

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

‘Malcolm X spoke truth to our generation of revolutionists’  
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 74/NO. 3 JANUARY 25, 2010

## Drive aims to spread ‘Militant,’ new book

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS  
AND PAUL MAILHOT

The one-month drive to win long-term readers to the *Militant* begins January 16. This effort opens the winter/spring socialist propaganda campaign to discuss a revolutionary working-class response to the capitalist crisis with a growing number of newly interested workers and youth. Those who renew their subscriptions to the *Militant* over the next four weeks, as well as new subscribers, will be able to buy *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by Jack Barnes for \$10.

The newly published Pathfinder book points the road to ending the dictatorship of capital in the United States and replacing it with the dictatorship of the proletariat. It explains why workers who are Black will be in the vanguard of this fight.

In the introduction Barnes explains, “It is a book about why this  
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## ‘Reform’ or not, workers face cuts in health care

BY BEN JOYCE

Now that both houses of U.S. Congress have passed a version of health-care “reform,” the administration of President Barack Obama is feverishly working to reconcile the two bills and get some form of the legislation passed as its first major mark on social policy.

Obama claims that the “reforms” would widen access to medical care. But with or without them, millions of working people will be forced to shoulder more of the skyrocketing costs, face cuts to previously won social programs, and deal with a deteriorating medical system as the worldwide capitalist crisis continues to take its toll.

The health-care proposal passed the Senate in a 60 to 39 vote. The Obama administration hopes to have a compromise between the Senate and House of Representatives versions early in the 2010 session. Not a single Republican voted for the Senate bill.

The legislation approved by the Sen-  
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## Social disaster racks Haiti following quake

### Imperialist exploitation magnifies crisis



Reuters/Eduardo Munoz

Residents sleep in streets of Port-au-Prince January 13 following earthquake. Tens of thousands are believed dead and many more trapped. Centuries of imperialist plunder and domination of island greatly magnify scope of social catastrophe inflicted on working people in Haiti.

BY CINDY JAQUITH

January 13—As the *Militant* goes to press, tens of thousands are believed dead and many more trapped or wounded as working people in Haiti fight to rescue others, find refuge, and combat disease following yesterday’s 7.0-magnitude earthquake that destroyed much of the capital, Port-au-Prince, and surrounding areas. Haiti has a population of 9 million.

The damage has been greatly magnified by the extreme poverty of Haiti and its lack of infrastructure—products of the plunder of the island’s workforce and natural resources by Washington and other imperialist governments that are today offering a mere pittance in rescue aid, none of which had arrived by mid-afternoon today. In contrast, Cuban doc-

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## Flight attendants at United protest pay, job conditions



Militant/Betsey Stone

Flight attendants and their supporters rally in San Francisco January 7 to protest deteriorating job conditions and demand higher wages.

BY BETSEY STONE

SAN FRANCISCO—Some 200 United Airlines flight attendants and supporters picketed at the San Francisco airport January 7. “We’re overworked and underpaid, United Airlines has got it made!” they chanted.

The protest, organized by the Association of Flight Attendants—Communication Workers of America, reflects the growing anger of flight attendants about their wages, loss of pensions, rising health-care costs, and deteriorating job conditions. Similar actions took place at 17 airports around the world.

Workers at United, including flight

attendants, pilots, baggage handlers, and other ramp workers, took deep concessions after United Airlines filed for bankruptcy in 2002. Thousands of workers were laid off. Flight attendant’s pay was cut 9 percent.

The flight attendants’ union estimates that over the past seven years, the combined cost to flight attendants of concessions in pay, work conditions, health care, and termination of pensions for all but the most senior workers comes to more than \$3 billion.

The January 7 “Day of Action” was called for the date that the union con-

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## SWP supporters up pledges in response to political openings

BY DON MACKLE  
AND CAROLE CARON

Responding to the evidence that a new kind of opportunity to expand the reach of propaganda activity and communist campaigning—and to build the Socialist Workers Party—has opened, 87 percent of the 435 contributors to the Supporters Monthly Financial Appeal raised their monthly pledges to the party by 15 percent in December. The success of the effort has led organizers of the appeal to project increasing the number of contributors to 500!

Organizers of the appeal met with each of the 435 contributors in the United States and Canada to discuss the new political openings for the communist movement.

“Contributors really appreciated the time we spent talking politics. They were proud to do what they could with an appreciation of what is possible if the funds are available,” said Natalie Bombaro, an organizer of the effort in Philadelphia.

Over the course of about one month, 380 contributors raised their pledge by 15 percent or more—an increase

of \$85,000—bringing the annual total to \$590,000.

“This is a victory for all contributors and the communist movement, which means the party will not have to cut back or scrimp on any of its plans for financial reasons,” said Dave Prince, a leader of the SWP.

