

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Answer to 'immigration reform':
Full rights for all undocumented!
— PAGES 7 AND 9

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 77/NO. 7 FEBRUARY 25, 2013

NY school bus strikers resist bosses, city gov't 'If they do this to us, they'll do it to everyone'



Militant/Seth Galinsky

Feb. 10 rally at New York City Hall to back school bus workers on strike since Jan. 16.

BY SETH GALINSKY

NEW YORK—More than 3,000 striking school bus workers and their supporters demonstrated here Feb. 10. After marching across the Brooklyn Bridge, chanting and singing in English, Haitian Creole, and Spanish, they assembled for a rally outside City Hall.

The strike by 8,800 drivers, attendants and mechanics began Jan. 16. Arrayed against the strikers are the New York City government, the bus company owners, and the big-busi-

ness press. The *New York Daily News* and *New York Post* have painted the strikers as overpaid workers who are interfering with students' education, especially those with special needs.

Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1181 launched the strike after city officials announced they were putting 1,100 school bus routes up for bid without Employee Protection Provisions, which have been in place for 34 years. The remaining 6,600 routes with private bus companies

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Socialist Workers go over top in drive to collect signatures for Omaha ballot

BY MAGGIE TROWE

OMAHA, Neb.—“We went over the top today,” Maura DeLuca, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Omaha, told the *Militant* Feb. 13. “We’ve collected more than two times

the required number of signatures to put me and my running mate, Jacob Perasso, on the ballot.”

One thousand signatures of registered voters are required for mayoral contenders, and 100 for those running for city council.

“We got a great political response. Now we’re doing the paperwork and will hold a press conference and file early next week,” DeLuca said. “We want to thank everyone who helped in this effort, from Omaha, across the Midwest, and from Los Angeles and Seattle to Boston and New York.”

“We found many workers who wanted to help. We sold hundreds of copies of the *Militant*, 16 subscriptions and were handed over \$100 in donations on the street and on people’s doorsteps,” Perasso, SWP candidate for city council in District 4, said. “We’re planning to hold a party this weekend to celebrate.”

“We’ll spread out and campaign door to door across the city this weekend,” Perasso added, “and win new readers for the *Militant*. We extend an open invitation to anyone we met to

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Assassination in Tunisia spurs mass protests, unhinges gov't coalition

BY LOUIS MARTIN

Two years after mass protests toppled the 23-year-old tyranny of Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali in Tunisia—initiating a new rise of struggle in the Arab world—working people in that country of 10.7 million continue to defend their newly won rights and political space to organize.

This was brought in sharp focus with the massive response of as many as 1.5 million people, according to the media, to a call by the Tunisian

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Door-to-door ‘Militant’ subscription drive kicks off

BY LOUIS MARTIN

Supporters of the *Militant* sold 167 subscriptions during the first three days of a five-week international campaign to win new and renewing readers to the workers’ paper and distribute hundreds of books on revolutionary working-class politics. The axis of the drive, which runs through March 18, will be selling door to door in working-class neighborhoods.

Bringing the *Militant* to broad layers of working people where they live is at the heart of the communist movement’s response to changing attitudes among working people under the cumulative impact of the capitalist crisis. What supporters of the *Militant* have found is a growing interest in a communist explanation of the roots of the capitalist crisis and the source of the bosses’ unrelenting attacks, as well as a growing openness to discuss a class-struggle perspective to meet

Continued on page 3

Report shows deep impact of ‘great recession’ on workers

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

NEW YORK—Nearly a quarter of workers were laid off at some point in the last four years and nearly eight in 10 know a family member or close friend who has lost a job.

These were the findings of a survey titled “Diminished Lives and Futures: A Portrait of America in the Great-Recession Era,” released in February by the John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers University.

The survey does a better job at reflecting the reality working people are living than the cold and distorted figures pumped out by the Labor Department each month. It paints a picture consistent with what supporters of the *Militant* have found as they take the paper door to door in working-class neighborhoods across the country.

“I’ve been unemployed since May

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Bronx rally: Cops responsible for killing Ramarley Graham should be off streets



Paul Lomax

Frank Graham, with bullhorn, and Constance Malcolm, at right, parents of Ramarley Graham, at Feb. 2 rally in Bronx on first anniversary of his killing by New York City cop.

BY DAN FEIN

AND EMMA JOHNSON

BRONX, N.Y.—Some 250 people gathered here Feb. 2 for a rally and march on the one-year anniversary of the cop killing of 18-year-old Ramarley Graham.

Graham was shot at close range in the bathroom of his house by New York police officer Richard Haste. Cops forced themselves into the Graham family’s house by breaking down the second-floor back door. They claimed Graham had a gun. But cops came up with no weapon after a

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Uruguay strikers win right to suspend work over safety

BY SETH GALINSKY

Thousands of construction workers building a paper mill in Punta Pereira in western Uruguay went on strike Jan. 29 to protest the death of a worker on the job that day. After more than a week on strike they forced the company to recognize the right of the union to shut down unsafe sites.

“We don’t want to keep burying compañeros. We want guarantees of job safety,” Oscar Andrade, general secretary of the National Union of Construction and Allied Trades, told the press.

Mario Andrezejuk Malacre, 47, a worker still on probation, died after falling 32 feet. He was not wearing a safety harness. “We know that workers on probation often feel pressure to not refuse to do some jobs,” Andrade said.

The “state-of-the-art” Montes del Plata pulp mill, a joint venture of Finnish corporation Stora Enso and Uruguay’s Arauco, includes a deep-water port and electric generation plant. Some 1,500 of the 5,500 construction workers are from the Czech Republic, Serbia, Croatia, Poland, Turkey and Finland.

“Whenever there is a death of a construction worker we automatically hold a nationwide stoppage in the construction industry the next day from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.,” Javier Díaz, the union’s press secretary, said in a phone interview from Montevideo. “We go out to the streets to inform people about what happened.”

“This time the workers at Montes de Plata stayed on strike,” Díaz said. “Workers guarded the entrance to the construction site to make sure that nothing came in or went out. We organized

marches and *fogones* [a tradition of sharing a communal meal as part of a protest] where we passed out flyers.”

The union forced Montes del Plata to agree that union safety delegates now have the power to immediately shut down any work site where there is a risk to the lives of workers. As part of the Feb. 7 agreement, union safety delegates, previously allowed one hour a day to inspect work sites, will now have two and a half hours, and in high risk areas up to four hours a day.

An average of one worker a week dies on the job in Uruguay, according to Díaz, including 170 construction workers over the last 10 years. “We’ve won a historic victory,” he said.



National Union of Construction and Allied Trades of Uruguay
Construction workers march in western Uruguay to protest Jan. 29 death of coworker on job.

On-the-job construction deaths rise in New York

BY EMMA JOHNSON

NEW YORK—One worker was killed and another seriously injured within two days at construction sites in Queens in the last week of January. Records show a marked rise in the number of construction injuries and fatalities in the city over the past few years, as city officials have increasingly been licensing contractors to oversee the safety of their own projects.

On Jan. 24 a 42-year-old worker died from injuries sustained at a construction site in Astoria. He fell through a hole in the floor, plummeted 15 feet and struck his head on a steel girder.

The day before, a worker at the site of the New York Police Department’s new academy in College Point suffered serious injuries when he fell 12 feet into an

elevator shaft.

In Long Island City, in Queens, seven workers were injured when a crane collapsed Jan. 9. The crane belongs to New York Crane and Equipment Corp., a company notorious for safety violations.

In the New York metropolitan area,

including northern New Jersey and Long Island, construction fatalities increased from 28 to 40 between 2010 and 2011.

According to city records, the number of injuries in New York rose 46 percent between 2011 and 2012, from 128 to 187.

