going to increase," as more freight comes to eastern ports, Perry Myers, a member of ILA Local 1526 in Fort Lauderdale, told the *Militant*. "That's what it's about."

Prior to the extension, ILA President Daggett issued a letter to union locals instructing them to prepare for a strike of containerized cargo with the exception of perishable food, military cargo and mail.

## Northwest longshore workers in contract fight



Three major grain handling companies on the West Coast declared an "impasse" in contract negotiations and unilaterally imposed their "last, best and final" contract offer on 3,000 members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union at four terminals in Oregon and Washington Dec. 27.

The photo above shows tugboats staffed by nonunion crews ready to dock grain ships if a strike occurs. Inset, a new entrance to terminal set up in Port of Portland, Ore., in preparation to bring in replacement workers.

"This is not a lockout," the bosses said in a public statement. "The companies informed the union that ILWU members are welcome to come to work under the new terms and conditions of employment."

Union members had rejected the contract by a 94 percent vote several days earlier. The previous contract expired Sept. 30. The union contends the contract contains some 750 concessions, Farm Futures magazine reported, including issues of union control over jobs and work rules.

The companies—Marubeni Corp., Matsui & Co. and Louis Dreyfus Commodities—load grain at shipping terminals in Portland, Seattle and Vancouver, Wash.

The fourth member of the Pacific Northwest Grain Handlers Association—Temco, a joint venture of Cargill and CHS Inc.—reportedly decided not to unilaterally implement the contract demands and is continuing to negotiate with the ILWU. The four companies move half of all U.S. wheat exports and more than a quarter of all U.S. grain exports through these terminals, much to the expanding Asian market.

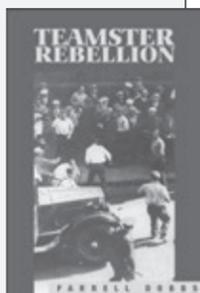
—JOHN STUDER



## Teamster Rebellion

by Farrell Dobbs

The 1934 strikes that built the industrial union movement in Minneapolis and helped pave the way for the CIO, as recounted by a central leader of that battle. —\$19



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## ON THE PICKET LINE

### Israel: Nurses win pay hike, cellphone workers fight for union

A 17-day strike by 28,000 nurses at hospitals and clinics in Israel ended Dec. 20 after the Finance Ministry agreed to a monthly 1,400 shekel increase (\$375) in the base wage, spread over the next four and a half years.

"This means that the percentage increase is higher for junior nurses than for those with more seniority," Uri Fleischmann, director general of the Israel Nurses Union, told the *Militant* in a phone interview from Tel Aviv.

The government also agreed to expand nursing schools and grant more scholarships to nursing students.

Making sure that nurses at the bottom of the pay scale got as big a wage increase as those at the top should attract more workers to take up nursing and help alleviate a shortage of nurses, Fleischmann said, one of the main goals of the strike.

There are 58,360 nurses in Israel, a rate of about 4.76 nurses per 1,000 people. In the U.S. there are 10.8 per 1,000.

While most nurses in Israel are Jewish, nursing is one of the main occupations of Palestinian women who work. There were banners in both Hebrew and Arabic at many strike support rallies.

"We don't really care whether workers are Jewish, Christian, or Muslim," Fleischmann said. "We are very happy that all the nurses joined in a unified struggle and happy with their accomplishment."

Meanwhile, 800 workers at privately owned Pelephone Communications Ltd., one of the top three cellphone companies in Israel, went on strike Dec. 10 after the company refused to recognize or negotiate with the Histadrut union federation.

"Under Israeli law, after you get the signature of one-third of the workers the company is supposed to recognize the union," Haim Sahar, a worker in the sales department, told the *Militant*. "We have 1,833 signatures out of 4,000 workers. But instead of talking with us, the CEO has started a war against the workers." Among those who joined the union are technicians who fix cellphones, software engineers, warehouse workers and customer service representatives.

The average wage at the company is about 5,500 to 6,500 shekels a month, Sahar said. "Child care is 2,500 shekels. How can you live on that?" Job security is also a key issue, he said, in the face of possible mergers with other companies.

"One hundred percent of the Arab workers at the call center in Umm al-

Fahm joined the strike," he noted. "Now the company is saying they might shut down the center because it's a security risk. How can it be a security risk?"

"We want to get recognized as a union. That is a basic human right," Sahar said. "It's only a matter of time."

Workers at other cellphone companies have been contacting the strikers, saying they want help getting a union where they work.

Pelephone did not return calls requesting comment.

—Seth Galinsky

### Rally backs Miami Teamsters on strike against BlueLinx

MIAMI—"Hey, hey, ho, ho, Donald Stover's got to go!" chanted striking members of Teamsters Local 769 and their supporters at a Dec. 19 rally here outside BlueLinx, a distributor of construction materials and building products. Stover is the warehouse manager. About 60 people walked the picket line at a rally called by the South Florida AFL-CIO.

The strikers include three drivers and six warehouse workers. They walked off the job after their union rep was thrown off company property Nov. 30 while the union and company were in contract negotiations. Two other workers have crossed the picket line. BlueLinx has also hired temporary workers and has brought in full-time workers from their nonunion North Carolina facility.

