

THE MILITANT

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Cuban Revolution today
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 73/NO. 18 MAY 11, 2009

Black farmers rally in Washington

BY SUSAN LAMONT

WASHINGTON, April 28—Around 90 people, half of them farmers, rallied outside the U.S. Department of Agriculture today with supporters and family members demanding an end to decades of biased lending practices by the department and just compensation for past discrimination. The rally, called by the National Black Farmers Association (NBFA), drew farmers from Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Maryland, and Oklahoma. Many were veteran fighters who have been involved for years in the Black farmers' struggle to hold onto their land.

"Equal justice doesn't exist in America for the Blacks and for the poor," said Eddie Slaughter, a former vegetable farmer from Buena Vista, Georgia, speaking outside the USDA building, as the department is known. "We have been denied the justice promised us" in the 1999 settlement of the *Pigford v. Glickman* class-action lawsuit, which successfully challenged the USDA's long-standing discriminatory practices against Black farmers. Despite winning the case, Slaughter explained, Black farmers

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Workers in N. Ireland continue auto sit-in

BY PAUL DAVIES

BELFAST, Northern Ireland—Workers at three Visteon auto parts supply plants in Ireland and England are reaching out for support from other workers in their fight against job losses. They have been occupying the plant here since March 31.

Visteon UK was established in 2000 from existing Ford car parts plants. The company manufactured fuel rails, injection moldings, and other parts used in Ford's operations.

Intending to avoid making redundancy (layoff) payments, Visteon declared bankruptcy and closed the plants. The government will administer the company's pension scheme. There is no guarantee what workers will receive.

The Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance union recently donated £5000 (£1=\$US1.47) to aid the workers in their fight against Visteon. Delegations from the Fire Brigades Union and the University of Ulster have visited the workers. At the Enfield and Basildon plants near London, workers have organized 24-hour pickets outside the factories.

Workers at the Belfast plant joined

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Legalization for all immigrants now!



Militant/Janice Lynn

Some 100 students participate in Immigration Rights Awareness Day April 28 at Suffolk County Community College in New York. Inset, panel on economic impact of immigrants. From left, Luis Valenzuela, director, Long Island Immigrant Alliance; Dan Fein, SWP candidate for mayor of New York; Kirby Einhorn, Long Island Wins.



A fight in interests of all workers!

Legalize all undocumented workers without restrictions, now! Fighting for this demand is a life-and-death question for the labor movement and for the working class in the United States, not just on May Day, but all

EDITORIAL

year round.

The fight for immigrant rights is not just an "immigrant" issue, any

Continued on page 11

Socialist candidate: 'All out May Day'

BY JANICE LYNN

SELDEN, New York—Dan Fein, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York, was among the featured speakers April 28 at Immigration Rights Awareness Day at Suffolk County Community College. Luis Valenzuela, director of the Long Island Immigrant Alliance, and Kirby Einhorn, of the immigrant rights group Long Island Wins, also spoke on the panel titled "The Economic Impact of Immigrants on U.S. Cities"

Continued on page 11

Chrysler, GM bosses, gov't demand new union givebacks

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Chrysler announced April 26 it has reached agreement for new givebacks from the United Auto Workers (UAW), just days before the government-imposed deadline for the auto company to receive new bailout funds or declare bankruptcy. General Motors also announced a plan to eliminate an additional 21,000 factory jobs by next year, in addition to the tens of thousands already cut.

The Chrysler deal alters terms of the union's 2007 labor contract. It suspends cost-of-living pay increases, limits overtime pay, reduces paid time off, and eliminates dental and vision benefits for retirees, the *New York Times* reported. Some 26,000 workers were to vote on the pact by April 29.

A statement released by the UAW said, "This concessionary agreement, while painful" can "help Chrysler return to viability." The company has already received \$4 billion in bailout funds and is seeking another \$5 billion. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, the agreement "is believed to include about a 50% reduction in the amount of cash Chrysler owes a

\$10 billion health-care fund." GM is demanding the same arrangement for its \$20 billion debt to the fund.

Under the Obama administration's plan, Chrysler has until May 1 to "restructure" through a joint partnership

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280 'Militant' subscriptions sold in 1 week

BY BEN JOYCE

Supporters of the *Militant* newspaper are halfway through a special target week to boost the paper's seven-week campaign to win new readers. The target week will end May 3 and coincides with demonstrations across the United States that weekend in defense of immigrants' rights. Building and participating in these demonstrations will help get the subscription campaign back on target.

Last week 280 people subscribed as

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Swine flu hysteria: rulers tighten borders, expand gov't intrusions

BY BEN JOYCE

April 29—An outbreak of the "swine flu" has reportedly killed more than 150 people in Mexico. Capitalist governments around the world are mounting a hysteria campaign about the disease in an effort to clamp down on immigration and extend government intrusion.

There have also been reported cases of swine flu in Canada, Israel, New Zealand, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Among those countries the first death from the virus was reported today in the United States.

Mexican President Felipe Calderón issued an order April 25 giving his government emergency powers to regulate transportation, inspect any home or building, order quarantines and assign any task to any federal, state, or local cops as well as health professionals. Schools in some states in Mexico are closed until May 6 and many major public events have been canceled.

Mexico's population is some 110 mil-

lion. There are 10 hospital beds for every 10,000 people, compared to 32 in the United States and 49 in Cuba. Infant mortality in Mexico is 29 per 1,000 live births, compared to 7 in the United States and 5 in Cuba.

Citing swine flu, Japanese officials

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Hundreds demand justice for Aborigine killed in custody

BY BOB AIKEN
SYDNEY, Australia—Some 300 people rallied in Perth, Australia, April 3 in conjunction with an inquest into the death of an Aboriginal man in January 2008 while in custody. Ward, a 46-year-old Aboriginal elder of the Ngaanyatjarra people, died while being transported some 360 kilometers (200 miles) through desert heat in the back of a prison van. (His family does not want his first name published for cultural reasons.)

An inquest into Ward’s death began more than a year later on March 10 in Warburton, his home district, some 960 miles northeast of Perth, and continued in Kalgoorlie March 18–20.

“We hold the state of Western Australia responsible,” rally organizer Marc Newhouse told the *Militant* in a phone interview.

Ward was arrested for drunk driving in Laverton Jan. 26, 2008. After locking him up overnight in the police station the cops organized to have him transported, without consideration of his right to bail, to the prison in Kalgoorlie. The temperature that day was 42°C (108°F). The inquest was told that during a reenactment of Ward’s trip on a slightly cooler day the temperature in the back of the van reached 122°F. Temperatures on the van’s metal surfaces inside the lockup reached 133°F.

Two security guards from Global Solutions, which has a contract to transport prisoners in Western Australia, admitted at the inquest that despite the run-down state of the prison van they had not checked whether the

air-conditioning in the secure section was working. Nor had they stopped during the four-hour drive to Kalgoorlie to check on Ward’s condition or give him a toilet break and food and water. Ward was dead by the time the van reached the prison. The two security guards continue to transport prisoners.

Demands raised at the protest action in Perth, called by the Deaths in Custody Watch Committee, included dismissal of the two guards, prosecution of those responsible for Ward’s death, and compensation to Ward’s family. Newhouse said that further protests were planned outside the Global Solutions offices in south Perth May 11–14 when the coroner’s inquiry was due to resume. A busload of Ward’s supporters would also travel from Perth to Kalgoorlie to witness the hearings over that period.

The Watch Committee is also planning another major protest after the coroner’s report is released. “The coroner’s court” in Western Australia “has never had charges laid against a Corrective Services [prison] officer or a police officer” over an Aboriginal death in custody, Newhouse said.

Women immigrants to U.S. forced to take new vaccine

BY HELEN MEYERS
DES MOINES, Iowa—Females applying for U.S. citizenship between the ages of 11 and 26 must be vaccinated with Gardasil, a vaccine that protects against the sexually transmitted human papillomavirus (HPV). Last August the

Pathfinder titles sell well at Sydney Africa festival



Militant/Bob Aiken

SYDNEY, Australia—Books by Nelson Mandela and Malcolm X were among the best sellers at the Communist League of Australia’s booth at the “Celebration of African Cultures” festival here. The titles included *How Far We Slaves Have Come*, *The Struggle Is My Life*, and *Nelson Mandela Speaks*, by Mandela; and *Malcolm X Talks to Young People* and *Malcolm X on Afro-American History*. The April 4 festival was attended by hundreds of people, mainly African immigrants. In addition to 10 books, 3 subscriptions to the *Militant* were purchased, and another 2 were sold at the Auburn shopping center nearby.

—BOB AIKEN

vaccine was added to the government’s list of 13 other required vaccinations for citizenship.

Under a 1996 immigration law, any vaccination recommended by the U.S. government for its citizens becomes a requirement for anyone seeking permanent residency. The Centers for Disease Control made this recommendation after use of Gardasil was approved in 2006. U.S. citizens may opt out of the vaccine requirement on moral, religious, or medical grounds.

The three-shot series costs \$360. According to the Migration Policy Institute, a nonprofit group that studies the migration of populations, U.S. naturalization fees are already among the highest in the world. A family of four has to pay \$2,430 to become naturalized citizens. If a family has one or more daughters

and doesn’t have health insurance the costs become higher.

Priscilla Huang, policy and program director at the National Association of Pacific American Women’s Forum, told the *Wall Street Journal*, “Given the controversy over the vaccine’s effectiveness and adverse side effects, mandating the vaccine for immigrant women is premature and is arguably equivalent to using them as test subjects.”