“We will be able to respond to new developments in the class struggle wherever they occur. We’ll be able to take trips and participate in con-

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# Immigrant rights activist fights deportation in N.Y.

BY MAURA DELUCA

NEW YORK—A standing-room-only crowd of about 40 supporters of Victor Toro packed a courtroom here January 11 to oppose government attempts to deport him. Toro was testifying before Assistant Chief Immigration Judge Sarah Burr.

Toro was arrested by Homeland Security agents on an Amtrak train in upstate New York July 6, 2007, and charged with being in the United States without legal papers. He was returning to New York City after joining actions in California for legalization of undocumented immigrants.

Toro has lived in the United States since 1984. Together with his wife, Nieves Ayress, a U.S. citizen, he founded the community organization La Peña del Bronx. Their daughter is a legal permanent resident.

In 1973 when a military junta overthrew the Chilean government in a U.S.-backed coup, Toro was a member of the Movement of the Revolutionary Left. Like thousands of other workers and peasants there he was jailed and tortured. In 1976 he was expelled from Chile. He lived in Sweden and Mexico before moving to the United States.

Along with asking for political asylum, Toro and his attorney have presented arguments that because of

his family ties and having lived in the United States for 25 years, the deportation proceedings against him should be halted and he should be granted permanent residency.

Some 150 supporters attended a January 8 solidarity event in New York to back his fight against deportation.

During the lunch break on the day of the hearing, some 50 people rallied outside the Federal Building chanting, “We are immigrants, not terrorists!” and “No deportation for Victor Toro!” in English and Spanish. The next court date is set for May 20.



Militant/Janice Lynn  
Victor Toro, center, joins March 26 demonstration outside Federal Building in New York City to demand he be granted asylum. Toro has been fighting deportation since 2007.

## Flight attendants protest job conditions, wages

**Continued from front page**  
tract is open to amendments. Negotiations have been taking place since April, but according to union officials the company has stalled on reversing the pay cuts and other concessions and is demanding further takeaways.

United Airlines management says they want to “change the scope” of flight attendant’s duties, “remove restrictions” on the company’s right to select hotels where attendants stay on layover between flights, and achieve “critical productivity” improvements.

Among the changes the company is demanding are fewer paid holidays, reducing the amount of rest required between flights, eliminating some crew meals, decreasing vacation days, and allowing other employees and contractors to do work done by flight attendants.

“United Airlines running late with

my pay,” “Living at 1994 wages,” and “The only thing ahead of schedule at United: Executive pay,” were signs carried by the picketers.

Sharon Caldwell, a flight attendant at United since the early 1990s, was one of many who expressed outrage at the belt tightening imposed on workers, while millions of dollars in bonuses have been given to company executives. “We’re

working harder, with smaller crews on the flights, and we’re the ones footing the bill!” Caldwell said.

United has laid off more than 2,000 flight attendants in the last two years.

Some 1,800 people, including pilots, mechanics, and other workers at United as well as flight attendants from other airlines, joined the protests worldwide.

## Laundry, garment workers buy ‘Militant’ outside factory gates

BY TED LEONARD

Supporters of the *Militant* newspaper have organized several teams to distribute the paper to workers at Angelica Laundry Services in Somerville, Massachusetts. Members of the United Food and Commercial Workers union there won a new contract after walking off the job for five days in December.

The week after the strike a *Militant* team sold out the 26 papers they had with them during the Saturday shift change. The *Militant* had an article reporting on the strike. The sales team set up a small table with books published by Pathfinder Press. One man who was picking up his companion who works in the plant bought *Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?* He also bought a copy of the *Militant* supplement featuring the introduction to the forthcoming

book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*.

The following week another sales team sold 12 *Militants* at the entrance to the plant. *Militant* supporters Kevin Dwire and Sarah Ullman reported several workers had their dollar in their hand ready to purchase the paper as soon as they saw the sales team.

In spite of some light snow flurries and below freezing weather, four sewing machine operators in Manhattan’s garment district bought the *Militant* January 8. Distributors of the *Militant* also passed out dozens of flyers for an upcoming Militant Labor Forum during the sale in front of a building that houses several clothing factories.

*Seth Galinsky contributed to this article.*

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# THE MILITANT

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Striking bus drivers and supporters in East London, November 21.

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

# Millions face eviction as mortgage crisis expands

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Millions of working people lured into taking loans to purchase houses over recent decades are facing eviction, despite the Barack Obama administration's program that promised to avert foreclosures. Bailouts for huge banks and insurance companies remain the capitalist rulers' priority.

According to the Mortgage Bankers Association, a record one in seven U.S. mortgages, held by 4 million individuals, was in foreclosure or at least one payment late in the third quarter of 2009. What began as a crisis with subprime mortgages—which have higher interest rates for those people the banks consider “high risk borrowers”—has spread to those with prime fixed-rate loans. “You’re in a situation where even the good mortgages are going bad because people are losing their jobs,” Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. chairperson Sheila Bair told Bloomberg News.