"We all have families and all have mortgages. But being on strike is about fighting for what you believe in. It's about fighting for what your rights are," shop steward Henry Ku told the *Militant*.

Jose Albo, a Teamster who works for Avis Budget rental car company near the airport, attended and comes by the picket line regularly. "I come to support my brothers," he said. "You never know when you're going to need some help."

—Tom Baumann

### Teamsters in Washington state strike United Natural Foods

SEATTLE—Nearly 100 members of Teamsters Local 117 and their supporters rallied outside Whole Foods



Hadar Zevulun

Striking nurses in Israel, Dec. 16, hold signs in Hebrew and Arabic. The 17-day walkout won increased pay and government agreement to expand nursing schools to ease shortage.

here Dec. 19, asking customers to show solidarity with 163 warehouse workers and drivers on strike at the United Natural Foods Inc. facility in Auburn by not purchasing products delivered by the organic food distributor.

The union first struck Dec. 10-12 over UNFI's refusal to negotiate a new contract. The previous pact expired Feb. 29, 2012, and had been extended through the end of August.

The workers agreed to go back to work on a good faith basis after the three-day strike. But when union members reported for their shift, bosses informed the union that 72 workers on night shift had been terminated. On Dec. 13, everyone then walked off the job, refusing to work until the fired workers were reinstated.

"We won't go back until the 72 workers are given their jobs back," Brenda Wiest, an organizer for Local 117, told the *Militant*.

According to the International Labor Rights Forum in Washington, D.C., UNFI "has engaged in serious violations of workers' rights of association at its Moreno Valley [Calif.] and Auburn facilities." A report by the group accuses managers of threatening violence against and firing of workers involved in a unionization effort at the California facility where the Teamsters lost an election last May.

The report also says that at its Auburn facility UNFI began hiring nonunion contract workers in May through Roadlink, a temporary agency.

UNFI is now using temporary workers as scab labor and its other facilities to maintain shipments normally supplied through the Auburn warehouse.

Five drivers have crossed the picket lines, Dottie Dunthorn, one of 45 drivers at the Auburn plant, told the *Militant*.

On the picket line Dec. 27 in Auburn, Gary Watkins said the strike has helped forge solidarity among workers, who come from the U.S., Philippines, Ukraine, Panama, Vietnam and Pacific Islands. "The company has increased from 12 to 20 the number of orders per hour that are required of workers. And if you are a smoker, you have to pay an additional \$650 a year for insurance," he said.

Strikers received 700 pounds of food donated by Occupy Seattle, according to Michelle Woodrow, a Local 117 staff person. Workers for City of Pacific, also members of Teamsters Local 117, brought firewood for the burn barrels to the picket line Dec. 27.

The company has not returned phone calls requesting comment.

—Edwin Fruit

## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



January 15, 1988

A U.S. fleet of about 30 warships, backed up by warplanes and 20,000 U.S. troops and other military personnel, is steadily expanding its operations against Iran in the Persian Gulf region. The U.S. forces are backed by warships and personnel from Belgium, Britain, France, Italy, and the Netherlands.

The buildup, the biggest U.S. naval armada put into action since the Korean War in the early 1950s, has already resulted in dozens of deaths and seen clashes involving U.S. and Iranian forces.

Although supposedly sent to the Persian Gulf to protect convoys of U.S.-flagged Kuwaiti oil tankers, the actual goal has been to help the Iraqi regime fend off defeat in the war it began in 1980 by invading Iran. The Kuwaiti emirate has strongly supported Iraq in the war—providing Iraq with its only ports for receiving arms shipments and other matériel.



January 14, 1963

Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy and the federal government have failed to uphold the court order desegregating the University of Mississippi. They have allowed racist harassment to continue against Negro student James Meredith. They have allowed attacks by racist night-riders to take place—and go unpunished—against Meredith's family. They have allowed racist persecution and intimidation of those white students and faculty members of the university who were friendly to Meredith or who extended ordinary courtesies to him.

This brought about the situation in which Meredith announced on Jan. 7 that he would skip the next semester at the University of Mississippi unless "positive changes are made to make my situation more conducive to learning."

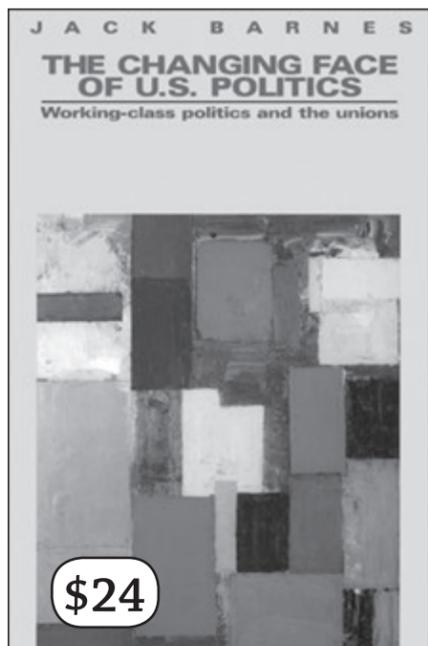
It is the power—indeed, it is the duty—of the Attorney General and the federal government to make these changes.