There is much debate over the effectiveness and necessity of this vaccine. The pharmaceutical company Merck & Co., maker of the HPV vaccine, stands to gain billions of dollars in profits as its use becomes more widely required. So far 41 states have introduced legislation and 19 have passed laws that “require, fund and educate” families about the vaccine.

THE MILITANT

The fight against layoffs in Puerto Rico

The government in the U.S. colony of Puerto Rico plans to lay off 30,000 government workers, privatize services, and tear up union contracts. The ‘Militant’ covers the resistance to these anti-worker measures.



Alvin Couto

Unionists in Puerto Rico April 15 protest impending layoffs of government workers.

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Auto bosses demand cuts

Continued from front page with the Italian-based car company Fiat. Fiat is also considering taking over European and Latin American production of the Opel car from GM, leading some union officials in Germany to speak out against the job cuts and work rule changes this move will involve.

From 395,000 to 38,000 GM workers GM is seeking an additional \$13.4 billion in bailout funds—above the \$15.4 billion it has already received—prior to a June 1 government deadline to “restructure.”

The company announced April 27 that it will eliminate 21,000 jobs and end production of the Pontiac. This is in addition to the projections made in February to close 14 plants in North America by 2012. After making all these cuts GM will have 38,000 union workers in the United States, compared to 395,000 in 1970.

GM also announced it would shut the majority of its North American plants for much of this summer. Factories in Arlington, Texas; Flint, Michigan; and Fort Wayne, Indiana; will be down for at least eight weeks, reports CNN Money. Ray Young, the company’s chief financial officer, told the *Journal* that despite these moves it’s “probable” GM will still file for bankruptcy.

Auto workers’ pensions are also on the chopping block. GM’s pen-

sion system had a \$20 billion shortfall as of Nov. 30, 2008. With the government’s Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp. (PBGC) taking control of these funds in bankruptcy proceedings, only \$4 billion of this amount would be paid out. As many as half of GM’s 670,000 pension-plan participants would see their benefits slashed.

Chrysler’s plan is underfunded by \$9.3 billion. The PBGC would make only \$2 billion of this amount available, according to Bloomberg News.

17.4 percent unemployed in Spain The official unemployment rate in Spain is now 17.4 percent, rising by 800,000 workers in the first quarter to a record 4 million, more than twice the European Union average, according to the National Statistics Institute. In Spain, laid-off immigrants from Latin America are being offered unemployment payments in a lump sum if they leave Spain and don’t return for at least three years.

In an even harsher arrangement in Japan, hundreds of thousands of workers of Japanese descent from Latin America are being offered a few thousand dollars to leave Japan and never seek work there again. Many have lived and worked in Japan for many years. So far, only about 100 workers and their families have agreed to this deal, Japanese officials told the *New York Times*.

Protests in Puerto Rico mount against layoffs



Dennis Rivera Pichardo/El Nuevo Día

Thousands of workers demonstrated outside the capitol building in San Juan, Puerto Rico, April 29 to protest the threatened layoff of 30,000 government workers by Gov. Luis Fortuño and the tearing up of union contracts under a measure known as Law 7. They also opposed proposed legislation that would privatize many government services in Puerto Rico, a U.S. colony. The demonstration was backed by the main union federations on the island. “We haven’t seen a united action like this of all the unions since at least 2000,” Luis Pedraza, a spokesperson for the Coordinadora Sindical, a federation of more than a dozen independent unions, told the *Militant*. The independent unions have called for a one-day strike on May Day and a march. Change to Win and the AFL-CIO will demonstrate later that day and are organizing a May 2 march.

—SETH GALINSKY

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

CALIFORNIA San Francisco The Fight to Free the Cuban 5—Stakes for Working People in the U.S. Speaker: Carole Lesnick, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., May 8. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 5482 Mission St. Tel.: (415) 584-2135.

ILLINOIS Chicago The Cuban Revolution Today. Fri., May 8. Dinner, 7 p.m.; program, 8 p.m. 3557 S. Archer Ave. Tel.: (773) 890-1190.

NEW ZEALAND Auckland Revolution, Internationalism, and Socialism: The Last Year of Malcolm X. Speaker: Felicity Coggan, Communist League. Fri., May 8, 7 p.m. Donation: \$3. 7 Mason Ave., Otahuhu. Tel.: (09) 276-8885.

SWEDEN Stockholm For Free and Public Schools for All! Abolish the School Voucher System! Speaker: Catharina Tirsén, representative of Communist League in elections to European Parliament. Fri., May 8, 7 p.m. Bildhuggarvägen 17, 121 44 Johanneshov (close to subway station “Globen”). Tel.: (08) 31 69 33.

CALENDAR

CALIFORNIA San Francisco Program on book ‘Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution.’ Evening includes excerpt of award-winning film, “Ancestors in the Americas” by filmmaker Loni Ding. Tues., May 5, 7 p.m. City College of San Francisco, Mission Campus Library, 4th floor. 1125 Valencia St.

280 ‘Militant’ subscriptions sold in 1 week

Continued from front page supporters of the socialist newsweekly organized teams to campuses, working-class neighborhoods, workplaces, and elsewhere. So far 1,182 subscriptions have been sold in the first five weeks. However the campaign is 16 percent behind schedule. With only two weeks to go, a serious effort is needed to bring in the international goal in full and on time.

In New York, *Militant* supporters Tom Baumann and Alex Ellefson brought the working-class press to the Hunter College campus April 29. They sold two subscriptions including one to Dalina Veliz, treasurer for the sorority Alpha Phi Omega, who then invited them to speak to the group about May Day. Baumann spoke about the importance of the fight for legalization for all immigrants and invited the sorority’s members to join the May 1 demonstrations. Eight people from the group said they wanted to participate. Dan Fein, Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York City, campaigned with his support-

ers at a meeting April 28 to mark Immigrant Rights Awareness Day at Suffolk County Community College. They sold three subscriptions at the meeting and another three later that day campaigning at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. Supporters of the paper in southern California participated in the *Los Angeles Times* Festival of Books April 25–26, held at the University of California at Los Angeles campus. Forty-four subscriptions to the socialist newsweekly were sold in addition to some \$1,300 in revolutionary literature published by Pathfinder Press. As the unique voice of the working class, the *Militant* is a necessary tool for working people looking to defend ourselves and advance our class interests in the face of the bosses’ counterrevolutionary assault on our standard of living. Opportunities to reach out broadly with this revolutionary perspective will be plentiful as supporters

participate in demonstrations May 1 and continue to carry out political work on campuses and workplaces. Readers of the *Militant* are encouraged to help in this effort. To find out how you can participate, contact a local distributor listed on page 6.


Militant Subscription Drive

March 21 – May 12, 2009 Week 5

Country	Quota	Sold	%
UNITED STATES			
Los Angeles	125	96	77%
Newark, NJ	75	55	73%
San Francisco	150	103	69%
Boston	60	36	60%
Atlanta	160	95	59%
Chicago	120	65	54%
Houston	95	50	53%
Seattle	101	52	51%
Twin Cities, MN	140	70	50%
New York	280	136	49%
Washington, DC	70	32	46%
Des Moines, IA	130	58	45%
Philadelphia	75	32	43%
Miami	150	57	38%
Other		4	
TOTAL	1,731	941	54%
CANADA			
	115	56	49%
UNITED KINGDOM			
Edinburgh	35	24	69%
London	80	60	75%
TOTAL	115	84	73%
NEW ZEALAND			
	70	42	60%
AUSTRALIA*			
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Atlanta socialists discuss Cuba today with students

BY RACHELE FRUIT

ATLANTA—Jacob Perasso, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Atlanta City Council president, and Loretta VanPelt, a member of the Young Socialists, spoke April 7 at Spelman College on “50 years of Cuba’s socialist revolution.” The campus Caribbean Students Association hosted the meeting.

VanPelt described Cuba’s revolutionary struggle against racism and its internationalist missions in Africa, joining the battles for independence from colonial rule and today providing thousands of doctors who serve in the most remote areas of the continent.

She also explained how Cuba’s revolutionary government and its working people organized to withstand the economic challenges of the “Special Period” after the collapse of Cuba’s trade with the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, ensuring that no school or hospital closed in spite of the deep crisis.

Perasso said the socialist candidates oppose the cuts in the public transportation system MARTA and at Grady Hospital, and defend Troy Davis, who is on death row after being framed up for killing a cop.

“Some may ask why we point to the example of Cuba,” Perasso said. “The

U.S. record of aggression against Cuba is bipartisan, and it is not irrational, as some people claim. The U.S. rulers hate the example of a country organized on the basis of human solidarity. They don’t want us to see it for ourselves, and they want to choke it economically.”

Perasso called for freeing five Cuban revolutionaries known as the Cuban Five, who have been unjustly held in U.S. jails for 10 years. The five were keeping Havana informed of activities of counterrevolutionary Cubans based in Miami who have carried out armed attacks on Cuba. The U.S. government used secret evidence and “conspiracy” charges to frame the five.

Natasha Herbert, a pre-med and sociology student who arranged the program, asked, “I’ve heard that President Obama is giving money to local farmers’ markets. Do you see our country moving toward a socialist perspective?” Both socialists explained that such a transformation can only come about as the result of working people taking political power from the wealthy rulers and reorganizing society in the interests of and in solidarity with working people around the world.

Kurt Williams, a student at Morehouse College, asked, “Are you say-



Jacob Perasso, SWP candidate for Atlanta City Council president, addressing Caribbean Students Association meeting April 7 at Spelman College on “50 years of Cuba’s socialist revolution.”

ing that socialism is good? . . . It was a great thing [the Cubans] did, standing up to the United States, but I think a lot of young people in Cuba want a change. Face it—this is 2009—and this world is about money. They want to live like the majority of the rest of the world.”