5 miners killed in first 5 weeks of year

BY EMMA JOHNSON

Two miners were killed on the job Feb. 6-7 in two southern West Virginia coal mines.

On Feb. 6, Brandon Townsend, 34, was killed when a hydraulic jack exploded on a belt press at Midland Trail Energy’s Blue Creek preparation plant in Kanawha County. Midland Trail is owned by Patriot Coal.

The following day Edward Finney, 43, was crushed under a scoop at Pocahontas Coal Co.’s Affinity Mine in Raleigh County.

The two men bring the number of miners killed in the first five weeks of 2013 to five. Last year 36 miners lost their lives on the job.

On Feb. 2, the *Charleston Gazette* reported that the state Office of Miners’ Health, Safety and Training has yet to issue a single citation under the state’s

coal dust standards put in place after 29 miners were killed in a dust-ignited explosion in Massey’s Upper Big Branch Mine in Raleigh County in April 2010.

Of the dust samples taken since August 2011, more than 20 percent—1,125—did not comply with the new standards.

“It’s a charade,” mine safety advocate Davitt McAteer told the *Gazette*. McAteer led an investigating team appointed by the governor into the Upper Big Branch disaster. “This dust issue was absolutely the most critical failure at the Upper Big Branch Mine and three years later, there’s still not a prevention measure in place to keep it from occurring again.”

Meanwhile, 18 workers were killed Feb. 11 in an underground explosion at a coal mine in the Komi region of northern Russia.

THE MILITANT

Fight for gov’t-funded public works program!

The ‘Militant’ reports on the reality workers face, which is covered up by official employment figures, and points out why we need to fight for a government-funded jobs program to strengthen the unity, confidence and combativity of the working class.

U.S. employment to population ratio

Jan 2006 to 2013

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The Militant

Vol. 77/No. 7

Closing news date: February 13, 2013

Editor: Doug Nelson
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Circulation director: Louis Martin

Editorial volunteers: Tom Baumann, Róger Calero, Naomi Craine, Seth Galinsky, Eleanor García, Emma Johnson, Brian Williams, Rebecca Williamson.

Published weekly except for one week in January, two weeks in July, and two weeks in September.

Business manager: Lea Sherman
The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018. Telephone: (212) 244-4899 Fax: (212) 244-4947
E-mail: themilitant@mac.com
Website: www.themilitant.com

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.

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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.

Door-to-door campaign

Continued from front page

these attacks and the need for a revolutionary struggle for a workers and farmers government.

John Naubert reported that a team of *Militant* supporters from Seattle went to Yakima, Wash., to visit with *Militant* subscribers and go door to door with the paper.

The team went back to Christina Faria, 24, who is a flagger on road work-sites. She said she likes the *Militant* and bought *Women and Revolution: The Living Example of the Cuban Revolution*. The book is one of eight titles offered at reduced prices with a subscription. (See ad below.)

“It’s important to talk about things other than what the big media says. People have lost lives to make things better,” Faria said.

Seattle readers also went back to the picket line of Teamsters Local 117 at United Natural Foods Inc., in Auburn, Wash., before the workers ended their nine-week strike with a settlement that includes the reinstatement of all fired workers and wage increases.

“I can see how they use brainwashing to convince us it’s OK if you are poor to accept the risk of living on the lowlands,” *Militant* subscriber and shop steward Robert Jury, 38, said. A forklift driver and stocker, he had read a story on Hurricane Sandy in a back issue of the paper.

After talking about the history of the Teamsters union, he bought a copy of *Teamster Rebellion* by Farrell Dobbs. The book tells the story of the militant 1934 strikes that built the industrial union movement in Minneapolis and helped pave the way for the CIO.

Dobbs was a central leader of that battle and the Socialist Workers Party.

“Supporters of the *Militant* here got

off to a good start the first weekend of the subscription campaign,” wrote Naomi Craine from Miami.

“We sold nine subscriptions going door to door, along with two copies each of *Cuba and Angola: Fighting for Africa’s Freedom and Our Own* and *Women and Revolution: The Living Example of the Cuban Revolution*.”

“One of the new subscribers works in a cement factory,” Craine added. “He took a few extra copies of the paper and some subscription blanks to show to his fellow workers, saying, ‘That way, they won’t take my copy.’”

“I saw this paper when my friend’s father, John Collado, was killed by the cops,” said Marcus Reyes, 27, when *Militant* supporters knocked on his door in Upper Manhattan Feb. 10.

Collado was shot by a plainclothes cop in September 2011 as he attempted to intervene in what witnesses said appeared to be an assault on his neighbor. Some 250 family members and supporters demonstrated a few days later, demanding that the cop be arrested and charged.

Reyes bought a single copy of the paper, saying, “It’s very informative. It lets us know we are not the only ones around the world facing the same issues.”

“I’m getting the paper because I’m interested in the cause. I want to put my shoulder to the wheel to fight injustice,” said Lucie Ngoie in Verdun, a working-class neighborhood of Montreal, as she bought a subscription from *Militant* supporters who met her as she was doing laundry in her apartment building.

Ngoie used to be a union activist in Lubumbashi, Democratic Republic of the Congo. She now works as a personal support worker in a retirement home.



Militant/John Naubert

***Militant* subscriber Christina Faria, left, in Yakima, Wash., picks up *Women and Revolution: The Living Example of the Cuban Revolution*, after Mary Martin knocked on her door Feb. 6.**

Readers, this column is your column. Send your reports, comments and photos by 9 a.m. EST every Monday.

You can join the effort to expand the circulation of the socialist newsweekly.

Contact distributors in your area. (See directory on page 8.)

Results of the first 10 days of the drive as well as local and international quotas will be printed in next week’s issue.

Membership in US unions is lowest in nearly a century

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The number of union members dropped by 400,000 last year to 11.3 percent of the workforce, down from 11.8 percent in 2011, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported Jan. 23. “That brought unionization to its lowest level since 1916,” the *New York Times* reported, according to a study by Rutgers University economists Leo Troy and Neil Sheflin.

Among industrial workers, 6.6 percent were in unions in 2012, a drop from 6.9 percent the previous year.

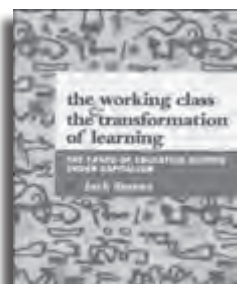
“From the mid-1970s until shortly

before the Great Recession [2008-2009], it really paid to be a factory worker in America,” writes Jim Tankersley in a Washingtonpost.com blog. “Manufacturing workers earned more per hour, on average, than workers across the private sector at large.”

Since around 2007 the opposite has been true. Part of the reason, Tankersley says, is that “the factory sector has been almost entirely deunionized.” There are 80 percent fewer factory union jobs today than in 1979, through a steady drop that has occurred every year since then.

Union membership among public workers declined to 35.9 percent, from 37 percent in 2011, the bureau reported. More public workers are in unions (7.3 million) today than those employed in manufacturing (7 million).