January 13, 1938

The Socialist Workers Party could not have been founded at a more crucial moment. The American working class is face to face with a heavy employers' onslaught upon its standard of living, already badly undermined by years of crisis and depression. The only solution that the wisest of the capitalist statesmen, Roosevelt, has been able to offer to the problem of hunger is to cut down the production of food. Now, with a new depression leading towards a sharper crisis, the capitalists, whose rule Roosevelt has been bent on preserving, are proceeding to throw new hundreds of thousands out of work and to cut wages of those they continue to employ.

The most powerful capitalist nation of the earth has proved incapable of feeding, clothing and housing the masses of the population. The existing social system is bankrupt and awaits only the revolutionary action of the working class.



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# US Army assigns brigade to expand operations in Africa

## UN authorizes military action in northern Mali

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The Pentagon has assigned an Army brigade to send groups of soldiers into as many as 35 African countries in 2013 to train allied militaries and “give the U.S. a ready and trained force to dispatch to Africa if crises requiring the U.S. military emerge,” reported Associated Press. The first-of-its-kind brigade assignment is part of a renewed effort by Washington to strengthen its influence throughout the continent that began with the establishment of the U.S. Africa Command in 2007.

Among the countries mentioned by AP are Libya, Sudan, Algeria, Niger, Kenya, and Uganda. “Already the U.S. military has plans for nearly 100 different exercises, training programs and other activities across the widely diverse continent,” the news agency notes. The brigade has some surveillance and armed aerial drones at its disposal.

While the stated focus is on training, the U.S. forces could conduct military operations upon approval from the secretary of defense.

Teams from the Army’s 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division deployed to each country could range from a few to a company of about 200, or in certain cases a battalion of about 800, notes AP. Army brigades are made up of roughly 3,500 troops.

Since 2007, Washington has been conducting surveillance over wide swaths of Africa from about a dozen air bases set up on the continent, an unnamed former senior U.S. commander told the *Washington Post* last June.

Most have been operating out of secluded hangars at African military bases or civilian airports. A key hub is based in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, where the U.S. Joint Special Operations Air Detachment operates out of the city’s airport. In East Africa, U.S. armed drones conduct strikes targeting Islamist group al-Shabab in Somalia from air bases in Djibouti, southern Ethiopia, and the Indian Ocean archipelago of the Seychelles.

In October 2011 the Barack Obama administration sent 100 special operations troops to four countries in Central Africa—Uganda, South Sudan, the Central African Republic, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo—as part of a military action targeting the Lord’s Resistance Army, a group of armed bandits operating in the region.

The U.N. Security Council voted unanimously Dec. 19 to authorize military action against Islamist groups in northern Mali. The Economic Community of West African States has agreed to send 3,300 troops, most of which are expected to come from Nigeria, Senegal, Niger, Burkina Faso, Togo and Ghana, reported Codewit World News. Military operations are expected to begin next fall, U.N. official Herve Ladsous told the media.

A coup in March ousted Malian President Amadou Toumani Touré. At the same time key cities were seized in the north by two opposing forces: Tuareg rebels, who demand a secu-



Air Force Master Sgt. Ken Bergmann

Soldier from U.S. special operations forces trains Malian soldiers in Tombouctou, Mali.

lar independent state, and Islamist groups wanting to impose Sharia law. Months later Islamists pushed out the Tuareg group.

The European Union plans to send military trainers to Bamako, Mali’s capital, over the next few months, and Washington is planning to provide extensive support for the operation.

While asserting no U.S. ground troops would enter Mali, Amanda Dory, the Pentagon’s deputy assistant secretary for Africa, “would not rule

out the possibility of the Pentagon contributing U.S. warplanes to transport African troops or provide them with aerial cover,” reported the *Post*.

On Dec. 28, the U.S. Air Force evacuated the U.S. ambassador and about 40 other U.S. personnel from Bangui, Central African Republic, as renewed fighting threatened to topple the government there. U.S. special forces, however, will remain. The French government increased its troop presence there from 420 to 600.

## Washington deepens military ties with Tokyo

Continued from front page

counter the economic and military rise of China, Washington has been exploiting mounting tensions between Beijing and other governments in the region over territorial claims to islands and waters in the South China Sea, which is believed to hold vast reserves of oil and gas.

Both Beijing and Tokyo claim control of the uninhabited islands known as Senkaku in Japan and Diaoyu in China. In a provocative move, the Japanese government in September bought the islands from their private owners.

After a small Chinese propeller plane flew near the island Dec. 13, the Japanese military dispatched eight F-15 fighter planes to the area. They arrived after the plane had already left the islands’ territorial airspace.

The Chinese plane “wasn’t a military aircraft,” reported the *Wall Street Journal*. “Warned by a Japanese patrol ship not to enter Japan’s airspace, it replied, ‘This is Chinese airspace,’ Japan’s coast guard said.”