“Yes, socialism is a step forward for humanity,” answered Perasso. “It is good that millions of Cuban working people and thousands of Cuban doctors see medical care as part of basic human solidarity and not as a way to make individual profits. It is a product of Cuba’s socialist revolution.”

Meetings boost contributions to ‘Militant’ fund campaign

BY ANGEL LARISCY

The campaign to raise \$105,000 to finance the *Militant* newspaper is just ahead of schedule by 5 percent at the halfway point in the drive. *Militant* supporters around the world have boosted their efforts to reach out and win as many contributors to the fund drive as possible.

Fund-raising programs in many cities have attracted new people who recognize the importance of a socialist newsweekly published in the interests of working people. The eight-week drive runs until May 19.

In Washington, D.C., 19 people, including workers from the Smithfield ham processing plant and students from two colleges in Maryland, attended a fund-raising forum and dinner on April 24.

Khaled Awad, who goes to Towson State University in Maryland, spoke at the meeting. “The *Militant* tells the truth,” Awad said. He and another student from Towson invited supporters of the paper to come to their campus and solicit contributions for the paper. Another student from Hood College in Frederick, Maryland, came to the program after meeting socialist campaigners four days earlier at a campus meeting on immigration.

In a message to an April 26 fund meeting in Miami, Florida International University student Natan Samuels explains he first subscribed to the *Militant* last year on campus when he met Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. vice president. He recently renewed his subscription for one year.

Samuels pointed to a February news series on the restructuring of the Cuban sugar industry saying, “I highlight this story in particular because it sheds light on Cuba—which is of particular interest here in Miami—and because it showed the high level of journalistic substance the paper is accustomed to.”

“I have made others aware of the existence and importance of the *Militant*,” Samuels said.

Miguel La Rosa of the Bolivarian Cir-

Iowa high school student wins fight to defend Lao heritage

BY HELEN MEYERS

DES MOINES, Iowa—Lori Phanachone, the U.S.-born daughter of Laotian immigrants, was reinstated March 5 after being suspended for three days from the Storm Lake High School in Storm Lake, Iowa. Her membership in the National Honor Society was also reinstated. Her offense? She had refused to take an English proficiency test.

Phanachone listed Lao as her first language on a school registration form out of respect for her heritage. That triggered a federally mandated test, according to school officials. School administrators also told her if she did not take the test she could not continue in the track athletic program, go to the prom, or participate in other spring activities.

In April, her membership in the honor society was revoked for failing to maintain “standards of scholarship, leadership, service, and character.” The student maintained a near perfect grade point average.

Phanachone, who is a senior, had taken the English Language Development Assessment test two years earlier in her sophomore year. She described the test as so easy it’s “insulting.” Given the test again as a junior she filled in all the “C” answers in protest. This time she decided not to take the test, but sat in silence in the room.

In an article published in the March 6 *Des Moines Register* she said, “I’ve worked hard. I’ve earned my grades, and here they are handing me a test asking me to describe the chair I’m sitting in.” She described the test as

demeaning and racist.

In response to the suspension, Storm Lake students wore “Support Lori” T-shirts. Senior Kristi Davis told the *Des Moines Register*, “We’ve always been taught to stand up for what’s right and now the time has come for that.” The students were planning a protest when the suspension was lifted.

In an April 6 press release, the Organization of Chinese Americans (OCA) protested the revocation of Phanachone’s membership in the National Honor Society. The OCA called on the Storm Lake School District to “expunge the disciplinary actions placed on Lori Phanachone.” George Wu, OCA executive director, stated, “What the Storm Lake School District is doing to Ms. Phanachone is wrong. The fact that she has a 3.9 GPA and has excelled in her classes, including English, should speak for itself.”

Two days after receiving the National Honor Society revocation letter, school superintendent Paul Tedesco informed Phanachone that her membership was being reinstated.

U.S. schools receive federal money for every child classified as learning English as a second language. The test is one of the stipulations to receive the funding. Sixty percent of Storm Lake’s 2,000 public school students are learning English as a second language.

Helen Meyers is a meat packer in Perry, Iowa, and member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1149.

cles also spoke at the meeting on the importance of the *Militant* being bilingual.

The *Militant* relies on financial contributions from workers and students to carry out its work. Partisans of the paper should make a special effort to win new readers—those who are renewing their subscriptions for the first time and others who haven’t given to the paper before—to making a contribution. This effort goes hand in hand with signing up new subscribers over the coming weeks.

To contribute, contact a distributor near you or send your donation directly to the *Militant*.

‘Militant’ Fund Drive Spring 2009 ♦ Week 4 of 8

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San Francisco	\$13,000	\$9,541	73%
Twin Cities, MN	\$6,600	\$4,615	70%
Des Moines, IA	\$1,900	\$1,143	60%
New York	\$15,500	\$9,348	60%
Newark, NJ	\$3,200	\$1,777	56%
Seattle	\$7,000	\$3,934	56%
Atlanta	\$8,000	\$4,327	54%
Philadelphia	\$3,300	\$1,615	49%
Chicago	\$9,000	\$4,200	47%
Los Angeles	\$8,800	\$4,140	47%
Houston	\$3,000	\$1,200	40%
Miami	\$3,300	\$789	24%
Boston	\$2,800	\$630	23%
Washington, D.C.	\$4,500	\$762	17%
Other		\$300	
TOTAL	\$89,900	\$48,321	54%
CANADA*	\$7,500	\$6,230	83%
NEW ZEALAND	\$2,500	\$1,700	68%
UNITED KINGDOM			
Edinburgh	\$500	\$334	67%
London	\$1,500	\$592	39%
TOTAL	\$2,000	\$926	46%
AUSTRALIA	\$1,050	\$823	78%
SWEDEN			
	\$400	\$155	39%
TOTAL	\$103,350	\$58,155	55%
SHOULD BE	\$105,000	\$52,500	50%
*raised quota			

Anti-government rallies shake Thailand regime

BY PATRICK BROWN

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—On April 24 Thailand’s prime minister lifted a state of emergency he had imposed 12 days earlier after protesters stormed the venue for the planned meeting of the Association of South-east Asian Nations (ASEAN) and forced the event’s cancellation.

A series of anti-government mobilizations shook Bangkok, Thailand’s capital, in the first three weeks of April. Thousands marched and rallied to demand the resignation of Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva and his unelected Democrat Party government.

One hundred thousand people mobilized in Bangkok on April 8 scorning Abhisit as the beneficiary of the 2006 military coup and more recent “legal” maneuvers to overturn other election results. Many wore red shirts to symbolize their support for former prime minister Thaksin Shinawatra, a multimillionaire businessman who was overthrown and exiled by the 2006 coup.

According to London’s *Telegraph* newspaper, protest organizers built the action by chanting over loudspeakers, “Abhisit, get out! Prem, get out!” Gen. Prem Tinsulanonda is the retired head of the Thai army and the central adviser to King Bumibol Adulyadej. The monarchy plays a key role in Thai politics, in association with the military. Thaksin has accused Prem and others close to the king of organizing the 2006 coup.

The invasion of the ASEAN venue came two days later. In addition to ASEAN members in the region, the summit was planned to include representatives from China and South Korea and the imperialist governments of Australia, Japan, and New Zealand. With thousands of police and soldiers unable to secure the venue, several heads of states had to be evacuated by helicopter.

Over the following days clashes in Bangkok streets intensified as protesters defended themselves against troops, police, and right-wing gov-

ernment supporters. With the toll standing at two dead and more than 100 people injured, protest leaders on April 15 called off the mobilizations. A number have been arrested.

Thailand’s ongoing political crisis, which is undermining ruling-class institutions like the monarchy, military, and courts, was sparked by the 2006 coup that overthrew Thaksin’s Peoples Power Party government. First elected in 2001, the businessman built a broad base with his populist rhetoric and some reforms. His government instituted a system of widely available cheap credit, and also moved to expand access to health care.

In spite of the military coup, Thaksin’s party won new elections in December 2007, held after 15 months of military rule. This new government was targeted by rightist forces in the People’s Alliance for Democracy (PAD). Dressed in the king’s color of yellow, PAD supporters shut down the capital’s airport for several weeks last November, facing little military backlash.



Photo by Artem Zhushman

Protesters march April 9 in Bangkok against Thai regime. Mobilizations eventually forced cancellation of Association of Southeast Asian Nations summit meeting.

The wealthy, middle-class forces that dominate the PAD say that only 30 percent of parliament should be elected, in order to curb the influence of “ignorant” peasants. In lifting the state of emergency the prime minister rejected demands from Thaksin’s supporters to hold new elections, saying that he would set up a commission of all parties to discuss reforming the constitution imposed by the military in 2007 after Thaksin was ousted.

Thailand is feeling the impact of the global contraction in production and trade. According to the March 29 *Wall Street Journal*, Thai officials are “forecasting the economy could shrink by up to 3 percent this year, compared with 2.6 percent growth in 2008 and 4.9 percent growth in 2007.” The *Journal*’s Web site states that 8 million people—out of a population of 62 million—have lost their jobs since September 2008.

Video exposes cop role in London man’s death

BY ÖGMUNDUR JÓNSSON

LONDON—Claims by cops here that they had no contact with a man walking in the area of the G-20 protests just before his death have been contradicted by video released by the press. Despite dozens of complaints of cop violence during the protests weeks ago, several videos showing police assaults, and the death of one of those assaulted, no cops have yet faced charges.