For those with adjustable-rate mortgages, higher interest rates are being reset starting this month. That could force 7 million others into foreclosure, reported Bloomberg. About one-third of those who own houses with mortgages in the United States—some 15 million people—are considered to be “underwater borrowers,” meaning they owe the bank more than their house is worth.

In its Home Affordable Modification Program, which began last March, the Obama administration allocated \$75 billion in loan subsidies toward persuading banks to voluntarily renegotiate mortgage payments.

About 750,000 individuals were given three-month trial adjustments of interest rates, with lower monthly payments that many still couldn't afford. Only 31,000 of them were granted permanent modifications.

“In New York City, where 20,000 homeowners faced foreclosure this year, a recent study by the Center for NYC Neighborhoods found that lenders have offered new or trial mortgages to just 3 percent of homeowners who have sought help,” reported the *New York Times*.

With little publicity, the Treasury Department in November began the Foreclosure Alternatives Program, which aims to hasten the surrender of houses by those unable to pay their mortgages.

## Impact of owning a house

Over the past decade or more banks and their financial intermediaries through “low down payment” loans and “adjustable rate” financing convinced millions of working people to switch from renting to owning, assuming huge debts.

## —MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

### CALIFORNIA

#### San Francisco

**Oppose U.S. ‘Antiterror’ Operations—Defend Democratic Rights, No to Washington’s Wars.** Speaker: Lea Sherman, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Jan. 22. 7:30 p.m. 5482 Mission Street. Tel.: (415) 584-2135.

Owning a house has a conservatizing impact on working people. It cuts across habits of class solidarity by elevating relations with fellow “property-holding owners” over those with fellow workers.

In his 1873 booklet *The Housing Question*, Frederick Engels explains that for workers “freedom of movement is the prime condition of existence,” being essential for getting jobs and moving to others with better wages and conditions. “Give them their own houses, chain them once again to the soil, and break their power of resistance to the wage cutting of the factory owners,” Engels wrote. “The individual worker might be able to sell his house on occasion, but during a big strike or a general industrial crisis all the houses belonging to the workers affected would have to be put up for sale and would therefore find no purchasers or be sold off far below their cost price.”

At the end of December the Trea-



AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez

Thousands turn out in Daly City, California, October 16 to receive counseling on their mounting housing debt. One in seven U.S. mortgages are in foreclosure or behind payment.

sury Department lifted the \$400 billion cap on government bailout funds to keep the mortgage giants Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac afloat. These capitalist-run financial agencies own or guarantee half of the nation's \$11 trillion in mortgages. Together with the Federal Housing Administration they back nearly nine in 10 mortgages. The government considers them

along with huge banks and insurance companies “too big to fail.”

The federal government first bailed out Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac in September 2008, making as much as \$200 billion available to cover losses from mortgage defaults. Five months later this figure was doubled. The decision to provide unlimited funds

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# SWP supporters up pledges by 15 percent



Militant (right)

Increases to the SWP supporters' monthly appeal were driven by new receptivity to *Militant* and Pathfinder books. Left, Farsi translation of Pathfinder books on display at 16th Tehran International Book Fair. Right, *Militant* sales at Dakota Premium Foods, January 2008. Thirty workers at plant bought *Militant* subscriptions during nine-week drive last fall.

## Continued from front page

ferences, book fairs, and expand the reach of the *Militant*. We'll be able to get books such as the recently published *Malcolm X*, *Black Liberation*, and the *Road to Workers Power* and many others into the hands of a growing number of workers and youth who are expressing an interest in a communist perspective,” Prince said.

Supporters of the SWP are also mapping out plans to convince buyers at bookstores to begin carrying the book, as well as its Spanish edition when it is available in mid-March.

Among the party campaigns that the increased funds will make possible is broad sales of *Malcolm X*, *Black Liberation*, and the *Road to Workers Power* at a special discounted price of \$10. The SWP has launched a winter/spring propaganda offensive in 2010 to respond to the opening among workers and youth to discuss the perspective of the working class taking power in answer to the growing capitalist crisis. (See article beginning on front page.)

## New receptivity

The special effort to raise supporter contributions by 15 percent was launched at a November 7 public meeting in New York City attended by more than 300 people. At that meeting SWP leaders explained that party members are finding a qualitatively new receptivity to the *Militant* newspaper and Pathfinder books among workers, youth,

and others seeking to understand and fight against the social and political consequences of capitalism's deepening economic crisis and expanding wars.