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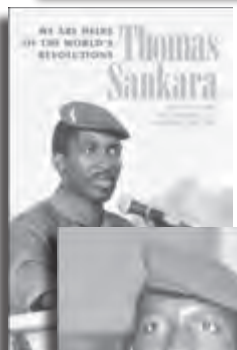
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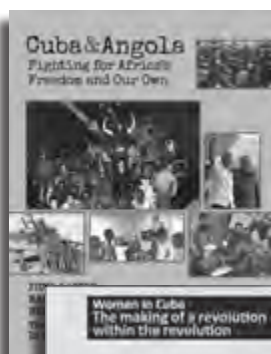


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Cuba and Angola

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by Vilma Espín, Asela de los Santos, Yolanda Ferrer

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The Cuban Five

Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should Be Free

from pages of the *Militant*

\$3 with subscription (usually \$5)



Women and Revolution

The Living Example of the Cuban Revolution

by Asela de los Santos, Mary-Alice Waters and others

Publication offer: \$5 till March 31
\$3 with subscription (usually \$7)

See distributors on page 8

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

FLORIDA

Miami

Deacons for Defense. Film showing. Introductory remarks by Anthony Dutrow, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Feb. 22, 7:30 p.m. 7100 Biscayne Blvd., Suite 306A. Tel.: (305) 757-8869.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

From India to the U.S.: The Fight for Women’s Rights Today. Speaker: Ilona Gersh, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Feb. 22, 7:30 p.m. 806 W. Washington Blvd., Suite 202. Tel.: (312) 455-0111.

TEXAS

Houston

Celebrate 25th Anniversary of Cuban and Angolan Troops Defeating South African Apartheid Army. Speaker: Jacquie Henderson, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Texas Senate, District 6. Sat., Feb. 23. Reception, 7 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 4800 W. 34th St., Suite C-50L. Tel.: (713) 688-4919.

UNITED KINGDOM

Manchester

Israeli Elections Reflect Rising Class Tensions and Impact of Arab Spring. Speaker: Pete Clifford, Communist League. Sat., Feb. 23, 6 p.m. Donation: £2.50. Room 301, Hilton House, 26-28 Hilton St., M1 2EH. Tel.: (016) 1478-2496.

Over the top in Omaha

Continued from front page
join in.”

The high unemployment, competition for jobs and falling wages that mark the deepening crisis of capitalism were concerns raised by workers.

“I’m working two jobs now to make ends meet—17 hours a day,” Toni Goodwill, a house cleaner and bartender told DeLuca as she signed the petition. “My kids both work in grocery stores and they had to move back in with me because they can’t make it on their own.”

“I’m 53 but I made more money when I was 21, working the same number of hours as a waitress,” Bernice Dentler, who signed the petition and subscribed to the *Militant*, told DeLuca.

The candidates say workers need to fight for a government-funded jobs program to put millions to work building schools, medical centers, child care centers and other things workers need.

“Coming from liberal Seattle the stereotype is that people in Nebraska would be violently opposed to a socialist candidate or merely the word socialism,” Bryce Phillips Horvath, 21, told the *Militant* from Seattle after returning

from petitioning Feb. 9-10. “This experience confirmed for me just how untrue that stereotype is.

“Most were excited to hear that DeLuca is a worker, she supports unions and creating more jobs, and perhaps most of all that she is neither a Democrat or Republican,” he added. “More than once I had someone say, ‘Wait a minute, is she a Republican or Democrat? No? Neither? OK good, I’ll definitely sign then.’

“I informed them that the candidate cannot promise anything but to be part of building a movement with you,” Horvath said. “Of course some people were busy or otherwise not interested, they were mostly, however, very polite and upfront. Standing in front of No Frills, a local chain of stores, I realized the name of this store really describes well the city of Omaha and why I like it.

“Not everything glitters and must be ultramodern, trendy and bourgeois like in Seattle these days. Omaha is one of those often overlooked places in America where the land and farmers and working people are exploited to produce the industrialized foods we rely on



Militant/Donald Bossert

Bus driver Carmen Phillips, left, signs petition Jan. 19 in North Omaha to put Maura DeLuca, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Omaha, Neb., on ballot.

to survive every day,” he said.

Kevin Cole, 57, a postal worker from Los Angeles who supports the SWP campaign of Norton Sandler for mayor and Eleanor García for school board there, came to Omaha for three days to aid in the ballot drive. He was the top

petitioner over the weekend, collecting 97 signatures for DeLuca.

“Many workers told me an industrial worker like Maura DeLuca should be able to run for mayor,” Cole said. “I was also pleasantly surprised when a guy saw a copy of the *Militant* under the petition and said he likes the paper and wanted to buy the latest copy.”

One objective of the SWP campaign and the ballot drive is to get the revolutionary working-class perspective of the party, the *Militant* and Pathfinder books better known by workers thinking about how to confront the capitalist crisis.

Campaigners and others attended a dinner and forum Feb. 9 at the South Omaha YMCA. Speaking at the forum were DeLuca, Perasso, and David Rosenfeld, SWP candidate for city council in Des Moines, Iowa.

Bronx rally slams cop killing of Ramarley Graham

Continued from front page
48-hour search of the home.

“I thank you all for coming and I pledge to continue the fight,” Frank Graham, Ramarley’s father, told the rally. “It’s not just about wanting Haste to go to prison. We want all those involved off the streets and out of the police force.”

In June a grand jury decided to indict Haste on first and second degree manslaughter charges. He has been put on administrative duty. Haste is the first New York Police Department cop to face criminal charges while on duty since 2007, when three cops were indicted for the killing of Sean Bell. He faces a maximum sentence of 25 years, and has pleaded not guilty. The next hearing is March 26.

“The most important thing for me now is to get a date for the trial,” Constance Malcolm, Ramarley Graham’s mother, said over the phone a couple of days after the rally. “We hope for May. They’ve been stalling and stalling. I think it’s because they’re trying to change the venue. They don’t want the trial to be held here in the Bronx.”

Malcolm added that she is convinced Haste will choose a trial with a judge and not a jury.

Sharing the platform with Malcolm and Frank Graham were four family members of others killed by cops in the New York/New Jersey area: Natasha Pannell, Margarita Rosario, Kenneth

Chamberlain Jr., and Shirley Williams.

Natasha Pannell’s brother, Phillip Pannell, 16, was fatally shot in the back by Officer Gary Spath in Teaneck, N.J., in 1990. Witnesses say Pannell had his arms up when he was shot. Spath was acquitted of manslaughter in 1992.

Margarita Rosario’s son, Anthony Rosario, 18, and nephew Hilton Vega, 21, were shot a total of 22 times in the back and sides by cops in a Bronx apartment in 1995.

Kenneth Chamberlain’s father, Kenneth Chamberlain Sr., 68, was killed by cops in his apartment in White Plains, N.Y., Nov. 19, 2011. A medical alert company asked police to respond after the elder Chamberlain accidentally hit his cardiac alert system. When the cops arrived he insisted he was fine and refused to open the door. Cops forced entry by unhinging the door and shot Chamberlain with a Taser and beanbag gun before Officer Anthony Carelli fatally shot him in the chest with a .40-caliber pistol. On May 3, a grand jury cleared the cops of any wrongdoing.

Shirley Williams is the mother of Malik Williams, 19, who was killed Dec. 19, 2011, by cops in Garfield, N.J. Police shot Williams after he escaped their custody and ran into a garage where cops claim he threatened them with a hammer. In June last year, a grand jury decided not to charge Sgt. Jose Brito and Officer Kenneth Keenan.

Yusef Salaam of the Central Park Five also addressed the rally. The five were Black and Latino teenagers framed up for the 1989 beating and rape of a Caucasian woman in Central Park and imprisoned for periods between six and 13 years.

Three city politicians also spoke: City Comptroller John Liu, one of the contenders in the race for mayor later this year; and City Council members Charles Barron and Andy King.

After the rally outside the house where Graham was killed, participants marched to the 47th Police Precinct, where Haste is assigned.

On Feb. 1 the family filed a lawsuit against Haste, Police Commissioner

Raymond Kelly and other cops. The suit accuses the NYPD of improper training of its officers, covering up facts surrounding Ramarley Graham’s death and disproportionately targeting minority youth through the department’s “stop-and-frisk” practices.

“I know my lawyers filed a lawsuit,” Malcolm said. “But I don’t care much about that. My priority is to get the trial against Haste going.”