Ian Tomlinson, 47, who was on his way home from work at a nearby newsagents, collapsed April 1 as he was walking through the protest area around the Bank of England. A postmortem examination the following day found that he had died from a heart attack. The police stated they had no contact with him before his collapse.

But on April 7 the *Guardian* newspaper released a video, taken minutes before Tomlinson died, that shows him walking away from a group of police officers, some with dogs and some in riot gear, who are pressing him to move on. Then a masked riot cop gives Tomlinson a heavy baton-blow on the legs and shoves him onto the ground. Tomlinson just manages to pull his hands out of his pockets before hitting the pavement. Witnesses described police attacking Tomlinson before the video was shot.

Peter Smyth, chairman of the Metropolitan Police Federation, justified the assault. “I know it’s a generalization,” he said, “but anybody in that part of the town at that time, the assumption would be that they are part of the protest.”

Tomlinson’s family and the government’s Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) arranged a second

postmortem, which found that Tomlinson had most likely died of internal bleeding. The IPCC pressed the family to keep quiet about the results for a week. The report also revealed that the first postmortem had shown extensive abdominal bleeding, but this was never mentioned by either the commission or the police.

The police suspended an officer of the Territorial Support Group (TSG), an elite cop unit, on April 10. Following the second coroner’s report, he was interviewed on suspicion of manslaughter, but has not been charged.

The IPCC says it has received 145 complaints related to the protests, including 70 by victims or witnesses of “excessive use of force.” Another TSG officer has been suspended for assaulting a demonstrator at an April 2 vigil for Tomlinson.

For further reading

Capitalism’s World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium

by Jack Barnes



The social devastation, financial panics, political turmoil, police brutality, and military assaults accelerating all around us are not chaos. They are the inevitable product of lawful and understandable forces unleashed by capitalism. —\$24

New International magazine issue no. 12

by Jack Barnes



“One of capitalism’s infrequent long winters has begun. Accompanied by imperialism’s accelerating drive toward war, it’s going to be a long, hot winter.” —\$16

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25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



May 11, 1984

The Dominican Republic—hailed by President Reagan as “a beacon for freedom-loving people everywhere”—exploded into massive rebellion April 23–25. Tens of thousands of workers, unemployed youth, and housewives took to the streets, outraged by hikes of up to 100 percent in the prices of essential food items, which the Dominican government ordered at the behest of the U.S.-dominated International Monetary Fund.

In the course of the largely spontaneous protests, many people helped themselves to foodstuffs and other consumer goods in stores and supermarkets. Barricades went up in the poor and working-class neighborhoods of Santo Domingo.

The rebellion by Dominican working people was touched off by a series of austerity measures announced April 19.



May 11, 1959

The receding waters of the Pearl River, 22 miles west of Poplarville, Mississippi, have yielded up the body of Mack C. Parker, the 23-year-old Negro lynched on April 25. There are no indications that the FBI or state police have any leads to the guilty parties. There is certainty however, that if somehow they were brought to trial, they would be quickly set free by an all-white Mississippi jury.

Independent sources have made important discoveries which reinforce the charge made in last week’s *Militant* that the lynching has the earmarks of a put-up job involving Mississippi officials.

On the night of the lynching the sheriff left the keys in his office. The lynchers knew this. They took them out of the locker without disturbing anything else.



May 12, 1934

Minneapolis—In the hands of the men who drive the trucks and vans, the delivery equipment of a modern city, lays a mighty power. Not a whit less important or powerful are the men who transport and serve the gasoline and oil which makes this vast industry a living thing. Taken together with that numerous and important strata of workers who store, preserve and warehouse the food that constitutes the daily ration of the people, we have a group of workers whose social importance is enormous.

During the past several weeks these workers have streamed, by the hundreds, into General Drivers Union No. 574. More than 3,000 have been enrolled. They have not merely joined the union. They have set up committees to carry on the detail work.

‘Cuban Revolution is free of physical abuse or torture’

Printed below is an excerpt from Fidel Castro: Nothing Can Stop the Course of History, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for May. The book is based on an interview with Castro by Congressman Mervyn Dymally and Professor Jeffrey Elliot in March 1985. It presents the Cuban revolutionary leader's position on a wide range of topics from U.S.-Cuba relations, the fight against apartheid in South Africa, to the gains won by workers and peasants through the Cuban Revolution. The piece below takes up Castro's response to a question about whether Cuba's prisons are filled with political prisoners "who dared to criticize your regime." Copyright © 1986 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY FIDEL CASTRO

Our courts hand down verdicts based on laws to punish counterrevolutionary actions. The idea that anyone is punished in our country for professing a belief other than those of the revolution is absolutely ridiculous. There are tens of thousands of people whose political and religious concepts and beliefs differ from those of the revolution. They have



Niurka Barroso/AFP/Getty Images

Rally in Havana in March 2004 protesting U.S. marine torture of Iraqi prisoners. Sign reads: "In Cuba, this will never happen."

full legal guarantees. The idea that anybody is in prison for having ideas that differ from those of the revolution is simply nonsense. No one in our country has ever been punished because he was a dissident or had opinions different from those of the revolution. Our penal code precisely defines those acts for which a citizen may be punished. Some of these laws were adopted prior to the triumph of the revolution, in the liberated territory of the Sierra Maestra, and were applied to punish torturers and other criminals.

We have defended ourselves and will continue to do so. I don't expect that the counterrevolutionaries will put up a statue to me or that our enemies will honor me. I've followed my line all my life—a line of conduct in the revolution, during the war, of absolute respect for individuals' physical integrity. If we had to mete out punishment—even drastic punishment—we meted it out. But, no matter what our enemies may say, or

how much they may lie and slander us, the history of the revolution is free of cases of physical abuse or torture. All the citizens in this country, without exception, know this. We waged a hard campaign against these practices throughout the underground struggle and the war. Our cadres, our soldiers, and our people became very aware of and opposed to these methods. I might ask whether any other revolution has maintained the serenity, coolheadedness, firmness, and consistent respect for laws and ethical principles that has typified the Cuban revolution. Not even in the most difficult moments during the war did we depart from those principles!

Why did we triumph in our struggle against the counterrevolution, against the CIA with all its experience? Because our people knew more than the CIA. The CIA worked on the basis of mercenaries, high pay, and accounts in U.S. banks. We worked on the basis of people who had ideals, thoughts, revolutionary fervor, and strong ideological motivations for supporting the revolution and for infiltrating the counterrevolutionary organizations both inside the country and abroad. Our police couldn't use torture, so they developed their intelligence and became very effective in the struggle against elements which lacked sound moral convictions. We often knew more about what they were doing than they did. They might not remember what they had done seven months earlier on a specific day, but we did, because it was on record.

We have defended ourselves with the support of the people and the co-operation of the masses. We've never had to resort to anything illegal—to

force, torture, or crime. Throughout the entire history of the revolution, no one can point to a single case of torture, murder, or disappearance, which are common, everyday occurrences in the rest of Latin America. Another thing: never has a demonstration been broken up by the police! Never in twenty-six years has a policeman used tear gas, beaten a citizen during a demonstration, or used trained dogs against the people. Never has a demonstration here been repressed by the army or the police—something that happens every day everywhere else in Latin America and in the United States itself.

Every so often I see dogs and policemen in action in the United States. I see prostrate people being violently and humiliatingly stepped upon. Something else: I frequently see demonstrations being broken up everywhere. How strange that this revolution has never used a policeman or a soldier or tear gas or a dog against the people! Why not? Because the people support it; the people defend it. All the people are soldiers; all the people are policemen. All the people defend the revolution.

Injustice, violence, torture, disappearance, and murder—those things happen in countries whose governments are against the people, whose governments have to defend themselves against the people—in Argentina under the military dictatorship, in Chile, El Salvador, and elsewhere—with repressive forces and death squads trained by the United States. You see, they need those procedures to defend themselves against the people. When the people themselves are the revolution, when it is the people who resolutely defend the revolution, you may rest assured there'll be no need for violence or injustice to defend it. Ours is the only government in this hemisphere—I can state this proudly—that has never used a policeman or a soldier against the people, never inflicted any bodily harm upon an individual, and never resorted to political assassination or disappearances.

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May **BOOKS OF THE MONTH**

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Kirkuk: disputed region shows Iraq’s instability

BY CINDY JAQUITH

A UN report outlining options to resolve the status of Iraq’s oil-rich Kirkuk province, which is populated by Kurds, Arabs, Turkmen, and Christians, highlights the potentially explosive situation there. Washington’s top general in Iraq has said that U.S. troops will likely remain in cities in that province beyond the June 30 deadline for ending their patrols in Iraqi urban areas.

The United Nations issued a report April 22 outlining possible solutions to be decided by referendum. UN special representative to Iraq Staffan de Mistura of Sweden, who has served in a similar capacity in southern Lebanon, Somalia, and the Balkans, distributed the report to top officials of the Iraqi government and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). The report is not available to the public.

Kirkuk is a center of the country’s oil industry, which supplies 86 percent of the nation’s overall revenue. Kirkuk’s oil fields contain 13 percent of the country’s reserves. A law governing oil resources has been stuck in parliament for more than two years because of disagreements over whether the central government or regional authorities should have control. Royal Dutch Shell and two large Chinese companies are considering a joint project to invest heavily in Kirkuk’s oil fields.

Originally Kirkuk province was predominantly Kurdish, with Turkmen and Christian minorities. It was considered

the capital of Iraqi Kurdistan.