### U.S.-Japan military ties

In August the U.S. and Japanese governments signed an agreement to deploy drones to monitor Chinese activity in the East China Sea. The following month Tokyo and Washington agreed to deploy a second major advanced missile defense radar on Japanese territory.

With another planned to be placed in the Philippines, it will be possible to track ballistic missiles launched from North Korea and large parts of China.

In November, Washington and Tokyo conducted a 12-day joint military exercise involving some 37,000 Japanese and 10,000 U.S. military personnel, according to Japan’s

Defense Ministry.

These actions build upon a new U.S.-Japan bilateral defense-cooperation agreement signed in April that “calls for strengthening ‘interoperability’ between U.S. and Japanese forces, and building permanent training facilities on Guam and in the nearby Northern Mariana Islands,” reported the *Journal*. “Such facilities will mark the first permanent post for the Japanese military within U.S. territory since World War II.”

At the same time, the presence of 26,000 U.S. troops in Okinawa remains unpopular among many working people in Japan. The Pentagon imposed a curfew for all U.S. soldiers in Japan after two U.S. Navy sailors were arrested and charged by Japanese authorities with raping and robbing an Okinawan woman outside the Kadena Air Base in October.

In the Dec. 16 parliamentary elections, the Liberal Democratic Party beat the ruling Democratic Party of Japan. While its popular vote was only 30 percent, the LDP won 294 out of 480 seats, up from 118 in the 2009 vote.

The Liberal Democrats ruled Japan for nearly half a century until being defeated by the Democratic Party of Japan in the last election.

LDP leader Abe was named prime minister Dec. 26, a post he resigned from six years ago after serving a one-year stint. Abe campaigned for a more nationalist foreign policy, increasing military spending and vowing to rewrite Japan’s constitution, which was imposed on the country under U.S. occupation after World War II and limits Tokyo’s use of its armed forces abroad.

Japan’s Self Defense Forces, however, are among the world’s largest armed forces, with annual military

spending ranking sixth in the world last year—in Asia second only to China—according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

Washington is also increasing its military presence in the Philippines, with more U.S. troops and increased stopovers by U.S. warships for training and exercises, reports Agence France-Presse. A rotating force of 600 U.S. special forces has been stationed in the southern Philippines since 2002.

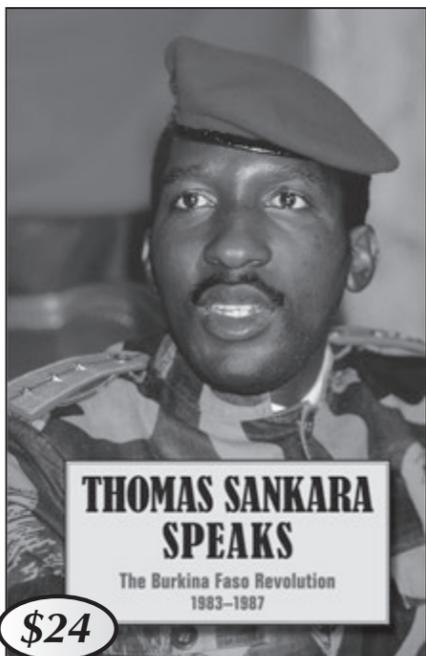
Philippine Foreign Minister Albert del Rosario has also called for use of Japanese armed forces in the Pacific region, despite the fact that the country was occupied by Tokyo during World War II.

In addition to Tokyo, the governments of the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia, Taiwan and Vietnam are involved in territorial disputes with Beijing in the South China Sea.

China claims sovereignty over all land inside the South China Sea, including more than 40 islands. In June Beijing set up a new national prefecture headquartered in the Paracel Islands, which Hanoi also lays claim to. The following month China’s Central Military Commission announced it would deploy a garrison of soldiers to guard the islands in the area.

In another development, the Barack Obama administration is planning to sell four Global Hawk surveillance drones to Seoul, the first sale of this aircraft in the Asia-Pacific region, reports al-Jazeera.

This proposal comes less than two weeks after the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea launched a satellite into orbit Dec. 12, which the White House condemned as “a highly provocative act.”



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# FBI spying on Occupy

Continued from front page

FBI turned over dozens of heavily redacted documents to the Partnership for Civil Justice Fund, a civil liberties law firm, concerning spying and monitoring of Occupy activities.

On Dec. 21 the government released 99 pages—out of 387 they claim they “reviewed”—in response to a PCJF Freedom of Information Act request.

“This production, which we believe is just the tip of the iceberg, is a window into the nationwide scope of the FBI’s surveillance, monitoring, and reporting on peaceful protestors organizing with the Occupy movement,” Mara Verheyden-Hilliard, PCJF executive director, said in a statement released with copies of the files.

“Domestic Terrorism” was the FBI’s reference on many of the files. “We do not open investigations based solely on First Amendment activity,” FBI spokesman Paul Bresson told the *New York Times* when asked why the agency had targeted Occupy groups across the country.

The FBI started generating reports on Occupy in August 2011, the month before the group began its first action in Zuccotti Park near Wall Street in New York City.