North Chicago rally: ‘Prosecute cops who killed Darrin Hanna’

BY JOHN HAWKINS

NORTH CHICAGO, Ill.—Close to 60 people attended a rally and news conference Feb. 4 to demand prosecution of cops who killed Darrin Hanna in November 2011. Two weeks ago, newly elected Lake County Coroner Thomas Rudd ruled Hanna’s death a homicide, reversing an earlier finding by the previous coroner.

Hanna, an African-American, was 45 when he died Nov. 13, 2011, from injuries suffered a week before when seven North Chicago cops beat and repeatedly shocked him with a Taser for 20 minutes.

Among those speaking at the event were Gloria Carr, Hanna’s mother; Rita Mayfield, Illinois state representative and a cousin of Hanna; Kevin O’Connor, Hanna family’s civil attorney; Ralph Peterson, rally organizer and also a cousin of Hanna; Airickca Gordon-Taylor, cousin of Emmett Till; and Bishop Tavis Grant, national field director for the Rainbow PUSH Coalition.

“Five hundred thirty-five people died in the U.S. last year from being Tasered,” Grant said at the rally. “One hundred eighty-four of those died from Taser torture. Darrin Hanna did not die from ‘Taser,’ he was tortured. We’re not going to be silent until the officers who did this to Darrin are off the force.”

Following the event participants presented the North Chicago City

Council with a demand that the officers involved in Hanna’s death be terminated or suspended. North Chicago Mayor Leon Rockingham repeated his claim that he has no authority to take action against the cops.

“Some people are saying that Dr. Rudd’s reclassifying Darrin Hanna’s death as a homicide was done as a political favor to our family,” said Carr at the city council meeting. “But a doctor would not put his reputation and professional credentials on the line if he did not believe what he was saying is true. If you really look at the photos of my son, how he was beaten almost beyond recognition, you can only conclude that this was a hate crime.”



Militant/Illona Gersh

Gloria Carr, Darrin Hanna’s mother, speaking at City Council meeting Feb. 4.

—CALENDAR—

MARYLAND College Park

Free the Cuban Five: A Panel Discussion. Speakers: William Norris, attorney for Ramón Labañino; Kurt Schmoke, vice president and general counsel, Howard University; David Sartorius, University of Maryland professor; José Pertierra, attorney for Venezuelan government; others. Wed., Feb. 20, 7 p.m. *Nyumburu Cultural Center Multipurpose Room, University of Maryland.* Tel.: (770) 330-5953. Sponsors: *Nyumburu Cultural Center, Black Male Initiative, D.C. Metro Coalition to Free the Cuban Five.*

ON THE PICKET LINE

South African farmworkers win minimum wage raise

South African Labor Minister Mildred Oliphant announced Feb. 4 a 52 percent increase in the minimum wage for farmworkers in the country. The increase comes after strikes by tens of thousands of farmworkers in the Western Cape in November, December and January.

“It’s not enough, but it’s more than before,” Ryno Filander, a farmworker near Robertson, said in a phone interview. The increase from 69 rand a day to 105 rand (\$11.77) is less than the 150 rand farmworkers were demanding.

Farmworkers faced rubber bullets, tear gas, water cannon and stun grenades from the police, opposition from government officials, and harassment and violent attacks by the farm owners. The bosses worked overtime to foster divisions between native-born and foreign-born workers and between seasonal workers and permanent employees.

The most recent strike started Jan. 9 and began winding down Jan. 25.

“Some workers are still languishing in jail, denied bail, and about 400 who are out on bail are facing charges of intimidation and public violence from the latest strike. And more than 1,000 workers have been dismissed by the farmers in retaliation for the strike,” said Nosey Pieterse by phone Feb. 8. Pieterse is general secretary of the Bawsi Agricultural Workers Union, one of several unions involved in the strike.

During the November and December strikes some immigrant workers were deported, “but this time around we have not received any reports of deportations,” he said.

“Our fight wasn’t just for raising the minimum wage,” Filander, a member of the Commercial Stevedoring, Agricultural and Allied Workers Union (CSAAWU), said. “It was also about the conditions farmworkers face,” including housing, job safety, education, land access and how workers are treated by bosses on the job.

“Yes, we have learned through these strikes,” said Simon Jacobs, a farmworker and shop steward with CSAAWU. “We learned that if you want something you must fight for it.”

—Seth Galinsky

Quebec hotel workers fight to keep union jobs

SAINT-HYACINTHE, Quebec—The strike by 180 workers since Oct. 28 at Hôtel des Seigneurs here took a new turn Jan. 10 with a news release saying the city plans to buy the convention center that is part of the hotel.

The hotel and convention center is owned by Vancouver-based SilverBirch Hotels and Resorts, which has more than 20 hotels across Canada.

Since the middle of last year labor contracts have been negotiated in 35 Quebec hotels. Union members in more than 20 hotels won annual wage increases of 3 percent through 2016, a 2 percent increase in employer contributions to pensions funds, and some improvement in job protection. Hôtel des Seigneurs workers have been demanding an hourly raise of 60 cents in addition to the increase won in other hotels in order to reduce a significant wage gap with nearby Montreal hotels. They have also been demanding protection from job losses, including from the convention center sale.

Local union President Robin St-Pierre said to the *Militant* that the union wants the collective agreement to be honored by any new buyer. Otherwise, union workers could be replaced in the convention center.

“What’s at stake are jobs in the kitchen, convention center room set-up and cleaning, and waiting on tables—that’s more than half the unionized workers,” Monique Nault, who has worked in banquet services for 26 years, explained on the picket line Jan. 31.

“We won’t go back till they guarantee our jobs in the convention center,” said Kim Baron, a kitchen worker with 25 years seniority.

—Philippe Tessier and Katy LeRougetel

Rally supports Peugeot strikers near Paris

AULNAY, France—Several hundred strikers and supporters rallied in front of the Peugeot auto assembly factory in this northeastern suburb of Paris Feb. 5 to support 400 workers on strike here since Jan. 16.

Peugeot said it will close the plant of 2,800 workers next year and eliminate 8,000 jobs in France. Workers are demanding a guarantee of jobs with comparable wages after the plant closing.

Local and national union leaders and local elected officials spoke at the rally,



Militant/Katy LeRougetel

Hotel workers picket in freezing cold Jan. 31 in front of Hôtel des Seigneurs in Saint-Hyacinthe, Quebec. On strike since Oct. 28, union workers demand wage increases and job protection.

including Pierre Laurent, national secretary of the French Communist Party.

The strike was called by the three unions in the Aulnay plant: the CGT, CFDT and SUD. While most production workers are not on strike, production is paralyzed.

The layoffs at Peugeot are part of moves by bosses in France to become more competitive. On Jan. 11, a number of boss associations and trade union federations concluded a national agreement that would make it easier to lay off or transfer workers, lower wages and change hours in the event a company faces “serious economic difficulties.”

The Socialist Party government of President François Hollande has pledged to adopt legislation in March that would give force of law to the agreement.

The two unions that refused to sign—the CGT and FO—have called for demonstrations against the agreement in early March. They represent the majority of unionized workers in France.

Renault is currently seeking an agreement with unions to eliminate 8,260 jobs in France, freeze wages in 2013, and reduce vacation time in exchange for promises to increase the volume of cars produced in the country.

Goodyear recently announced plans to shut one of its factory in Amiens, which employs 1,173 workers.

Interior Minister Manuel Valls instructed police Feb. 5 to “closely” moni-

tor companies facing economic difficulties where there is a “risk of radicalization.”

—Claude Bleton and Derek Jeffers

Workers strike New Zealand magazine over severance pay

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—Twenty-three members of the FIRST Union (Finance, Industrial, Retail, Stores and Transport) went on strike Jan. 31 against magazine distributor Gordon & Gotch after contract talks broke down over the company’s moves to reduce redundancy (severance pay).