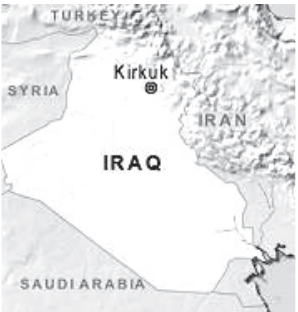
In the 1970s and ‘80s, Saddam Hussein moved thousands of Arabs to the province and drove thousands of Kurds and Turkmen out in order to ensure Baathist control of the oil. In the policy called “Arabization,” Hussein’s government razed hundreds of Kurdish villages. Christian churches were also attacked.

Autonomy following 1991 war

Following the first U.S.-led war against Iraq in 1991, the Kurdish people won a measure of autonomy in northern Iraq under a U.S.- and British-imposed no-fly zone. When Hussein was overthrown in the U.S. invasion of 2003, the KRG was established, with Erbil as its capital. Not included was Kirkuk and other northern areas with large Kurdish populations, pending further discussion.

A referendum was scheduled in 2007 to decide Kirkuk’s status, but it never happened. Elections that occurred in the rest of Iraq in 2008 also never took place in Kirkuk. According to a UN press release, the new document proposes four options, none of which include partitioning the region.

The *New York Times* reported, “A member of the Iraqi Parliament who read the report said that one of the four proposed options was the creation of an independent or autonomous region run by Kurds, Arabs, and Turkmen.” A second option “was for Kirkuk to become a special region, to be jointly adminis-



U.S. Air Force/Staff Sgt. Samuel Bendet
U.S. Army troops from 350th Tactical Psychological Operations drop leaflets over village in Kirkuk province in 2008. Since then, U.S. government upgraded its forces in Kirkuk from battalion, about 900 troops, to combat brigade, around 3,200 soldiers.

tered by the regional and central governments. Under this proposal, a referendum would be held within five years to determine whether residents wanted Kirkuk to become part of the Kurdistan region or to be incorporated into the central state.”

Today Kirkuk is governed by a provincial council in which Kurds have 26 seats, Turkmen have 9, and Arabs have 6.

The Kurdish militia, called pesh merga, is deployed in Kirkuk. More Iraqi troops loyal to Baghdad have moved in recently, following bombings in which 10 people died. Earlier this year, the U.S. government upgraded its forces in Kirkuk from a battalion, about 900 troops, to a combat brigade, around 3,200 soldiers.

The newly formed Iraqi Kirkuk Bloc, made up of Arab bourgeois political figures in the province, announced it is going to start deploying Awakening councils to provide security, the *Washington Post* reported. The councils grew up over the last year as U.S. military officials succeeded in convincing Sunni insurgents to stop attacking U.S. and Iraqi troops and instead turn their weapons on al-Qaeda forces.

Turkish government

The government of neighboring Turkey is watching the dispute in Kirkuk closely. Turkey depends on oil from northern Iraq. Ankara has made it clear it opposes a KRG strengthened by the annexation of Kirkuk and its oil. The Turkish government is fearful of its own large Kurdish population, which has been inspired by advances in Kurdish autonomy in Iraq.

The Iraqi Turkmen Front (ITF), a coalition of six Turkmen parties in the area, supports Turkey’s position. Jala Neftachy, a Turkmen on the provincial council, was part of a delegation that visited Turkish officials in 2008. If the KRG attempts to annex Kirkuk by force, she told the *Christian Science Monitor*, “The Turkish government has confirmed this to us; they will not be bystanders, they will interfere by force.”

Massoud Barzani, president of the KRG, has called for annexing Kirkuk.

January elections in nearby Nineveh province point to the unstable situation in the north. The Kurdish Brotherhood slate lost majority control. The Arab al-Hadba List won 19 seats compared to 12 for the Brotherhood slate. The new provincial council has four Arab members, one Turkmen, and no Kurds. In at least one town, Sinjar, Kurds demonstrated against their exclusion from the provincial leadership. Officials in the Kurdish town of Zummar said they want to join the KRG.

Last year Barzani said U.S. troops would be welcome to remain in Iraqi Kurdistan after they withdraw from cities in other parts of the country.

The April 18 *Washington Times* published an interview with Fuad Hussein, Barzani’s chief of staff, who said, “If the problems which exist now cannot be resolved in one or two years, the withdrawal of the American army will lead to unrest in Baghdad and perhaps a return of sectarian fighting.”

Monsignor Louis Sako, Catholic archbishop of Kirkuk, said withdrawal of U.S. troops will create a “vacuum” that could lead to “civil war.” Sako blamed the recent deaths of five Christians on sectarian violence.

Swine flu

Continued from front page

have ended the policy of allowing Mexican travelers to obtain their visas upon arrival in Japan, reported the *New York Times*. Health inspectors there will now comb through some 6,000 passengers per day on flights from Mexico, Canada, and the United States before allowing them to get off the plane.

The government of Indonesia announced April 27 it had banned all imports of pork products from North America and would destroy all imports received before the ban, even though medical authorities state the flu cannot be transmitted from pigs or from eating properly cooked pork.

On April 24, Democratic U.S. Congressman Eric Massa of New York called for Washington to close the border with Mexico “immediately and completely until this is resolved.” His comments were hailed by the rightist anti-immigrant group the Minuteman Project and posted on its Web site. Janet Napolitano, secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, dismissed Massa’s proposal. “You have to look at what the costs of that are,” she said. “We literally have thousands of trucks and lots of commerce that cross that border.”

The Cuban government has taken preventative steps in the face of the flu outbreak. In response to the avian flu epidemic in recent years, steps had been taken by Havana to assure speedy diagnosis and minimal risk of the disease spreading. Today, these measures are being employed along with temporary restrictions on travel to and from Mexico.

Oil workers, meat packers boost funding for communist publishing program

Meat packers and oil workers are among the latest group to join the contingent of workers who are turning the bosses’ and their government’s “blood money” bribes against them.

Betsey Farley, Laura Anderson, and Dennis Richter work in a union-organized meatpacking plant in Chicago. Workers there received \$20 shopping cards for a local food chain. They converted them into a \$60 contribution to the communist movement’s Capital Fund.

Contributions to the fund help in the production of books and educational materials needed in workers’ fight to take power out of the hands of the wealthy rulers, end the wages system, and reorganize society based on human solidarity.

Mitchel Rosenberg, an oil refinery worker in Philadelphia, received bribes from his boss and the bosses’ government. He immediately dispatched the checks: \$603 after taxes on a contract-signing bonus and \$307 from the government’s so-called “stimulus” bonus.

George Chalmers, a former meat packer in Philadelphia, sent in \$300, the after-taxes balance from last year’s return. David Rosenfeld from Des Moines, Iowa, also a meat packer, was shorted by Uncle Sam from last year’s stimulus. “I just got my tax refund, which included \$52 from last year’s stimulus,” he said in a note.

Class-conscious workers have a proud tradition of turning over these bribes—large or small—to the Capital Fund to further the movement’s publishing program. Workers in the revolutionary socialist movement call such “gifts” from the bosses “blood money,” because the bosses use them to try to buy our silence about speedup, long hours, and unsafe working conditions. The bribes come with our blood and that of our coworkers on them.



From a different source, Deborah Liatos sent in a contribution to the Capital Fund of \$1,060 in honor of her mother Ruth Liatos, who died of cancer March 26. The money is from contributions she received from family members and coworkers.

“I wanted to contribute it in honor of my mother Ruth Liatos, who though she would have liked to see a socialist revolution in this country, was not convinced it was possible,” Liatos wrote. “She and I had many debates. Even so, she admired the party’s steadfast confidence and commitment to advancing the fight of the working class to take power in the United States as part of the worldwide fight for socialism.”

—SAM MANUEL

Seattle students discuss Cuban Revolution today

BY EDWIN FRUIT

SEATTLE—More than 150 people, mostly students, attended a panel presentation and discussion April 24 at Seattle Central Community College on the book *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*.

The book tells the story of three Cubans of Chinese descent—Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui, and Moisés Sío Wong. As young men they participated in Cuba's revolutionary war that overthrew the dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista and opened the road to the first socialist revolution in the Americas. They later became generals in the revolutionary army and today shoulder major tasks in strengthening the revolution.

The Chicano student organization MEChA, the International Student Union, United People's Coalition, College Activities Board, and the Global Education Design Team, a faculty group, sponsored the meeting.

Annie Nguyen welcomed participants to the meeting on behalf of the International Student Union. She introduced Bettie Luke of the Organization of Chinese Americans in Seattle. Luke said that the book is important because it tells another piece of the history of the Chinese Diaspora in the Americas. She also encouraged people to visit the Wing Luke Asian History Museum, the only Pan-Asian museum in the United States.

Carlos Sibaja, a vice president of MEChA, chaired the meeting. Sibaja said he is Mexican but his great-grandfather came to Mexico from Japan. The book

struck a chord with him because of its description of Asian immigration that is not well known. He said he was inspired that the generals were student leaders who helped to change the world and that is what young people need to do today.

'We're still learning our history'

Tina Young, director of Multicultural Initiatives, explained that as a young Chinese American growing up in New York City she was fascinated when her parents told her about a Chinese-Cuban-Jamaican relative. "We are still learning our history through this book," Young said, quoting Choy, Chui, and Sío Wong on some of their experiences in growing up Chinese in capitalist Cuba. She said the book also shows how the questions of racism and sexism have been addressed systematically through the revolution.

Karen Strickland, who teaches social work, spoke about her two trips to Cuba as part of academic tours for health-care teachers and professionals.