The files turned over to PCJF contain reports of cop spying in 32 cities, including New York; Anchorage, Alaska; Albany, N.Y.; Memphis, Tenn.; Biloxi, Miss.; Portland, Maine; Des Moines, Iowa; and Tampa, Fla.

Dozens of federal agencies, state and local cop outfits, university police and security forces for banks and businesses across the country are listed as participating in meetings with the FBI about planned protests and Occupy activists.

They include FBI-police Fusion Centers and local affiliates of the Joint Terrorism Task Force—both collaborative efforts combining FBI and other federal spy agencies with intelligence or “anti-terrorism” divisions of local police departments; the Domestic Security Alliance Council, which the government calls “a strategic partnership between the FBI, the Department of Homeland Security and the private sector”; and the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, which says it is “an elite worldwide federal law enforcement organization” whose “mission is to investigate and defeat criminal, terrorist, and foreign intelligence threats to the United States Navy and Marine Corps ashore, afloat and in cyberspace.”

## Targets West Coast port protests

One central target of the spying was protests planned at ports up and down the West Coast in December 2011.

A Domestic Security Alliance Council “Liaison Information Report,” which states its purpose “is to raise awareness concerning this type of criminal activity,” reports that Occupy groups are organizing to hold peaceful protests at ports in Los Angeles; San Diego; Houston; Portland, Ore; and Seattle, Tacoma and Vancouver, Wash.

The report is particularly concerned about potential cooperation between the protesters and members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union. “The Naval Criminal Investigative Service has stated that the actions of the OWS [Occupy Wall Street] Movement may or may not be coordi-

nated with organized labor actions at the affected ports,” the anonymous DSAC author writes.

The Occupy actions at the ports included slogans in support of ILWU workers in Longview, Wash., who at the time were involved in a bitter fight against a lockout by EGT Development.

DSAC includes recommendations for executives of its business affiliates: “Avoid all large gatherings related to civil issues. Even seemingly peaceful rallies can spur violent activity or be met with resistance by security forces.”

An Oct. 19, 2011, “Domestic Terrorism” memo warns about the emergence of Occupy chapters in northern Florida. The FBI’s counterterrorism program coordinator there explains his concern that these are “territories” where “some of the highest unemployment rates in Florida continue to exist.”

An “Intelligence Briefing” issued in Los Angeles Oct. 20 reports on a meeting the FBI organized with local county sheriffs and L.A. Transit Security Bureau cops. The bureau’s special agent notes that there is a rise in confrontations with “verbally abusive” people on mass transit who confront cops about beatings of prisoners in L.A. Sheriff’s Department jails.

The FBI agent expresses concern for what would happen if “Occupy Wall Street” protesters mix with the more vio-



Militant/Eric Simpson

Thousands of protesters march on street leading to Port of Oakland, Nov. 2, 2011, in Occupy Oakland action endorsed by Alameda County Central Labor Council.

lent individuals upset about the alleged mistreatment of prisoners in the LASD jails.”

An Oct. 25 document reports the FBI “disseminated two intelligence products from the Campus Liaison Program to sixteen (16) different campus police officials” in the Albany, N.Y., area.

The authors of these files, whose names are all redacted out, work hard to present some potential for violence that justifies their investigation. Some note the participation of anarchists. One memo says Occupy would provide “an outlet for a lone offender exploiting the movement for reasons associated with

general government dissatisfaction.”

They also strain to give the appearance that the FBI is not running informers or provocateurs inside the Occupy groups.

“The documents indicate, however, that the FBI obtained information from police departments and other law-enforcement agencies,” the *Times* wrote, “that appear to have been gathered by someone observing the protesters as they planned activities.”

Attorneys for the PCJF say they “will continue to push for public disclosure of the government’s spy files and will release documents as they are obtained.”

## Cops, prisons arose to enforce capitalist order

BY JOHN STUDER

Cops—the armed henchmen of the bosses’ government who workers confront in the streets and on picket lines—are a relatively new development in history. Like modern prisons, the first police forces were created with the establishment of capitalism as the dominant world economic system in the 18th century and the rise of industrial factory production in the 19th.

As capitalist manufacturers increasingly pushed feudal lords aside, they took steps to create the urban working class they needed from the peasantry. As the textile industry exploded, for example, they passed enclosure laws to drive peasants off the land, replacing them with sheep pasture for wool.

But the landless peasants had reason to resist factory labor with its starvation wages, slavery to machines, unhealthy conditions and long work hours. So the ruling classes enforced vagabondage laws—backed by harsh penalties—to make it a crime to live in cities without a job or home.

“Thus were the agricultural people, first forcibly expropriated from the soil, driven from their homes, turned into vagabonds, and then whipped, branded, tortured by laws grotesquely terrible, into the discipline necessary for the wage system,” Karl Marx wrote in *Capital*.

### Vagabond laws and ‘workhouses’

Out of enforcement of vagabondage and other laws against working people in England and France during the 17th and 18th centuries grew the predecessors of the modern prison—“workhouses,” where convicts were put to labor, the men chopping and finishing lumber, the women and children spinning, knitting and sewing.