“The company says it is not making money but that is not important,” said Maggie Qui on the picket line Feb. 3. “We have been here many years and deserve to have that redundancy pay.”

Qui, who has worked for Gordon & Gotch for eight years, said her job in the returns department is threatened by moves to process more and more returns online. Now the bosses are looking to eliminate what for her would be four weeks’ worth of wages in severance.

Workers on the picket line said bosses successfully bribed two machine operators with a pay raise to cross the picket line and have been operating with the two workers, management and agency staff (temporary workers).

The company did not return calls requesting comment.

—Annalucia Vermunt

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



February 26, 1988

Soviet Communist Party head Mikhail Gorbachev announced that Soviet troops will begin pulling out of Afghanistan on May 15. Gorbachev said the withdrawal would be completed within 10 months.

Gorbachev called for an agreement that would include “international guarantees of non-interference in Afghanistan’s internal affairs.”

The “international guarantees” sought by Gorbachev include an end to Washington’s massive aid—more than \$1 billion over the last two years—to rightist-led forces combating the Afghan government.

Washington has vastly increased its arms shipments to these groups since December 1979, when tens of thousands of Soviet troops poured into the country to prop up the government. Soviet military intervention, far from rolling back the insurgency, enabled it to win more popular support.



February 25, 1963

A McCarthy-type hysteria is raging in Washington on the Cuba issue. It results from the publicly avowed commitment to destroy the Cuban Revolution, and the resulting frustration because Washington has been unable to accomplish any such thing.

This demagoguery is by no means confined to extreme right-wingers but has become a central political tactic of the leaders of the Republican Party. Nor is it confined to the Republicans.

[President] Kennedy himself began the current wave of hysteria and demagoguery with his performance before the Bay-of-Pigs Brigade in Miami’s Orange Bowl last month. There, to shouts of “War, War” from the crowd, he promised the destruction of the Cuban Revolution. Kennedy keeps promising the very thing the right-wingers are clamoring for, but since he can’t produce, the clamor increases.



February 26, 1938

The swift pace at which the ruling class is preparing to plunge this country into war with Japan in order to establish American domination of the Pacific was revealed this week.

This information describes a series of meetings recently held by President Roosevelt with key leaders in the worlds of finance, industry, journalism, labor, and, of course, the army and navy. The purpose was to prime the pumps of the propaganda machine already at work to prepare the American masses for war.

The campaign to whip up the war spirit will be two-fold in character: First, appeal will be made to patriotic sentiment—the need to protect American “rights” abroad. The second and supplementary line will be “idealistic,” stressing the desirability of “defending the sanctity of treaties.”

It was emphasized that forces vigorously opposing the war drive must be silenced as quickly as possible.



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\$24

Greek farmers protest squeeze of rising costs, taxes, gov't cuts

BY GEORGES MEHRABIAN
AND NATASHA TERLEXIS

LARISSA, Greece—Several hundred farmers and their supporters rallied in Nikaia, on the outskirts of this town in the agricultural center of Thessaly Feb. 10, as part of a nationwide farm protest. They're protesting against a decision to end farmers' tax breaks on income and gasoline and delays in subsidy payments.

More than 1,500 tractors were parked, some three deep, on the side of the National Highway connecting Athens to the northern city of Thessaloniki.

Several other smaller tractor protests took place throughout the country, in Thrace, Macedonia and Thessaly. On a four-hour drive from Larissa to Athens, these reporters spotted four smaller demonstrations on the side of the road. On this day representatives of 35 lo-

cal farmers' associations were meeting to discuss the recent offer made by the government to speed up several subsidy payments and delay implementation of stricter retirement regulations.

"We have been here 10 days already," Apostolos Totsios, a cotton farmer, told the *Militant*. "Thirty-five tractors are here from Maratheas, my village. More would have come, but it costs a lot in gas to get here. Our whole village of 700 people had to collect money to get us here. This is going on throughout the plain in village after village."

Regional farm organizations each had their kiosk, with a barbecue and tables set up at the side of the road.

"The main issues we face have to do with skyrocketing costs of production," said cotton farmer Vaggelis Kokalaras. "This primarily has to do with tax increases on fuel. At the same time prices



Militant/Malcolm Mehrabian Terlexis

More than 1,500 tractors, some three deep, were parked along highway between Athens and the northern city of Thessaloniki in Greece as part of national farm protest Feb. 10.

for cotton have plummeted by about 20 percent since last year."

"They provide tax-free fuel to the shipowners and industrialists, why not to us who grow all the food and fiber," Kokalaras said.

"Electricity costs have also shot up by 70 percent," said cotton farmer Vaivos Filos. "There used to be special agricultural prices for electricity but now they have been eliminated. In addition, they have stuck onto the bills an environmental damage tax!"

"The value added tax has also increased to 23 percent," Kokalaras pointed out. "We get a 6 percent rebate for production necessities, which gets reimbursed after many months. So that puts it at 17 percent, it used to be 11 percent."

"We also take all the risks. There have been serious losses due to the green worm infestation. It is costing us 33 euros [\$44] per *strema* [0.25 acres] just for pesticides," said Totsios.

"It is not only diseases but breakdowns. For example, to replace a tractor tire costs 1,000 euros [\$1,345]. A sudden expense that you did not expect," chimed in cotton farmer Kostas Kontonikos.

"With the sale of the state-owned ATE [Agricultural Bank of Greece], credit costs have also increased," said Kokalaras.

"Clearly all the problems we face are very big. I can say that things will have to change in many countries. Only then will we be able to see a difference in our ability to produce and live decently in the village," Filos said.

The presence of police and special forces in armored buses was reinforced through the day.

The meeting of farmers' associations decided to reject the government's partial concessions.

They called for strengthening the tractor protest and daily road blockades from 2 to 3 p.m. As they moved to carry out these decisions Feb. 11, road blockages were in some areas combined with handing out leaflets and food to motorists.



Militant/Georges Mehrabian

Vaivos Filos, Kostas Kontonikos, Apostolos Totsios, Vaggelis Kokalaras at Larissa protest, Feb. 10.

Report shows impact of 'great recession' on workers

Continued from front page

2012," Juan Otero, 21, told the *Militant* at his apartment in the Frederick Douglass public housing complex in Manhattan, N.Y. He was laid off from a job at a frozen yogurt shop. Otero is a certified apprentice painter and member of the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades. "Getting jobs has been hard for a while," he said. "You have to deal with anything these days."

Of those laid off, nearly a quarter said they have been unable to get a new job, the report said. Workers 55 years or older have had the hardest time. Nearly two-thirds of them said they searched for more than a year before finding a job, or have still not found one.

And more and more workers who thought they had retired are now seeking full or part-time work to make ends meet.

"I've been looking for a part-time job over the past year and haven't been able to find one," Pablo Alveril, 70, told the *Militant* in one of the Frederick Douglass apartment buildings. For several decades he had worked as a power plant worker and a seaman. "People should be put to work repairing roads and the electric grid," he said. "This would create a lot of jobs."

The majority of those who have gotten other jobs after being laid off are now working for lower wages—one-third have taken pay cuts of more than

30 percent, according to the report.

Many with savings accounts have had to dip into them to get by. The report notes that the majority surveyed have less money in these accounts than when the recession began.

Among key expenditures workers have cut back on are doctor visits and other medical treatments. More than one-third did so at some point during the recession; for those laid off more than half avoided needed medical care, the report states.

"And health care is expensive and hard to get," Otero said. "If I get sick, I'd rather not go to a hospital."

Eighty-six percent of those surveyed said their lives have been changed by the economic downturn, and 35 percent said it has had "major consequences."