"When you visit Cuba you get a clear consistent message of how they deliver social services there," she said. "Education and health care are free and even those who have disagreements with the government will never agree to give those things up."

In 2008 Strickland also visited Venezuela and said she was impressed by the impact the 20,000 Cuban health-care professionals have had on the population there. She also related the example of how the Federation of Cuban Women objected to the use of images of women to promote tourism to the island and the offensive advertisements were done away with.

Charles Jeffreys, who teaches psychology, talked about how Cuba was part of the post-World War II international struggle against colonialism in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Reading in the book about the Cuban role in Angola in the 1970s and 1980s impressed him. The defeat of the South African government forces there helped pave the road to the independence of Namibia, the freeing of Nelson Mandela, and the downfall of the apartheid regime itself. "Cuba went in to help, not to dominate the places they were in," he said.

Martín Koppel, who helped interview the generals in Cuba, explained that the book strikes a chord for many working people and youth today because we are at the beginning of a worldwide eco-



Militant/Jim Miller

Students at Seattle Central Community College (above) attended panel discussion on Cuban Revolution and *Our History Is Still Being Written* book. From left (below): Martín Koppel, who did interviews for book; Charles Jeffreys; Carlos Sibaja; Tina Young; and Karen Strickland. Jeffreys and Strickland teach at the campus, Young is director of Multicultural Initiatives, and Sibaja is a leader of campus MEChA chapter.

omic and social crisis, and Cuba's socialist revolution presents an example of the way forward for working people.

"In Cuba the workers and farmers are the motor force of the revolution," he said. "Because of that they survived the economic crisis of the 1990s and came out politically stronger." Koppel was referring to the period when Cuba's favorable trade status with the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe collapsed.

Koppel pointed to working-class resistance in the United States, including the upcoming May Day mobilizations for immigrant rights. He highlighted the example set by five Cuban revolutionaries locked up for more than 10 years in U.S. prisons who continue to fight for their freedom.

In the lively discussion period fol-

lowing the presentations, questions ranged from how Cuba handles drug use to how the health-care system is organized. Strickland said that unlike in this country, Cuban authorities penalize drug traffickers, not drug users, who are instead offered treatment.

Koppel explained that it took a socialist revolution to change the health-care system. "Health care in Cuba is a right, not a commodity like in the capitalist world," he said.

One student disagreed that racism was a necessary part of the capitalist system. Koppel spoke about the history of the Black struggle in the United States and how the institutionalization of racial oppression was reinforced after the defeat of Radical Reconstruction following the U.S. Civil War.

For further reading

Our History Is Still Being Written The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution

Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui, and Moisés Sío Wong talk about the historic place of Chinese immigration to Cuba, and the more than five decades of revolutionary action and internationalism. Available in English, Spanish, and Chinese. \$20

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Vancouver hospital workers march, demand higher pay

BY MIKE BARKER

VANCOUVER, British Columbia—After a spirited rally April 9 in front of Vancouver General Hospital, some 250 hospital cleaning staff, dietary workers, and their supporters marched to the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority to demand a living wage. On April 6 the cleaners and dietary staff at the authority voted more than 95 percent in favor of strike action.

The workers are part of some 2,400 members of the Hospital Employees

Union (HEU) working for the Aramark and Sodexo companies.

In 2002 thousands of workers hired directly by public health-care facilities were fired after Aramark and Sodexo won contracts to provide cleaning and food services. Wages were cut from Can\$18.50 to Can\$10.00 an hour with almost none of the previous benefits (Can\$1 = US 82 cents). Aramark is offering a wage increase of \$1.57 an hour over five years. Sodexo wants a five-year agreement that freezes wages for retail food-service workers and grants an average yearly raise of 25 cents an hour for everyone else.

The march drew support from other union members who work at Vancouver General Hospital and from members of the British Columbia Nurses Union. Also present were members of UNITE Local 40 who recently won wage increases for Aramark workers at GM Place Stadium ranging from 17 to 22 percent over three years.

Ana Vaquerano, a Sodexo retail food-service worker at VGH, said the offer of no wage increase over five years "was humiliating. . . . They think they can hire us one day and fire us the next. I want to go on strike!"

Mike Barker is an HEU member at Vancouver General Hospital.

plant for 31 years. "We fought for the things Visteon has taken away."

"I'm not going anywhere," said Sean McCaffrey an electrician at the plant for 31 years. McCaffrey and his wife Moya help provide three hot meals a day for workers occupying the plant. "We've got a Xmas tree ready—if it takes that long," he added.

"I'm a changed man since the occupation started. I use to live in a cocoon and just got on with things."

Messages of support for the Visteon workers can be emailed to steve.hart@unitetheunion.com

Björn Tirsén contributed to this article.

Visteon workers fight auto parts plant closing

Continued from front page

a rally in the city center organized by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions April 17 to protest rising joblessness. Delegations from the Enfield and Basildon plants were present as well as Belfast bus workers. All Citybus services were stopped for an hour during the rally, according to the *Belfast Telegraph*. Union representatives from Bombardier and Nortel, where job cuts have been announced, spoke at the rally.

"We don't want their money—we want our jobs," said John Maguire, the union convener at the Belfast plant in response to a payment that Visteon Corporation, the U.S. owners, made last week.

Union representatives rejected the offer, which is equivalent to 16 weeks' pay.

"This would give me a maximum of £11,000, but under the terms agreed to before the plant closure I would get between £30,000 to £40,000," explained Chris Jones on the picket line at Basildon.

"The offer is not even available to me," said Joe Murphy, who worked at the Belfast plant for four years. Murphy explained he was one of 22 workers hired under the company's "cost competitive rate," who don't qualify for the payment.

"We had a nine-week strike over pay and conditions in 1978," said Charlie Johnson, who worked at the Belfast

Israeli film depicts 1982 massacre in Lebanon

Waltz With Bashir. *An animated film directed by Ari Folman, 2008, Hebrew with English subtitles, 87 minutes.*

BY GEORGES MEHRABIAN

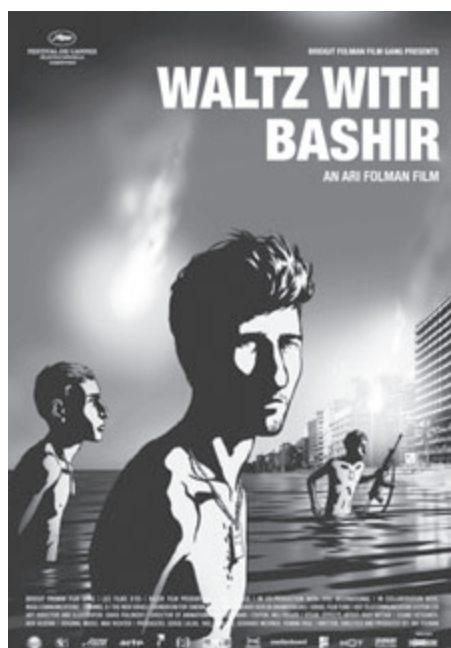
Waltz with Bashir, the Oscar-nominated documentary about the 1982 Israeli invasion and subsequent occupation of Lebanon, has caused a surprising uproar from some supporters

IN REVIEW

of the Palestinian people's struggle for liberation.

Directed by Israeli filmmaker Ari Folman, it is an animated account of the recollections of an Israeli soldier who took part in the 1982 events in Lebanon. The soldier has suppressed the events from his memory and is attempting to remember what happened.

The film culminates with his apocalyptic recollection of the massacre



of close to 3,000 Palestinians at the refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila in Beirut at the hands of the Fascist Phalange militia—a Lebanese force allied with the Israeli invaders.

The soldier was stationed outside the camps, assigned the job of shooting flares to illuminate the night so that the killers could see. He asks himself, “Am I guilty, an accomplice?”

Criticism of the movie has come from some who oppose Israeli government oppression of the Palestinians. For example, Gideon Levy, a correspondent for the Israeli daily *Haaretz*, wrote in a February 21 column that “we would do well to remember that this is not an antiwar film. It is an act

of fraud and deceit, intended to allow us to pat ourselves on the back, to tell us and the world how lovely we are. . . so different from the bloodthirsty soldiers at the checkpoints, the pilots who bomb residential neighborhoods, the artillerymen who shell women and children, and the combat engineers who rip up streets.

“Here, instead, is the opposite picture. Animated, too. Of enlightened, beautiful Israel, anguished and self-righteous, dancing a waltz, with and without Bashir.” Bashir is a reference to Phalange leader Bashir Gemayel.

Yet the film shows unmistakably the Israeli command's complicity with and control of the massacre. A ground commander calls Ariel Sharon, then commanding the invasion forces, and tells him about the massacre. Sharon simply thanks him and hangs up. The film shows Israeli soldiers allowing Phalangist militias in and out of the camps and illuminating the night sky during the whole massacre.

In one of the final scenes, a fellow soldier whose family had survived the Holocaust says that the scenes of the massacre remind him of the stories of the killing of the Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto during World War II. There could be no clearer condemnation of Israeli government policies.

Critics of the film seem to argue that unless there is a condemnation of all Israelis and a collective mea culpa then it is simply a cover-up—sort of



The 1982 massacre carried out by fascist Phalange militia and facilitated by Israeli military killed nearly 3,000 Palestinian refugees in Sabra and Shatila camps in Beirut, Lebanon. Above, 2003 demonstration in Beirut to remember the massacres. Signs in background say “Never forget the Sabra and Shatila massacres.” Left, Sabra refugee camp in 2003.

like the demand for collective guilt made on all Germans as a way of redemption for the crimes committed by the Nazis.