Vagabondage laws were transported to the new world. An 1837 U.S. Supreme Court decision, *Mayor of City of New York v. Miln*, held it “necessary for a State to provide precautionary measures against the moral pestilence of paupers, vagabonds, and possibly convicts.”

With the expansion of factory production and cities, the bosses established the night watch to keep a lookout for their facilities and goods.

But the growth of capital soon made this system inadequate. Bosses pushed for the creation of full-time police, armed and uniformed, with military discipline, to guard their property and enforce capitalist order.

The first police force was organized in London in 1829, followed rapidly in Boston in 1838 and New York City in 1845. Similar steps were taken in other urban centers across the northern states.

During the 1830s and ’40s hundreds of thousands of immigrant workers from Ireland, Germany and elsewhere swelled the cities, seeking work. They faced competition with each other, low wages, ramshackle and dangerous housing. In city after city riots broke out in protest against living conditions.

From their outset, the cops’ mission was to control the “dangerous classes”—the rioters, vagabonds, unruly immigrants and workers who fought to organize unions and defend political rights.

This process had a different history in the U.S. South, where the growth of the textile industry in Britain propped up the slave system, built on the transport of Blacks from Africa to labor on cotton and tobacco plantations.

Because slave-labor-based agriculture retarded the development of industry and urbanization, there was little need for a night watch.

What did develop was the slave patrol. Organized gangs searched for slaves bold enough to escape, to find and smash any meetings they organized and enforce laws enshrining human bondage.

As shipping expanded and ports grew on the southern coast, night watches, often in league with the slave patrols, were organized to protect the cotton and other crops on the docks.

In the port city of Savannah the first police force was pulled together out of elements of the watch and slave patrols in 1859. Its targets, as described in one contemporary account, were “runaway slaves from surrounding counties, free Negroes, seamen, and Irish laborers congregated in Savannah’s outlying districts, where they engaged in various illicit activities.”

In most southern cities, the first police departments were set up after the victory of capital in the Civil War. Former slave patrol members played a key role. Patrol veterans—including those newly hired as cops—were central in setting up the Ku Klux Klan and other white-supremacist terror organizations.

The first prisons in the U.S. began in the early 1800s—Auburn in western New York state and Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia. Auburn followed the model of the European workhouses, extracting labor from those imprisoned behind its walls.

Eastern State billed itself as an example of reform. The system was built on solitary confinement, each worker placed alone in a tiny cell to seek “penitence.”

Police brutality, cop frame-ups, stop-and-frisk, and the explosion in incarceration of millions of workers in the U.S. over the last quarter century flow from the needs of capitalist rule today.

# How 1959 Cuban Revolution ended US domination of island

Below are excerpts from Fidel Castro's September 1960 address to the U.N. General Assembly, included in *To Speak the Truth: Why Washington's 'Cold War' Against Cuba Doesn't End*, one of *Pathfinder's Books of the Month* for January.

The *Militant* is reprinting the excerpts on the occasion of the 54th anniversary of the Jan. 1, 1959, Cuban Revolution that overturned the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship and brought the working class to power, opening the socialist revolution in the Americas. Copyright © 1992 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY FIDEL CASTRO

The military group that tyrannized our country was based on the most reactionary sectors of the nation and, above all, on the foreign interests that dominated our country's economy. ...

Fulgencio Batista's government based on force was the type most suited to the U.S. monopolies in Cuba, but it was obviously not the type most suited to the Cuban people. Therefore, the Cuban people, at a great cost in lives, threw that government out. ...

What "marvels" did the revolution find when it came to power in Cuba? First of all, the revolution found that 600,000 Cubans, able and ready to



Cuban Prime Minister Fidel Castro addresses U.N. General Assembly Sept. 26, 1960.

work, were unemployed—as many, proportionally, as were jobless in the United States during the Great Depression that shook this country, and which almost produced a catastrophe here. This is what we confronted in my country—permanent unemployment. Three million out of a population of a little more than six million had no electricity, possessing none of its advantages and comforts. Three and a half million ... lived in huts, in shacks, and in slums, without the most minimal sanitary facilities. In the cities, rents took almost one-third of family income. Electricity rates and rents were among the highest in the world. Some 37.5 percent of our population were illiterate; 70 percent of the rural children lacked teachers. ...

Public services, the electricity and telephone companies, all belonged to U.S. monopolies. A major portion of banking, importing, and oil refining; the majority of sugar production; the best land; and the most important industries in all fields in Cuba belonged to U.S. companies. ...

What alternative was there for the revolutionary government? To betray the people? As far as the president of the United States is concerned, of course, what we have done is a betrayal of our people. And he surely would

not have considered it a betrayal if, rather than being true to its people, the revolutionary government had instead been true to the monopolies that were exploiting Cuba.

The revolutionary government began to take its first steps. The first was a 50 percent reduction in rents paid by families. ... [T]he people rushed into the streets rejoicing, as they would in any country—even here in New York—if rents were reduced by 50 percent for all families. ...

Then another law was passed, a law cancelling the concessions that had been granted by the Batista dictatorship to the telephone company, which was a U.S. monopoly. ...