"I get angry when I pass a vacant house we could live more comfortably in, knowing it will never work because we don't have enough income or a good enough credit history," said Sue Chalfant, 58, a health care worker in Des Moines, Iowa. Recently her daughter, son-in-law and granddaughter moved in with her after loss of income meant they could no longer afford their own home. Chalfant herself was having trouble paying the rent while living alone.

"The economic retrenchment made worse by a slow recovery has transformed American workers' financial and job security and altered their expectations about the American economy," the report concludes. "Six in ten Americans believe they will not recover from the effects of the recession, a sobering assessment of the American recovery."

Maggie Trowe from Des Moines contributed to this article.

'I realized boss accidentally gave me *his* card'

Blood money donations from holiday bonuses keep coming in to the Socialist Workers Party Capital Fund.

"This is a \$25 gift card my boss gave me for showing up on a Saturday, even though I was told it was compulsory," wrote Dean Hazlewood in Miami in a note with his check. "At first he gave me a card for \$50. Five minutes later I heard him yelling about something. When he started asking people how much the card he had given them was worth and everyone said \$25, I realize what had happened. He had given me *his* card."

Hazlewood works as a temp in a plant that prints advertising on everything from pens to coffee mugs.

Carole Lesnick, Jeff Powers, Rashaad Ali and Willie Cotton in San Francisco sent in a check for \$76, Christmas bonuses from Gate Gourmet where they all work.

"At the same time as we got this, contract negotiations are taking place and the bosses propose no wage increase, a 25 percent hike in health insurance premiums out of workers' pockets and stricter work rules," Lesnick wrote.

Blood money is a term used to describe so-called bonus payments and other bribes from bosses pressing workers to accept speedup, wage cuts, concession contracts and dangerous working conditions. Communist workers turn them over to the SWP Capital Fund to finance long-range work of the party.

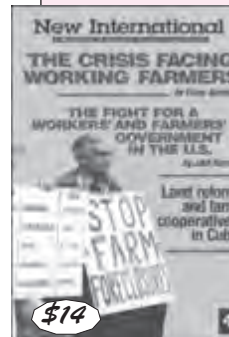
To make a blood money contribution, contact Militant distributors listed on page 8.

—EMMA JOHNSON

New International no. 4

'The Fight for a Workers and Farmers Government in the U.S.'

by Jack Barnes

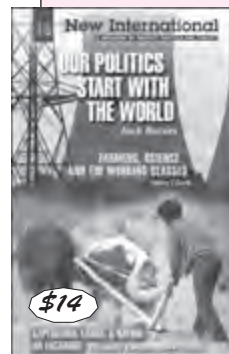


The shared exploitation of workers and farmers by banking, industrial and commercial capital lays the basis for their alliance in a revolutionary fight for a government of the producers.

New International no. 13

'Farming, Science, and the Working Classes'

by Steve Clark



Advancing the world-wide struggle for socialism requires closing the enormous gap in economic, social and cultural conditions among working people in different countries, and toilers of city and countryside.

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Mass protests in Tunisia

Continued from front page

General Union of Labor (UGTT) for a general strike Feb. 8 to protest the killing two days earlier of opposition leader Chokri Belaid in the capital Tunis.

“All trade unionists in all regions of the country participated,” Kacem Afaya, UGTT deputy general secretary, said by phone from Tunis Feb. 13. The UGTT has a membership of 500,000 and is the main trade union federation in Tunisia.

What the Feb. 10 British *Guardian* described as “an assassination in broad daylight of a type not seen in Tunisia since colonial times” triggered a wave of nationwide protests that has unsettled the government coalition elected in October 2011 and deepened the rift among bourgeois forces contending for power.

Tunisia was a colony of France until 1956. As an independent country, it has remained largely under France’s imperialist domination.

Belaid, 48, was a central figure of the bourgeois, liberal opposition. The head of the Democratic Patriots, he was a founding leader of the Popular Front, a “left-leaning alliance comprising a dozen parties and national personalities,” according to the French daily *Le Parisien*.

The evening before his assassination, Belaid had denounced the Ennahda-led government for condoning increased violent assaults by Islamist groups. Targets have included women, artists, journalists, bourgeois liberal figures and trade unions.

“As a lawyer, Belaid had defended many workers and trade unionists, sometimes for free,” Afaya said.

“Political assassinations like that of Belaid are a threat for all of Tunisia,” added Afaya. “The UGTT has been the target of these militias. General Secretary [Houssine Abassi] has received death threats.”

Ennahda, an Islamist party, was brought to power in the October 2011 elections.

No one has claimed responsibility for Belaid’s death. Prime Minister Hamadi Jebali called Belaid’s assassination a “heinous crime against the Tunisian people.”

As news of his assassination spread,

thousands took to the streets across the country. There were many clashes with police over the following days and more than a dozen Ennahda offices were attacked.

On Feb. 8, the day of Belaid’s funeral, most public transportation was paralyzed, including airports. An overwhelming majority of shops and industries were closed, with the exception of emergency services, drugstores and grocery stores selling basic goods, according to the *Nouvel Observateur* website.

Some 40,000 joined the funeral cortege in Tunis. Dozens of demonstrations occurred in the rest of the country.

The march to the Tunis cemetery became a massive anti-government demonstration, with chants of “Bread, freedom and social justice” and “Clear off!” being revived from the 2011 protests against Ben Ali.

Some 10,000 gathered in Sidi Bouzid, the central Tunisia town where the uprising against the Ben Ali regime started in December 2011.

The scope of the popular outpouring is a reflection of the conditions Tunisia’s working people face.

“The country’s economic situation is worsening, with unemployment of-



Fethi Belaid/AFP/Getty Images

Rally in front of Interior Ministry in Tunis, Tunisia, Feb. 6, to protest killing that day of opposition leader Chokri Belaid. Hundreds of thousands joined general strike two days later.

ficially at 17% but far higher among the young,” the *Guardian* wrote Feb. 8. “Lawyers and campaigners say torture continues in prisons, the justice system and administration remains corrupt.”

Some 6,000 Ennahda supporters attended a counterrally Feb. 9 in Tunis.

The response of Ennahda founder and central leader Rashed Ghannouchi to Belaid’s assassination was different than Jebali’s. “These kind of things hap-

pen in revolutions,” Ghannouchi told an Algerian daily Feb. 10.

The evening of Belaid’s assassination, Jebali disbanded the government and announced his intention to put together a “government of technocrats” with no political affiliation until new elections, as a way to placate the unrest.

The country’s main political parties initially rejected the move, including Ennahda. Jebali has been engaged in intense negotiations since then.

Momentum builds for bipartisan ‘immigration reform’

BY JOHN STUDER

Momentum is building in both the Democratic and Republican parties for “immigration reform” as they converge on its main elements—an arduous path to some type of legal status for many of the more than 11 million undocumented immigrants already here, along with stricter enforcement of immigration law and “guest worker” programs to supply the shifting demands of bosses, from farms to packinghouses, for low-paid workers with few rights.

High joblessness, expansion of government enforcement programs making it harder for the undocumented to get jobs, and bosses’ assaults against workers’ living standards and working conditions have spurred a marked decline in immigration to the U.S.

Representatives of the bosses’ two parties are looking to craft immigra-

tion policy with an eye toward the substantial and growing Latino vote. At the same time, they are moving to tighten government control over immigration flows and maintain a superexploited pool of labor, as they drive against the wages, benefits and unions of all working people.

On Jan. 28 the “gang of eight” in the Senate—four Democrats and four Republicans—released a set of “principles” to guide a new comprehensive immigration bill. Among the eight are Republicans John McCain of Arizona and Marco Rubio of Florida along with Democrats Charles Schumer of New York and Bob Menendez of New Jersey.