During the recently completed fall *Militant* circulation campaign, 30 subscriptions were bought by union workers at a large packinghouse in South St. Paul, Minnesota. Eighteen workers at a large garment factory in Los Angeles, and another 18 workers at a meatpacking plant near Des Moines, Iowa, also subscribed. Many workers across the country bought subscriptions to the paper after getting a copy of the *Militant's* special supplement with the introduction to *Malcolm X*, *Black Liberation*, and the *Road to Workers Power*.

The positive response among workers was coupled with many students in cities across North America and in other countries signing up to regularly receive the paper.

Several examples of how the communist movement leverages its use of propaganda toward the working class worldwide were also pointed to by contributors in raising their pledges. The cumulative sales of communist literature in Iran—more than 40,000 Farsi-language Pathfinder books over the past decade—has helped to highlight what is opening up in the world.

As the effort to win increases for the Supporters Monthly Appeal was under way in late November, participants in the Venezuela International Book Fair

reported selling over 400 copies of the Marxist magazine *New International*, and a 37 percent increase in book sales from the year before.

## Winning new contributors

As a part of the 15 percent raise effort in Pittsburgh, New York, and Newark, New Jersey, four new people were won to making monthly contributions to the Supporters Monthly Appeal.

Organizers of the appeal are convinced that many more will be won as the SWP reaches out to the new possibilities for propaganda activity and communist campaigning. The appeal will now focus efforts on expanding the number from 435 to 500!

Josefina Otero, an organizer of the effort in Pittsburgh, wrote, “Following the resounding success of this most recent 15 percent increase, we should reach out to workers and farmers, students, and others who are looking for political answers. We can increase the number of financial contributors to the party right now in a big way.”

Become a contributor! Anyone interested in joining the ongoing effort to expand the reach of communist politics by making a monthly pledge can contact organizers of the appeal in your area through the numbers listed on page 8.

*Don Mackle and Carole Caron are organizers of Supporters Monthly Appeal. Dave Prince and Steve Clark contributed to this article.*

# U.S. military deepens intervention in Yemen

BY DOUG NELSON

In a January 7 speech laying out more aggressive “security” measures and “intelligence” procedures, President Barack Obama used the failed Christmas Day suicide bombing aboard a Detroit-bound flight to garner support for Washington’s expanded military role in Yemen and beyond. “Let’s be clear about what this moment demands,” he said. “We are at war against al-Qaeda, a far-reaching network of violence and hatred. . . . And we will do whatever it takes to defeat them.”

Implicit was a justification for increased spy operations worldwide as an integral part of Washington’s war drive. “It is clear that al-Qaeda increasingly seeks to recruit individuals without known terrorist affiliations not just in the Middle East, but in Africa and other places,” Obama said. “I’ve directed my national security team to develop a strategy that addresses the unique challenges posed by lone recruits.”

Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, based in Yemen and Saudi Arabia, claimed responsibility for training

and arming the bomber, Nigerian-born Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab. In the weeks leading up to the attack, Washington had conducted air strikes and stepped-up its military operations in Yemen.

Obama alluded to increased U.S. intervention in Yemen in his December 1 speech on U.S. troop increases in Afghanistan. “Where al-Qaeda and its allies attempt to establish a foothold—whether in Somalia or Yemen or elsewhere—they must be confronted by growing pressure and strong partnerships.”

The CIA sent top operatives to Yemen last year and Washington is set to more than double its military aid there over the next year and a half.

The London *Daily Telegraph* reported December 13 that according to U.S. officials, Washington had dispatched Special Forces to Yemen to “improve training” of Yemeni troops in a joint campaign against al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.

Then, on orders from Obama, the U.S. military launched missile attacks December 17 against two al-



Reuters/Stringer

December 19 demonstration in southern Yemeni town of Radfan against military strikes by U.S. and Yemeni government forces that killed some 120 people two days earlier.

leged al-Qaeda bases in an area north of Sanaa, Yemen’s capital, and in the village of al-Maajala in the southern province of Abyan. The strikes were coordinated with ground assaults by Yemeni troops to prevent survivors from escaping. Some 120 people, most of them civilians, were reportedly killed in the assault.

Forty-nine civilians, “including 23 children and 17 women” were killed

in al-Maajala alone, according to a local official quoted on Iran’s Press TV. “Al-Qaeda has chosen to build its training center on land where Bedouin nomads pitch their tents and the government forces believe the nomads harbor al-Qaeda forces,” a leader of the Al-Kazam tribe said.

People in Abyan marched with flags of the former People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen) in a protest against the assault a few days later. A month earlier, in nearby Shabwa province, Yemeni forces killed five people in a demonstration backing the former south Yemeni state.

A second U.S.-backed Yemeni air and ground assault was conducted December 24 in Shabwa, a day before the failed bombing of the Northwest Airlines Detroit-bound airplane. The assault reportedly killed dozens of al-Qaeda members, including some leaders.