Israel is a class-divided society with a capitalist ruling class pursuing its interests at the expense of the oppressed Palestinian people and the Jewish Israeli workers who are the cannon fodder for the Israeli rulers' military policies. The task is to win these toilers to the side of a common struggle with the Palestinians.

Waltz with Bashir is an attempt to question the stated policies under which soldiers invaded Lebanon, creating the horrors that ensued. While it does not take the side of the Palestin-

ian freedom fighters it does show the brutality of the Israeli invasion and the responsibility of the Israel Defense Force at the highest levels in the destruction and massacres.

The film illustrates the questioning that does and will emerge amongst Israeli Jewish toilers as they are assigned the police tasks of brutally suppressing the Palestinian people. It shows the real potential to win over sections of Israeli working people, intellectuals, and artists to the side of the Palestinian toilers. It bodes well for those who argue that Palestinian and Israeli Jewish working people can struggle collectively for a democratic and secular Palestine.

Israeli Arab rail workers fight racist firings

BY SETH GALINSKY

Palestinian workers in Israel won an initial victory against discrimination when the Tel Aviv Labor Court blocked Israel Railways from firing them in early April.

At least 40 Palestinian workers were given pink slips March 29 after the state-owned railroad announced new rules requiring that crossing guards be Israeli army veterans. While most Jewish workers are required to serve in the army, Israeli Arabs are exempt, and few, if any, do.

The guards, who are unarmed, work as lookouts at rail crossings to prevent collisions between trains and vehicles. About half of the 260 guards are Palestinians. Almost all the train crews are Jewish. Some Jewish workers who never joined the army could also be fired.

Many of the guards started working

in 2006 after five people were killed and 80 injured when a train collided with a car at a crossing. They are hired through an employment agency and make little more than minimum wage.

At first Israel Railways said it was instituting the new rules to provide “opportunities” for young Israeli army veterans. But after workers filed suit challenging the discriminatory firings, the company changed its story. According to *Haaretz*, the company now claims that “mistakes” by workers prompted them to “improve the level of supervision.”

Adalah, the Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel, filed a brief in the Labor Court backing the Palestinian workers. “Every day we get more calls from Railway workers asking us for help on this case,” Adalah attorney Sawsan Zaher said in a phone interview.

On April 22 some 50 people, including workers threatened with dismissal, demonstrated in front of the Labor Court, she said. “They have received informal solidarity from some of their Jewish coworkers and from a Kibbutz movement which is close to the Histadrut.” The Histadrut, the largest union federation in Israel, has not made any public statements about the case.

The temporary injunction against firing the workers is a “victory,” but not exactly a huge victory,” Wehbe Badarne, director of Sawt el-Amel, the Laborer's Voice, told the *Militant*. “The workers are still working, but

where they used to work five or six days a week, now they have been cut back to two or three days.”

“We are demanding that they be kept working full time and that their work conditions be improved,” he said. “Sometimes they have no place to sit to eat their lunch, no place with air conditioning, no place to go to relax on their breaks.”

“You don't need military experience to do this job. We don't carry a gun,” Abad Taya, one of the Palestinian crossing workers, said in a phone interview. “We just report on what is going on. We use a walkie-talkie; sometimes we call the train driver and tell him to be careful.”

“Some of my Jewish coworkers say that anyone who has worked here a long time should be allowed to stay. But it's not about length of time, it's about principles. This new rule is discriminatory.”

Assad Salam works both as an elementary school teacher and a railroad guard to make ends meet. “We just want to work, like everybody else,” he told the *Militant*.

On April 19, while the rail workers were at a Labor Court hearing, instructors at Open University—the largest in the country, with 40,000 students—went on strike. The university hires only 70 full-time instructors; the rest, some 1,300, are hired only a semester at a time.

The state-funded Open University has 50 branches across the country, including in Nazareth, a predominantly Arab city in northern Israel.

For further reading



Israel and the Arab Revolution by Gus Horowitz

The fight for a democratic, secular Palestine and its place in advancing the struggle of workers and peasants against imperialist oppression and capitalist exploitation throughout the Middle East and the entire world. —\$10

Palestine and the Arab's Fight for Liberation

by Fred Feldman and Georges Sayad

An overview of the Palestinian struggle from World War I to the beginning of the intifada in 1987. —\$6



Chicago march to call for end to raids, deportations

BY JOHN HAWKINS

CHICAGO—Representatives of this city’s main immigrant rights action coalitions joined together at a news conference April 28, urging a massive turnout for this year’s May Day march and rally.

Opening the news conference, Fr. José Landaverde of Our Lady of Guadalupe Anglican Catholic Mission noted that it took place on the street just outside the Little Village Discount Mall, scene of a massive immigration raid April 25, 2007.

On that date FBI agents and immigration cops in bulletproof vests carrying heavy automatic weapons confronted and detained people in this small shopping mall.

At the time the FBI claimed it was targeting people selling false Social Security cards.

Speaking at the press conference Emma Lozano, a founder of Centro Sin Fronteras and president of Familia Latina Unida/Sin Fronteras, said, “The Latino vote carried the swing states for Obama. He promised immigration reform would be on the agenda in the first 100 days. The first 100 days are up and we’re still waiting. We’re calling for a moratorium on raids and deportations. We want to see an end to the separation of fami-

lies. Economic recovery should not be built on the separation of families.”

“We are calling on all workers to join us for this workers holiday to march for legalization and a just immigration reform,” said Margarita Klein, representing Workers United and a coalition of 10 unions mobilizing for May Day. “We are also appealing to the community to join us.

“May Day is the international workers holiday celebrated worldwide,” Klein explained in response to reporters’ questions.

“The workers movement in this country cannot tolerate a situation where a layer of workers is forced into a second-class status,” she continued. “That can have only one impact—making it more difficult to win decent wages and working and living conditions for all workers. That’s why the fight for legalization of immigrant workers is a key question for workers as a whole.”

“We’re calling upon our brothers and sisters who came out and marched with us in massive numbers on March 10, 2006, and May Day in 2006 and 2007 to come out again this year,” said Jorge Mújica, representative of the March 10 Committee, one of the groups that organized the March 10, 2006, march of 100,000 here against



Fr. José Landaverde speaks at April 28 press conference in Chicago to build May Day action in support of immigrant rights. Among other speakers was Margarita Klein of Workers United, who said, “The fight for legalization is a key question for workers as a whole.”

the Sensenbrenner anti-immigrant bill. “The situation we confronted then has not been resolved, so we must act again,” he said.

“The consequences of the economic crisis we are living through are being felt by working people across the country and especially by immigrant workers. The rich and their system caused the crisis. The rich should bear the burden of it, not the working class,” he said.

“Immigrant workers are American workers. And they should enjoy the same rights as workers who are citizens,” Mújica added. “That’s why we

are urging a massive turnout May 1 to demand legalization now.”

In a related development, about a dozen students met at Northeastern Illinois University to build the May Day march and to defend a student and a young unemployed worker threatened with deportation. The campus Movimiento Cultural Latino Americano sponsored the meeting.

José Herrera, 25, a student at the campus who came to Chicago from Mexico when he was seven, was picked up by Chicago police for a traffic violation and handed over to immigration authorities. He ended up in jail for three months and now faces deportation. “Eventually I got out. But I am fighting for the rest that are still in the jails,” Herrera told the students.

José Macías came to Chicago from Mexico when he was two years old. He and a friend were stopped by Chicago police for allegedly running a red light. “I was in jail for several months. The jail is full of other people like me facing deportation. We shouldn’t be treated this way. I am still fighting my deportation.”

After the meeting the students, who are planning to walk out of school on May 1, made signs and banners to carry in the march.

Alyson Kennedy contributed to this article.

U.S. Black farmers hold rally for justice

Continued from front page

“have had 10 more years of persecution and farmers are still losing their land.” Slaughter himself faces foreclosure and his disability check is being garnished for debts the government claims he owes.

In the *Pigford* settlement Black farmers who could offer minimal proof of discrimination were eligible for a \$50,000 tax-exempt payment, debt forgiveness, and preferential access to future loans.

“We are here to demand what we were promised in the 2008 farm bill,” said John Boyd, president of NBFA, who chaired the rally. He was referring to farm legislation passed by Congress last year that allows thousands of farmers who were excluded from

the original *Pigford* settlement because they missed deadlines or failed to meet other requirements, to now file claims. However, the funds allotted for additional compensation—a mere \$100 million—fall far short of what is needed to meet new claims. Boyd and other speakers called on President Barack Obama, who as a senator sponsored the legislation added to the farm bill, to make good on promises he made to farmers while running for president. “Congress can dole out billions when it comes to [insurance company] AIG, to the banks, to the car companies,” Boyd said. “We’re simply saying, ‘Pay the Black farmers what they’re owed.’”

“This rally is important to bring attention to the situation of all minority

farmers, including Hispanic farmers, women farmers, and Native American farmers,” Lawrence Lucas, president of the Coalition of Minority Employees at the department, told the crowd.

“We say that the USDA is an ‘equal opportunity’ discriminator, because if you come to them for help, they do not respond,” said Lucas, adding that “there is a plantation culture at the USDA that remains unchanged and this is not going to change just because we have a Black president.”

“I’ve been a farmer all my life, and my father before me,” said R.L. Underwood, 59, from Centreville, Alabama. He and his wife Faustine own 15 acres and raise beans, corn, and hogs. “My father tried to get a loan from the USDA and they denied him. We tried to file a claim [under the *Pigford* settlement] and were told it was too late,” explaining why they made the long bus ride from central Alabama to attend today’s rally.