The plan proposes “immediate legal status for many of the ... undocumented U.S. immigrants but delays their embarking on a path to citizenship until a raft of border security and rigorous enforcement mechanisms are in place,” the *Christian Science Monitor* reported.

Undocumented workers would be able to apply for a new probationary status if they register with the government, undergo a background check that does not—in the eyes of government bureaucrats—show “a serious criminal background” or anything else that could “pose a threat to our national security” and settle “their debt to society by paying a fine and back taxes.” Those who pass muster would be allowed to stay and work. They could get a driver’s license, but would not be eligible for any government services, including health care coverage under Obamacare.

The bipartisan proposal calls for increased use of surveillance drones and further beefing up the Border Patrol.

It includes plans to expand and strengthen the E-Verify program, through which bosses use government databases to check workers’ legal status. The changes would make E-Verify mandatory for all employers across the country. The program is currently mandatory for some federal government

contracts and for many employers in several states.

New non-forgeable identity papers under the proposal will make it easier for bosses and their government to keep track of workers—immigrant and native born. And a toughened security system will help to assure that “all persons entering the United States on temporary visas via airports and seaports have left the country as required by law.”

The senators propose creating a commission of elected officials and “community leaders” from southern states to determine when these measures have “secured” the Mexican border.

When the commission deems the border is closed, “probationary” workers would be eligible to apply for permanent residency, which would entail a second background check, passing English and U.S. history tests, and providing proof of a work history and a current job—challenging for many forced to work off the books. Those who finally qualify would have to go to the “end of the line” to apply for a green card.

President Barack Obama has also released the outlines of his own plan.

One aspect of these proposals that has strong bipartisan agreement is a sharply differentiated approach to immigrants who could be immediately incorporated into the professional middle class versus workers they consider necessary but “low skilled.” The Senate “gang’s” proposal says it will fix a “broken system which sadly discourages the world’s best and brightest citizens from coming to the United States and remaining in our country.”

Both plans would “award” green cards to students who get a PhD or Master’s degree in science, technology, engineering or math.

On the other end of the spectrum, the senators propose a special “agricultural worker program” to “maintain America’s food supply,” as well as an

Continued on page 9



New International no. 12

Capitalism’s Long Hot Winter Has Begun

by Jack Barnes

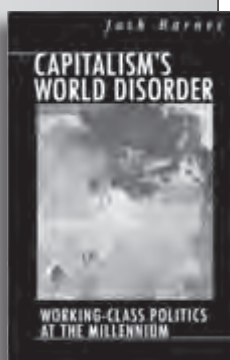
Today’s accelerating capitalist crisis accompanies a continuation of the most far-reaching shift in Washington’s military policy and organization since the U.S. buildup toward World War II. Class-struggle-minded working people must face this historic turning point for imperialism, and chart a revolutionary course to confront it. \$16

Capitalism’s World Disorder

Working-Class Politics at the Millennium

by Jack Barnes

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



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Malcolm X: Our program needs to be international

Below is an excerpt from a speech by Malcolm X in Rochester, N.Y., Feb. 16, 1965, five days before his assassination. It is included in February 1965: The Final Speeches, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for February. Copyright © 1992 by Betty Shabazz and Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY MALCOLM X

The [Black Muslim] movement itself attracted the most militant, the most dissatisfied, the most uncompromising elements of the Black community. And also the youngest elements of the Black community.

And as this movement grew and it attracted such a militant, uncompromising, dissatisfied element, the movement itself was supposedly based upon the religion of Islam and therefore supposedly a religious movement. But because the world of Islam or the orthodox Muslim world would never accept the Black Muslim movement as a bona fide part of it, it put those of us who were in it in a sort of religious vacuum. It put us in a position of identifying ourselves by a religion, while the world in which that religion was practiced rejected us as not being bona fide practitioners, practitioners of that religion.

Also the government tried to maneuver us and label us as political rather than religious so that they could charge



Malcolm X speaks at Corn Hill Methodist Church in Rochester, N.Y., Feb. 16, 1965.

us with sedition and subversion. This is the only reason. But although we were labeled political, because we were never permitted to take part in politics we were in a vacuum politically. We were in a religious vacuum. We were in a political vacuum. We were actually alienated, cut off from all type of activity with even the world that we were fighting against.

We became a sort of a religious-political hybrid, all to ourselves. Not involved in anything but just standing on the sidelines condemning everything. But in no position to correct anything because we couldn't take action.

Yet at the same time, the nature of the movement was such that it attracted the activists. Those who wanted action. Those who wanted to do something about the evils that confronted all Black people. We weren't particularly concerned with the religion of the Black man. Because whether he was a Methodist or a Baptist or an atheist or an agnostic, he caught the same hell.

So we could see that we had to have some action, and those of us who were activists became dissatisfied, disillusioned. And finally dissension set in and eventually a split. Those who split away were the real activists of the movement, who were intelligent enough to want

some kind of program that would enable us to fight for the rights of all Black people here in the Western Hemisphere. ...

[W]e set up the Organization of Afro-American Unity, in which anybody in the community could participate in an action program designed to bring about complete recognition and respect of Black people as human beings.

And the motto of the Organization of Afro-American Unity is "By any means necessary." We don't believe in fighting a battle in which the ground rules are to be laid down by those who suppress us. We don't believe that we can win in a battle where the ground rules are laid down by those who exploit us. We don't believe that we can carry on a struggle trying to win the affection of those who for so long have oppressed and exploited us.

We believe that our fight is just. We believe that our grievances are just. We believe that the evil practices against Black people in this society are criminal and that those who engage in such criminal practices are to be looked upon themselves as nothing but criminals. And we believe that we are within our rights to fight those criminals by any means necessary.

This doesn't mean that we're for violence. But we have seen that the federal

government has shown its inability, its absolute unwillingness, to protect the lives and the property of Black people. We have seen where organized white racists, Klansmen, Citizens' Councilmen, and others can come into the Black community and take a Black man and make him disappear and nothing be done about it. We have seen that they can come in. [Applause] ...

[O]nce you properly analyze the ingredients that opened the doors even to the degree that they were cracked open, when you see what it was, you'll better understand your position today. And you'll better understand the strategy that you need today. Any kind of movement for freedom of Black people based solely within the confines of America is absolutely doomed to fail. [Applause] ...

You say, "Well, look at the beautiful decision that the Supreme Court handed down." Brother, look at it! Don't you know these men on the Supreme Court are masters of legal—not only of law, but legal phraseology. They are such masters of the legal language that they could very easily have handed down a desegregation decision on education so worded that no one could have gotten around. But they come up with that thing worded in such a way that here ten years have passed, and there's all kind of loopholes in it. They knew what they were doing. ...

So, since we see—I don't want you to think I'm teaching hate. I love everybody who loves me. [Laughter] But I sure don't love those who don't love me. [Laughter]

Since we see all of this subterfuge, this trickery, this maneuvering—it's not only at the federal level, the national level, the local level, and all levels. The young generation of Blacks that's coming up now can see that as long as we wait for the Congress and the Senate and the Supreme Court and the president to solve our problems, you'll have us going in circles for another thousand years. ...

So one of the first steps that we became involved in, those of us who got into the Organization of Afro-American Unity, was to come up with a program that would make our grievances international.

February

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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The Militant February 25, 2013

Full rights for all undocumented workers!

In response to the bourgeois debate on “immigration reform,” the labor movement should demand no special restrictions or caveats on full legalization of undocumented workers in the country and oppose moves that target rights of working people.

For several years starting in 2006, immigrant workers stood up in mass in response to direct attacks on their rights. The capitalist rulers were forced to back off and reassess their approach. At the same time immigrant workers, with and without papers, have been among the most combative sections of the working class in mines and factories across the country. Through these struggles they have won more sympathy and support among native-born workers.