Washington and Sanaa are looking for another target in Yemen in preparation for a possible strike in retaliation for the attempted suicide bombing, U.S. officials told CNN January 11. The two governments have signed a military cooperation agreement, CNN reports, that allows the U.S. military to fly cruise missiles, fighter jets, and aerial drones in the country, but does not include use of U.S. ground forces.

Under the pact, Washington is to remain publicly silent about its operations and military aid there. The U.S. government has not officially divulged that it has conducted any strikes. However, U.S. officials told CNN that the Yemeni military could not have carried out the assaults without help.

Sanaa is wary of public knowledge about U.S. operations in the country given widespread anti-American sentiment that exists throughout Yemen. “Any intervention or direct action could strengthen” al-Qaeda, Rashed al-Aleemi, deputy prime minister, told a press conference January 7. “All we need from the United States is training and providing weapons.”

With a Shiite insurgency in the north and a resurgent separatist movement in the south, Sanaa has many enemies at home and is increasingly dependent on military help from Washington and the regime in Saudi Arabia.

The northern-dominated government relies on backing from a reactionary Islamist movement, which supplied U.S.-backed Mujahideen

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## Drive aims to spread ‘Militant’ and new book

Continued from front page

revolutionary conquest of state power by a politically class-conscious and organized vanguard of the working class—millions strong—is necessary. About why that new state power provides working people the mightiest weapon possible to wage the ongoing battle to end Black oppression and every form of exploitation and human degradation.”

The book will be of great interest to the more than 2,000 people who subscribed to the *Militant* last fall. Many were attracted to the paper’s coverage and analysis of the ongoing historical crisis of capitalism and its impact on the working class.

It was during the fall effort that socialist workers saw a new openness from coworkers—and from other working people and students—to the *Militant* and the perspective of proletarian revolution as the answer to the dictatorship of capital and its devastating consequence for the toilers worldwide.

*Militant* supporters are taking quotas for the renewal campaign and will be adopting ambitious goals for sales of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* between now and June. The renewal campaign will be

followed by a spring circulation drive, which will also be combined with sales of the book. These efforts will build on the results of the fall campaign.

Anyone purchasing a *Militant* subscription or a renewal can buy *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* for \$10—that is 50 percent off the cover price. Others can also purchase the book for \$10 in combination with one or more specially discounted titles: *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*, for \$5 (a \$5 discount); *Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?* for \$4 (a \$3 discount); or *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning* for \$2 (a \$1 discount). These special offers are good through June 1.

Sales in working-class districts that are predominantly Black will be at the center of this campaign. While knocking on doors and setting up street tables in Black communities last fall, *Militant* supporters met workers who pre-ordered the book for \$10 along with a subscription. With the book now in hand, follow-up discussions with these and other subscribers from the fall will be a top priority.

At the Dakota Premium Foods plant in South St. Paul, Minnesota, 30 work-

ers subscribed to the paper last fall. *Militant* supporters there have adopted an initial goal of selling 10 renewals and five copies of the new book, in addition to winning new subscribers. “We already have three renewals,” reports Frank Forrester, in describing the potential to use the *Militant* to introduce coworkers to the new book now that it’s available. “One worker from Burma sent his renewal in on his own. The other two long-term subscriptions were sold to a Black worker and a coworker from Palau.”

Distributing the *Militant*’s special supplement containing the introduction to the new book in English and Spanish will be an important part of this campaign. Along with getting back to current subscribers, *Militant* supporters will be reaching out to potential new readers, getting the supplement in their hands, and following up after they’ve read it with further discussions about the importance of purchasing the book.

Over the next several weeks, beginning with this issue, the *Militant* will be featuring excerpts from the book.

The Spanish edition of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* will be available in mid-March.

## Special offer on Pathfinder books

Get any of these revolutionary books at a discounted price when you purchase a copy of the new book **Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power** for only \$10.



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## ON THE PICKET LINE

### 1,000 join march against hotel health-care cuts

SAN FRANCISCO, January 5—“It’s about health benefits. That’s why we are here,” said Carlos Perez, one of over 1,000 hotel workers and supporters who marched through this city’s downtown area today. The workers, members of UNITE HERE Local 2, oppose the hotel owners’ demand for increased health-care payments.

The workers are also fighting job combinations. “They laid off a bus person and a receptionist, expecting others to cover their jobs,” said Perez, a banquet server at the Holiday Inn. “At the same time, they are cutting hours.”

Since the contract expired in August, the union has organized three-day walkouts at Grand Hyatt, St. Francis, and the Palace hotels. Despite high profits, hotel owners are pleading poverty.

The march ended with a sit-in at the Hilton Hotel that is demanding a 25 percent pay cut for new hires. A Local 2 press release notes that the Blackstone Group, which owns Hilton Hotels, announced that it has \$12.6 billion in available capital. It paid its CEO \$1.39 billion in 2008.