The third measure was the reduction of electricity rates, which had been among the highest in the world. This led to the second conflict with the U.S. monopolies. ...

Then came another law, an essential law, an inevitable law—inevitable for the Cuban people and inevitable, sooner or later, for all the peoples of the world, at least those who have not done so. This was the Agrarian Reform Law. ...

In our country it was indispensable. More than 200,000 peasant families lived in the countryside without land with which to plant essential food-

stuffs. Without agrarian reform our country could not have taken the first step toward development. And we took that step. We instituted an agrarian reform. Was it radical? Yes, it was a radical agrarian reform. Was it very radical? No, it was not a very radical agrarian reform. We carried out an agrarian reform adjusted to the needs of our development, to the possibilities of agricultural development. ...

Then the question of payments and indemnities came up. Notes from the U.S. State Department began to rain down on Cuba. They never asked us about our problems, not even to express sympathy or because of their responsibility in creating the problems. ... Every conversation we had with the representatives of the U.S. government centered around the telephone company, the electricity company, and the problem of the land owned by U.S. companies. The question they asked was how we were going to pay. ...

They demanded three things: "prompt, adequate, and effective compensation." Do you understand that language? "Prompt, adequate, and effective compensation." That means, "Pay this instant, in dollars, and whatever we ask." [Applause]

We were not 150 percent communists at that time, [Laughter] we just appeared slightly pink. We were not confiscating land. We simply proposed to pay for it in twenty years, and in the only way we could—by bonds that would mature in twenty years, at 4.5 percent interest amortized annually. How could we have paid for this land in dollars? How could we have paid on the spot, and how could we have paid whatever they asked? It was ludicrous.

It is obvious that under those circumstances, we had to choose between either carrying through an agrarian reform or not doing so. If we chose not doing so then our country's dreadful economic situation would continue indefinitely. And if we did carry out the agrarian reform, then we faced incurring the enmity of the government of the powerful neighbor to the north.

We chose to carry out the agrarian reform.

*January* **BOOKS OF THE MONTH**

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# Solidarity with longshore workers coast to coast

Longshore workers across the country face attacks on long-held and hard-won gains in wages and union control over hiring and working conditions. Whatever the outcome of current disputes—from port workers organized by the International Longshore and Warehouse Union at grain terminals in the Northwest to International Longshoremen's Association-organized workers from Texas to Maine—the rulers' assaults on the docks has just begun.

These attacks are part of a larger offensive by the bosses, who seek to shore up their profit margins on the backs of working people during a worldwide historic crisis of capitalism.

Along with their anti-union assault, the bosses are pressing a propaganda offensive designed to weaken solidarity. Part of this anti-labor campaign involves highlighting (and often exaggerating) the relatively

higher wages of certain sections of the working class under assault. The purpose is to foster resentments and divisions while promoting the false notion that higher wages of some workers has something to do with lower and declining wages of others. But there is no "pie" from which wages are divided. Wages are determined in the course of struggles against the owners of capital.

The bosses' smear campaign also includes branding the longshore workers in the New York/New Jersey area as mafia-connected thugs. "Too many people are concerned if they cause the union problems, they will be wearing cement shoes in the river," *International Shipping News* wrote in September.

What the capitalists are concerned about is engaging a battle they might not win and the "bad" example that would provide. That's what happened last year in

Longview, Wash., where EGT Development opened a new grain terminal and refused to use union labor. The longshore workers forced EGT to back down, won a union contract and inspired other workers.

The simmering disputes on the docks over the last couple years have brought two things to the fore.

First, the fact that the government is the state power of the employing class comes through clearly—from threats to invoke the Taft-Hartley Act; to restrictions on pickets; to the role of federal "mediators," cops and courts; to the brutality, frame-ups, fines, and jailings employed in the Longview fight. Second is the potential power of organized working-class resistance to shut down production, win broad support and push the bosses back.

Solidarity with the dockworkers! An injury to one is an injury to all!

## Both sides of 'gun debate' target rights of working people

Continued from front page

Association executive director, opposed the call for government restrictions on guns in a Dec. 21 press conference and instead demanded the government post armed cops in every public school across the country and maintain an "active national database of the mentally ill.

"The only thing that stops a bad guy with a gun," he said, "is a good guy with a gun."

LaPierre blamed the Connecticut rampage on the media, Hollywood and video-game makers, which he referred to as a "corrupting shadow industry that sells and sows violence against its own people," according to the *Los Angeles Times*.

Joe Arpaio, sheriff of Maricopa County in Arizona, announced plans to deploy armed volunteer "posses" around Phoenix-area schools.

Bloomberg, who the *Times* dubbed the "chorister" for the gun control campaign, defended what he called the city's "proactive" policing methods. "We send our police officers to problem places where there are problem people," he said on NBC's "Meet the Press" program Dec. 16, hailing New York's "stop and frisk" policy that overwhelmingly targets young Black and Latino men.

Some conservatives joined in liberal calls for more restrictions on gun sales.

"The best we can do is to try to detain them, disarm them and discourage 'entertainment' that can intensify already murderous impulses," conservative columnist Charles Krauthammer wrote in the Dec. 20 *Washington Post*. He called for targeting what he described as a "small cadre of unstable, deeply deranged, dangerously isolated young men."