The employers’ demand for undocumented migrant labor has brought more than 11 million here without rights of citizenship. Today, as a result of bosses’ declining demand for labor, immigration to the U.S. has been slowing, as it has in previous periods of contraction in capitalist production and trade.

Given all these factors, Democratic and Republican politicians—seeking social stability, Latino votes, and

tighter government control over capitalist-driven labor flows—are converging on a new immigration policy that includes a path to legal status for many.

All the proposals also aim to expand sharing of information between the employers and their government, stricter enforcement of immigration law and border security, and the establishment of a national ID card—moves that go against the interests of all working people and will be used to target whomever they want, from immigrants to labor militants.

And all proposals include temporary guest-worker programs aimed at providing bosses a stable supply of superexploitable labor.

At the same time, any steps that provide legal status to millions of undocumented in the U.S. will lead to greater confidence and help strengthen the unity of the working class. And the bosses’ daydreams about docile “guest workers” will be dashed.

Whatever scheme the propertied rulers come to, the future holds deepening working-class resistance in the fields, packinghouses, mines and factories across the country.

Bipartisan ‘immigration reform’ proposals

Continued from page 7

expanded guest-worker program to “fill jobs at hotel, janitorial, meat-packing and other companies that use low-skilled employees,” reported the Jan. 30 *Wall Street Journal*. Obama’s supporters have made it clear that the president would go along with these programs.

Maintaining the temporary status would be tied to employment—keeping their heads down, not getting fired, not going on strike. As extra incentive these programs would dangle the promise of possible residency for some down the road.

Some past reform proposals have foundered partly due to opposition to guest-worker programs by the labor officialdom.

This time, the AFL-CIO, the Service Employees International Union—which says some 25 percent of its members are immigrant workers—and the Chamber of Commerce are already in discussions about how to craft such a program.

Latino membership in unions has grown 21 percent over the last 10 years, while overall membership has dwindled.

Arguing that the 2012 election showed their party needs to win more support among the growing Latino population, many Republicans are pushing for reform.

Rubio, often mentioned as a potential conservative candidate for president in 2016, took this campaign

to the radio waves Jan. 29 with talk-show host Rush Limbaugh, who had attacked the proposal the day before.

At the end of the show, Limbaugh backed off. “What you are doing is admirable,” he told Rubio.

The same day, Obama told a rally in Las Vegas he was “encouraged” by the senators’ announcement. “For the first time in many years,” he said, “Republicans and Democrats seem ready to tackle this problem together.”

Obama highlighted one difference with the senators’ proposal, urging that undocumented workers be granted provisional status without having to wait for verification that the border has been closed.

“We put more boots on the ground on the southern border than at any time in our history,” Obama said. “Illegal crossings are down nearly 80 percent from their peak in 2000.” In his State of the Union speech Feb. 12, Obama repeated these themes.

Hearings on immigration began in the House of Representatives Feb. 5.

While many former opponents of change in the House say they are open to it today, debate there focused on a “middle ground option” to offer millions of undocumented “an approach that could include legal residency but not a path to citizenship,” the *New York Times* said.

NY school bus strike

Continued from front page
have not yet expired.

Under the provisions, regardless of what company wins a particular bus route, any laid-off workers have to be hired by seniority at their previous wages and benefits before new workers can be taken on.

City officials now claim the protection provisions are “illegal” and have refused to take part in negotiations between the union and the bus company owners.

Strike supporters at the action included small contingents from the United Federation of Teachers, Transport Workers Local 100, United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1500 and Service Employees International Union Local 32BJ. The action was cosponsored by the New York State AFL-CIO and the New York City Central Labor Council.

Two days before the rally New York City Chancellor of Education Dennis Walcott complained that under the Employee Protection Provisions company owners do “not have a say in who gets hired or how much they are paid.” He made it clear that city officials want the bus owners to drive down wages.

Walcott and Mayor Michael Bloomberg have ignored the offer by officials of Local 1181 to suspend the strike if city officials would suspend the route bids and join negotiations. Instead, on Feb. 11 they opened bidding and said they would soon reassign the routes.

“I’m 56 years old,” bus driver Yoselyn Noesi told the *Militant* as she marched across the Brooklyn Bridge. “With so much unemployment and at my age, if they get rid of the protections what other job could I get? What if they sell the company or make themselves go bankrupt or give the route to another company?”

Like many workers, driver Victor Bautista says he didn’t expect a strike. “But we’re willing to stay on strike as long as we have to.”

Strike faces challenges

The bus owners have been stepping up the pressure. Medical insurance coverage for strikers and their families was cut off as of Feb. 1. Three bus companies have filed a lawsuit demanding that the Employee Protection Provisions be removed from all existing contracts.

In addition to a small minority of ATU members, workers from other unions and nonunion bus companies have been crossing the picket line. According to the Department of Education, as of Feb. 7, 100 percent of pre-kindergarten, 13 percent of general education, and 41 percent of special education routes are running.

Members of Teamsters Local 854, which represents 1,000 school bus workers, are working, as are two so-called independent unions—United Craft and Industrial Workers Union Local 91 and United Service Workers Union Local 335.

“Where I work the drivers are in Local 854 and they’re not honoring the picket lines,” said Felicia Persaud, a bus attendant. “We tried to talk to them, but the company wouldn’t let us on the property. ... The company told them they would be fired if they didn’t come to work.”

Several strikers at the rally said few or no ATU members have crossed the picket line where they work. Persaud said about 30 of the 160 attendants where she works have returned to their job.

Several Democratic Party officials have called on Bloomberg to negotiate with the union. But none of them have backed demands to keep the Employee Protection Provisions. The mayor should sit with the union “and negotiate in good faith,” said City Comptroller John Liu in a statement. City Council Speaker Christine Quinn has supported Local 1181’s call for a “cooling off period” that “would bring an immediate end to the school bus strike.”

New York Post columnist and former Democratic Party Assemblyman Michael Benjamin is hoping the strikers will give up. “If the city’s lucky,” he writes in a Feb. 12 column, the mayor “will use similar gambits to tackle some of the much larger union-benefit issues that are consuming ever-larger chunks of the municipal budget.”

“The chancellor and Bloomberg speak about saving money, but they don’t talk about what will happen to us,” said Noesi. “Pretty soon there’ll just be rich and poor in this city and no middle class.”

“I think all the unions should be in this together,” she said. “If they do this to us, they will do it to everybody.”

LETTERS

Conflict in Egypt

Your articles on Egypt give a very comprehensive idea about the conflict that is taking place there in relation to the constitution, such as the controversial articles, the composition of the opposition, the poll and its results, with a brief history of the revolution and its aftermath in a smooth and concise manner.

It would have been useful though to mention how the constituent assembly was formed and who are the people who dropped out of it in a protest, like the Copts.

*Ammar Khatib
Athens, Greece*

Our humanity

Like always, the U.S. criminal system has provoked prisoners to stand up for their humanity.

A few days ago, the prison here was put on lockdown. The officers announced no one was getting ex-

ercise, shower, canteen, religious service, education—nothing.

The prisoners who stood up got showers. The prisoners who did not stand up did not have a shower in over a week.

This Wednesday, more prisoners stood up. They were maced, beat up and so on. They simply wanted canteen so they could buy stamps to write to their family, hygiene so they could clean themselves, and to be treated like a human.

Some of us have been beaten

and not offered medical attention. Some of us will get worse treatment if the eyes of the public are not on officials—and the officials know it.

*A prisoner
North Carolina*

The perfect read

The *Militant* is the perfect read. Not only do you address issues here at home, but you also give us, the readers, a view of other things we can’t see that are happening in the world.

*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.

‘Militant’ Prisoners’ Fund

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