—Betsey Stone

### Georgia Tech bus drivers protest union busting

ATLANTA—More than 100 people rallied January 4 at the Georgia Insti-

tute of Technology bus lot at 6:00 a.m. in below freezing weather to show solidarity for 40 Teamster bus drivers who were told one week before Christmas they were being permanently replaced by nonunion workers.

In 2008 the bus drivers, who worked for First Transit Inc., became the first unionized workers in the history of Georgia Tech. They won a wage raise and job security protections, according to Ben Speight, an organizer for Teamsters Local 728.

In December, Georgia Tech awarded the bus contract to Groome Transportation, which refused to hire the union drivers.

“These people had seen many previous contractors come and go from the Georgia Tech campus,” said Speight. “What’s unethical is that Groome is not hiring these drivers who’ve shown such dedicated commitment to the campus and student body.”

On January 11, the first day of classes, about 40 students and unionists rallied and distributed leaflets seeking support for the replaced union workers at Georgia Tech University.

—Asha Ramachandra

### Janitors strike for better pay at Boston airport

More than 100 workers who clean planes for Delta and United Airlines at Logan International Airport in Boston walked off the job for 24 hours December 31.



Militant/Betsey Stone

Janitors, grocery workers, construction workers, teachers, nurses, and university students joined union hotel workers January 5 at march in San Francisco of more than 1,000.

The workers chanted their demands in English and Spanish at the picket line during the strike. The Massachusetts Port Authority told the press this was the first strike at the airport in more than 10 years.

The workers were demanding that

Aramark Corp., which hires the janitors, agree to substantial pay increases. The janitors, members of Service Employees International Union Local 615, earn between \$8 and \$9 an hour with few benefits.

—Seth Galinsky

## Health-care ‘reform’ legislation

### Continued from front page

ate December 24 is similar to one approved by the House in November. It includes a mandate that would force most people in the United States to buy health insurance or pay a fine. The bill sets a \$95 per uninsured person fine in 2014; \$350 in 2015; and \$750 or 2 percent of a household’s income, whichever is greater, in 2016 and beyond. Some federal subsidies to buy insurance would be provided to those with income up to four times the official poverty level.

The mandate would give windfall profits to insurance companies, which would collect on an estimated 31 million additional people obligated to buy plans over the next 10 years.

Proponents of the bill claim that 14 million people would be added to Medicaid rolls, a government-run health insurance program for those with low income. But the “reform” proposals project major cuts to Medicaid and to Medicare, the government-run medical program for those 65 and older. These programs were won by working people in 1965 as a result of the mass, working-

class-led struggles for Black rights in the 1950s and ’60s. The two programs were an extension of the social wage won in the 1930s during the upsurge of the labor movement.

The Senate bill cuts \$483 billion from the costs of Medicare and other federal programs over 10 years, including \$118 billion in federal subsidies to privately offered Medicare Advantage plans.

The Senate bill also limits a woman’s right to choose abortion. Those who receive federal subsidies to pay for health insurance would have to make separate payments: one for abortion coverage and another for the rest of the insurance. The House version of the bill outright bans those who receive subsidies from choosing a health plan that covers abortion.

Both the House and Senate bills prohibit undocumented immigrant workers from receiving federal subsidies to pay for insurance. The Senate bill would also prevent undocumented workers from purchasing coverage offered through state-run insurance marketplaces.

### Hospitals cut back on services

As the capitalist crisis takes its toll, both private and government-run hospitals are cutting back on services.

Recently, Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami cut off kidney dialysis treatment to some 175 patients who cannot afford insurance.

In October, Grady Memorial Hospital in Atlanta shut down its dialysis clinic, affecting more than 60 undocumented immigrant workers who depend on its services for survival. Hospital officials offered to ship the patients off to their countries of origin or other states, and to pay for just three more months of dialysis at a private clinic.

Three former Grady dialysis patients have died since the clinic’s closing, though a hospital spokesman told the *New York Times* none were the result of insufficient dialysis.

In Pennsylvania at least seven hospitals and medical centers closed in 2009. Fifteen acute-care hospitals have closed in New Jersey since 1997.

In Queens, a borough of New York City, 3,000 workers were laid off when two major hospitals declared bankruptcy and closed in March 2009.



Militant/Jacob Perasso

Bus drivers protest January 4 at Georgia Tech after new contractor fired union members

## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



### January 25, 1985

TIPITAPA-MALACATOYA, Nicaragua—In front of a huge sign reading “July victory, people’s victory, symbol of Cuba-Nicaragua friendship,” a new sugar mill was inaugurated here January 11. Called the “Victoria de Julio” (July victory) mill, the refinery is the largest in all of Central America and the largest single industrial plant in Nicaragua. It was built with extensive aid from Cuba.