“I’m here on behalf of all the latecomers who couldn’t be here themselves,” explained Rudy Doss, from Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Doss, 75, raises peanuts and cotton.

The USDA building is on the national mall, a popular travel destination. Many tourists, including groups of students, stopped for a while to listen to the rally speakers and spoke with farmers about the issues in their fight.

After the rally, participants marched up Pennsylvania Avenue to the Capitol building to meet with congressional representatives from their home states. Many also planned to attend a one-day conference organized by the NBFA the next day.

Chris Hoepfner contributed to this article.



April 28 rally in Washington, D.C., drew Black farmers from eight states to demand compensation and a halt to discrimination by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

For further reading

New International no. 4

The Fight for a Workers and Farmers Government in the United States
by Jack Barnes

The Crisis Facing Working Farmers
by Doug Jenness
Land Reform and Farm Cooperatives in Cuba
by Fidel Castro
\$14

New International no. 13

Our Politics Start with the World

by Jack Barnes
Farming, Science, and the Working Classes

by Steve Clark
Capitalism, Labor, and Nature: An Exchange
by Richard Levins, Steve Clark
\$14

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A fight in interests of all workers

Continued from front page

more than the fight for Black rights is just a “Black” issue or women’s rights is solely a “women’s” issue. It is key to uniting our class—native- and foreign-born, increasingly drawn from all corners of the world—in waging a more powerful struggle against the bosses to defend our immediate interests.

As the worldwide capitalist economic crisis unfolds, the ruling rich try to shore up their declining profits at the expense of working people. They speed up the production lines; drive to produce more with fewer workers; lengthen the work day; slash wages and health and retirement benefits; and cut corners on safety regardless of the toll on our lives and limbs.

At the same time the bosses’ government is slashing needed services from mass transit to child care to libraries. More attacks are coming; they will go after Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid under the guise of “reform.”

Because of the depth of the economic crisis they face, the capitalist rulers are seeking to drive down the historic value of workers’ labor power—the basic living standards won over decades of struggle. They want us to lower our expectations. They want to push more and more of the burden of living and working under capitalism onto the backs of the family, and women in particular.

Central to their antiworker offensive is scapegoating those in our class who are undocumented immigrants,

controlling the flow of labor across the Mexican border with the aim of bolstering a modern reserve army of labor. Haven’t you heard bosses say, “If you don’t like the pay or conditions here, fine, there are 100 people willing to take your place and take whatever I offer them”?

Capitalist politicians such as John McCain and Barack Obama are calling for “comprehensive reform” and “road to legalization” schemes. These are traps.

“Go to the end of the line,” they say. Why? “Pay a substantial fine.” Why? For the “crime” of working? “Learn English.” As if millions of immigrants are not already learning English because they understand the importance of being able to communicate with fellow workers. And even if you jump through all the hoops there is still no guarantee you will ever get papers. Don’t fight for what you don’t want! You might get it.

Immigrant workers have been at the forefront of struggles that strengthen the entire working class, from defending trade unions in meatpacking plants in the Upper Midwest to fighting to unionize coal mines in Utah. They will be an important part of the battles to come.

Working people should fight for what we need. Stop the raids and deportations! Free all those in prison for so-called immigration violations! End the militarization of the border! Legalization without restrictions, now!

Socialist candidate: all out on May 1

Continued from front page

and States.”

Some 100 students attended the daylong event, which included a second panel discussion on “The Politics of Immigration.” Sponsors included the Office of Campus Activities, Amnesty International, Latinos del Mundo Club, Women’s Club, Campus Library, and several academic departments.

“I was out here last November to join 2,000 others in protesting the killing of Marcelo Lucero,” Fein said, referring to the vigil in nearby Patchogue demanding justice for Lucero, an Ecuadoran immigrant who was stabbed to death in a racist anti-immigrant attack by a gang of youth.

“I am a garment worker,” continued Fein, “and I see firsthand how the employers benefit from immigrant labor. They keep workers divided so they can pay less than the minimum wage; pay no unemployment compensation and no workers compensation when we get injured on the job.

‘Join common fight for jobs’

“We need to join in a common fight for jobs, health care, and education for all workers. There’s no such thing as an American job. Every worker needs a job,” Fein stated. “I’m glad when a worker gets medical care. I don’t care where they come from. We need to see ourselves as part of an international working class.”

Valenzuela said the Long Island Immigrant Alliance was formed in response to the attempted murder of two Mexican day laborers who in 2000 were lured to an isolated site near Farmingville and brutally beaten. “It is a myth that immigrant workers are bankrupting our schools, our hospitals, our jails,” Valenzuela said. “You hear some people say, ‘Why didn’t they get on line?’ Well, there is no line. It’s a nightmare. People have been on line 20, 30 years.”

He reminded the audience that “thanks to immigrant workers we have the eight-hour day.” He also said he thought “things look better for immigrant rights under the Obama administration.”

Einhorn said the immigrant population on Long Island has doubled over the last 30 years from 8 percent in the 1980s to 16 percent today. She urged students to support “comprehensive immigration reform” and to turn out for the Long Island May 1 march and rally in Hempstead.

“We must call for legalization now,” Fein responded. He explained that the Obama adminis-

tration’s “reforms” call for strengthening patrols on the border and put a series of obstacles in front of immigrant workers before they can obtain legal residency or citizenship.

“Legalization would mean that all workers would have the same status and can unite together against this capitalist system that exploits workers,” said Fein. “The only way out is to fight to take power—to put working people in the drivers seat. The corporations go all over the world to make more profit. But when workers go from point A to point B they say something is wrong.”

He also urged everyone to “be part of history and join with the vanguard and others who have been protesting raids and deportations and who will be marching in cities around the country on May 1.”

Ana Menendez, a Spanish teacher who encouraged her class to attend the discussion, told of the hurdles immigrants are forced to go through. Even though she came to the United States on a student visa, got her PhD, and applied for a green card, because of a misspelling of her name by immigration authorities she was threatened with deportation and had to pay more than \$5,000 in legal costs.

“This meeting was important,” 19-year-old Eugenia Castillo told the *Militant*, “because it didn’t say immigrants are taking away from native U.S. citizens. It is saying the capitalists want money from all the workers and so we need legalization to help raise the wages for everyone.”

“I’m definitely for legalization!” said Jasmine Huancayo, 20. She recalled the hardships faced by her father’s family in trying to obtain legal residency.



Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?
by Mary-Alice Waters

“Revolutionary struggles by working people are inevitable. They will be initiated not by the toilers, but will be forced upon us by the crisis-driven assaults by the propertied classes. As solidarity grows among working people, the outlines of these coming class battles can be seen.” \$7

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Immigrant rights and debate over ‘free trade’ pacts

BY CINDY JAQUITH

NEW YORK—A leaflet put out by the May 1st Coalition to publicize a “March for Workers and Immigrant Rights” here on May Day includes the demand “Abolish NAFTA and All Free Trade Agreements.”

This protectionist slogan has no place at May 1 actions. It is part of the employers’ campaign to criminalize immigrant workers by blaming them for unemployment rather than the bosses who are the ones actually throwing workers into the streets.

NAFTA—the North American Free Trade Agreement—is a trade pact between the United

AS I SEE IT

States, Mexico, and Canada that went into effect in 1994. The U.S. capitalists saw it as a way to strengthen their domination over Canada, a weaker imperialist rival, and at the same time to intensify their exploitation of Mexican peasants and workers. From the start, the main opponents of NAFTA have been liberal Democrats and union officials, on the one hand, and ultrarightists like Patrick Buchanan on the other. Both claim the agreement threatens “American jobs.”

In his 2008 presidential campaign Barack Obama called for amending NAFTA. “Trade with foreign nations should strengthen the American economy,” his platform said.

This narrow, nationalist framework—that U.S. workers have a common interest with their bosses in “strengthening the American economy”—is deadly for the labor movement. From there it’s a small jump to another demand that has appeared on some May 1st Coalition literature: “No to labor export”—the idea that there are “American jobs” that must stay in the United States.

There’s no such thing as an “American job,” or a “Mexican job,” for that matter. There are simply jobs. The rulers seek to boost their profits by getting workers to see each other as enemies in the competition to get hired.

The issue is not whether you are for or against NAFTA. What attitude class-conscious workers take toward a given imperialist trade policy doesn’t start with that policy but how to unite workers around the world to defend our interests as a class and fight for jobs for all.

As Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, wrote in the book *Capitalism’s World Disorder*, “Class-conscious workers oppose NAFTA. . . . But we do so from an internationalist standpoint, rejecting any notion of common interests with the employing class in bolstering their competitiveness against their rivals or helping them reinforce the pariah status and superexploitation of immigrant workers.”

The U.S. labor movement should oppose any tariffs or other restrictions on products entering the United States, just as it should oppose the U.S. government prohibiting exports to any country—including imperialist countries.

However, class-conscious workers support the right of semicolonial countries to use tariffs against the import of goods from imperialist countries. Such measures are a way to compensate for unequal trade relations, the gap in the productivity of labor between the imperialist countries and the countries they exploit, and the debt slavery imposed by the likes of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

This working-class approach to trade is not less applicable when unemployment is on the rise, but all the more essential if the labor movement is to overcome the divisions imposed by the employers, one of the biggest being the division between U.S.- and foreign-born workers. And that starts with resolutely exposing all nationalist, “America first” slogans such as “Abolish NAFTA.”