"But there's a cost," he adds. "Gun control impinges upon the Second Amendment; involuntary commitment impinges upon the liberty clause of the Fifth Amendment; curbing 'entertainment' violence impinges upon First Amendment free speech.

"That's a lot of impingement, a lot of amendments," he says. "But there's no free lunch. Increasing public safety almost always means restricting liberties."

The shooter in Connecticut, 20-year-old Adam Lanza, was clearly mentally ill. He killed his mother, then shot and killed 20 children and six school staff before killing himself.

Media reports that Lanza suffered from autism or Asperger's Syndrome and he has been described as mentally unstable by some who knew him. This has led to a sharp debate over reactionary calls for special registries of the mentally ill or increasing their forcible institutionalization.

### Funds for mental health programs slashed

Meanwhile, funding for mental health programs are being slashed all across the country. South Carolina cut their mental health budget by 39.3 percent from 2009-2012, the National Alliance on Mental Illness reported. Illinois cut 31.7 percent, Washington, D.C., cut 23.9 percent and California cut 21.2 percent. Capitalism both fosters antisocial and violent behavior and places a low priority on treating those with mental disorders. Mental health care is first and foremost a commodity—and often not very profitable.

Capitalist rulers fear that the deepening economic and social crises of their system will force bigger battles with working people ahead. They seize on every opportunity to cut away at political rights, seeking to make it harder for workers to fight back.

In the current debate, most representatives of the propertied rulers stress the need to strengthen the armed bodies of the capitalist state and their related institutions—the cops, courts and "registries" of dangerous people.

And many want to restrict workers' access to guns, seeking a monopoly on arms in the hands of their cops and military forces.

The Second Amendment to the Constitution—like the rest of the Bill of Rights won in struggle by workers and farmers that serve as restrictions on and protections from the government—guarantees the "right of the people to keep and bear arms" against government infringement.

Opponents of the Second Amendment argue that

"public safety" necessitates scrapping that right as a relic of the past enacted in a different period when popular militias existed and before the invention of automatic weapons.

But working people are not safer with a monopoly of firearms in the hands of cops and other armed bodies whose job is to protect property and prerogatives of the capitalist exploiters. Defending all workers' rights against stepped-up encroachments by the bosses and their government become more, not less important today, as the employing class mounts assaults on our wages and working conditions.

The Second Amendment is among the constitutional protections that working people wielded as part of the mass proletarian fight for Black rights in the 1960s. Groups like the Deacons for Defense and Justice and Robert Williams' NAACP chapter in Monroe, N.C., maintained their right to bear arms and used them to stay the hand of racist thugs and cops, protect social protest actions and Black communities and prevent bloodshed.

At the same time, the working-class movement has nothing in common with the gun-rights politics of rightist militia outfits or with vigilante "justice" and so-called Stand Your Ground laws that promote them. But the working-class political battle against such reactionary movements and laws cannot be advanced by calls for government restrictions on any rights of working people.

Anti-social violence and senseless murder do not come from video games or legal rights to own guns. They are not a product of too many constitutional rights or too few armed cops at every corner. They are first and foremost a by-product of social relations under capitalism—buttressed by cop brutality, deaths and maimings on the job, and bloody wars of conquest abroad.

And violent crimes within the working class can be exacerbated by the myriad social pressures that mount under the grinding effects of the capitalist crisis.

At the same time, the rise of mass working-class struggles to come will replace capitalism's dog-eat-dog values with social solidarity, just as they always have in the past. It's this solidarity and the transformation of working people and their view of themselves that develops in the course of struggle against capitalist exploitation that is the most powerful weapon against anti-social behavior of all kinds.

### Corrections

In the Dec. 31, 2012, issue, the On The Picket Line item titled "Longshore Workers on East and Gulf Coasts Prepare Strike" should have abbreviated the United States Maritime Alliance as USMX, not USMA. Also, the article "Int'l Meeting to Free Cuban 5 Held in Holguín, Cuba," should have said six (not five) workers attended from the Canadian Union of Postal Workers. In the article "'Right-to-Work' Laws Can't Stop Fight Ahead to Build Union," Morgan Stanley bank analyst Adam Jonas commented to Reuters about "Moving to right-to-work in Michigan," not "right-to-vote."

## LETTERS

### Prisoners part of class struggle

I wanted to express my gratitude for the subscription that you have provided to me and those in my immediate surroundings.

Your coverage of the hunger strikes in California's jails has been very educational and needed.

It's of tremendous, essential significance that the convict masses understand that the prison system is a concentrated expression of the class, racial and gender contradictions inherent in a class-divided society.

Our struggle is a part of the class struggle and transcend these

razor-topped walls.

*A prisoner  
California*

### Paper 'like gold' in solitary

Your paper highlights many

### 'Militant' Prisoners' Fund

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issues that the free society currently faces, and I enjoy staying informed. Reading material in solitary confinement is like gold. Thank you. Keep me on your mailing list.

*A prisoner  
California*

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