Present at the inauguration ceremonies was Cuban president Fidel Castro, who gave a two and a half hour speech. He announced that Cuba is cancelling the \$73.8 million debt owed by Nicaragua. Castro said Cuba is canceling the debt because of the hundreds of millions of dollars of damage Nicaragua has suffered as a result of the war Washington is waging against the Nicaraguan people.



### January 25, 1960

The flareup of anti-Semitic vandalism sparked by neo-Nazis in West Germany has intensified popular pressure in that country for the ouster of Nazis from the Adenauer regime. Meanwhile there have been two new cases of police reprisals against antifascist demonstrators.

In West Berlin police clashed yesterday with students demanding the removal of Nazis from government. In Hamburg, mounted police attacked antifascists who broke up a meeting of the neo-Nazi German Reichs party. Thirty anti-Nazis were arrested on charges of disturbing the peace.

During the West Berlin demonstration, students raised black posters bearing the names of two federal ministers, two lesser officials, and Chancellor Adenauer’s state secretary. All were ranking Nazis.



### January 26, 1935

Did anyone ever believe that the NRA codes would increase the purchasing power of wage earners and redistribute the national income?

First, the Bureau of Labor Statistics study on wages. In August 1933, when the code took effect, half the cotton textile workers earned less than 21.8 cents per hour. In August 1934, on the eve of the great strike, the median hourly wage rate was 34.9 cents.

But wait—between August 1933 and August 1934 living costs skyrocketed—because of the drought, because of the A.A.A. processing taxes, because the NRA codes permit cartelized price-fixing and production control.

The result? In that one year, real wages—purchasing power—in the cotton industry, in the north fell away 15 percent; in the south 25 percent.

# ‘Malcolm X always spoke the truth

## Excerpt from new book explains impact Malcolm had on millions



Wide World Photos

“Malcolm X was the leader of the struggle for Black liberation,” Barnes said in his 1965 memorial speech. “But he was also the teacher, inspirer, and leader of a much smaller group, the revolutionary socialist youth in America. He was to us the face and the authentic voice of the forces of the coming revolution.” Above, Malcolm addressing Harlem rally, June 1963.

Printed below is an excerpt from the new book by Pathfinder Press, *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*. Over the coming weeks the *Militant* will run selections from it, as we urge our readers to pick up a copy and join in the campaign to get the book into the hands of working people, youth, and others fighting against all forms of oppression and exploitation.

This selection is from the speech “He Spoke the Truth to Our Generation of Revolutionists: In Tribute to Malcolm X,” a March 1965 talk by Jack Barnes, then national chairman of the Young Socialist Alliance, at a memorial meeting for Malcolm two weeks after his assassination.

Clifton DeBerry, the 1964 Socialist Workers Party candidate for president,

chaired the meeting. Also speaking were Malcolm’s secretary and close collaborator James Shabazz; Farrell Dobbs, national secretary of the SWP; and Robert DesVerney, a writer for the *Militant*. The meeting was organized by the SWP and Young Socialist Alliance.

Today Barnes is the national secretary of the SWP. Copyright © 2009 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



### BY JACK BARNES

I would like to speak tonight not only on behalf of the members of the Young Socialist Alliance, but also the young revolutionists in our movement around the world who would want to speak at a memorial for Malcolm X but who cannot be here. This is especially true of those in Africa, the Middle East, France, and England, who recently had a chance to meet, see, and hear Malcolm.

Malcolm was the leader of the struggle for Black liberation. He was, as stated at his funeral by Ossie Davis, our Black shining prince, the manhood of the Harlems of the world. To his people he first and foremost belongs.

But he was also the teacher, inspirer, and leader of a much smaller group, the revolutionary socialist youth in America. He was to us the face and the authentic voice of the forces of the coming American revolution. He spoke the truth to our generation of revolutionists.

What attracted revolutionary youth worldwide to Malcolm X? More important,

what often made youth who listened to him—including youth who are not Black—start down the road to becoming revolutionists? I think there were two things above all. First, he spoke the simple truth—unadorned, unvarnished, and uncompromising. Second was the evolution and content of Malcolm’s political thought.

Malcolm saw the depth of the hypocrisy and falsehood that cover the real social relations that make up American society. To him the key was not so much the lies that the ruling class and its spokesmen propagated, but the lies and the falsehoods about his people—their past and their potentialities—which they accepted.

Malcolm’s message to the ghetto, his agitation against racism, was a special kind. What he had to say and what he did stemmed from a study of the history of Afro-Americans. He explained that in order for Black Americans to know what to do, to discover who they really are—to know how to go about winning freedom—they had to first answer three questions: Where did you come from? How did you get here? Who is responsible for your condition?

Malcolm’s truth was so explosive because it stemmed from a careful study of how the Afro-American was enslaved. He publicized the facts that have been suppressed from standard history books and kept out of the schools. While in the Black Muslims and after he left, Malcolm taught that the process by which the Africans were made into slaves was one of dehumanizing them. Through barbarous cruelty, comparable to the worst Nazi concentration camps, they were taught to fear the white man. They were systematically stripped of their language, culture, history, names, religion, of all connections with their homes in Africa—of their identity. They were named *Negro*, signifying this lack of identity and this denial of their African origin.

Especially after their “emancipation,” the Christianity they were taught was the Christianity of meekness and submission and of their reward in heaven.

They were taught that Africa was a jungle where people lived in mud huts, and that the white man had done them a great favor in bringing them to America.

Malcolm asked the Black American: Who taught you to hate yourself? Does *he* hate himself? Who taught you to be a pacifist? Was *he* a pacifist? Who said Black people cannot defend themselves? Does *he* defend himself? Who taught you not to go too far and too fast in your fight for freedom? Did *he* stand to lose something by the speed of your victory? Who taught you to vote for the fox in order to escape from the wolf? What does the fox give you in return? . . .

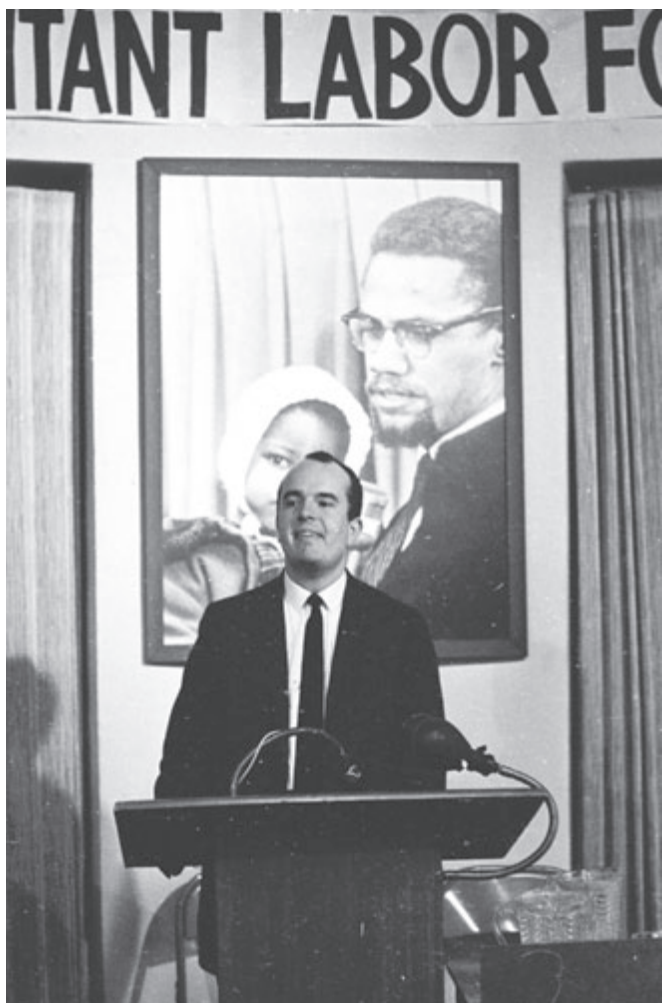
Malcolm’s political thought was the other important factor in the development of those who were taught by him. First, he believed in and explained the need for Afro-American unity in action. He felt it was necessary to base your alliances on that unity, and reject unconditionally any degrading or compromising alliances. It is only upon the basis of this unity, and the dignity and self-respect that goes along with it, that the battle for freedom can be waged. Those who would bypass this step would condemn Black Americans to be a tail to the kite of other, more conservative forces.

“We cannot think of uniting with others until after we have first united among ourselves. We cannot think of being acceptable to others until we have first proven acceptable to ourselves. One can’t unite bananas with scattered leaves.”<sup>1</sup> Malcolm knew that Afro-Americans had had enough of this kind of unity—with the liberals, the Communist Party, and the Socialist Party.

Secondly, he spoke of self-defense, and the real source of violence. He continually pointed out that the source of violence was the oppressor, not the oppressed. He continually pointed to the use of violence by the oppressor. Out of one side of its mouth the government and press preach pacifism to the American Negro, while out of the other side comes the cold announcement that they will destroy as many North Vietnamese as they wish. Malcolm never tired of pointing out the hypocrisy of this form of pacifism, its ineffectuality, and its degrading and belittling character.

Malcolm told us ten months ago, at the first Militant Labor Forum at which he spoke, that “if George Washington didn’t get independence for this country nonviolently, and if Patrick Henry didn’t come up with a nonviolent statement, and you taught me to look upon them as patriots and heroes, then it’s time for you to realize that I have studied your books well. . . . No white person would go about fighting for freedom in the same manner that he has helped me and you to fight for our freedom. No, none of them would. When it comes to Black freedom, then the white man freedom-rides and sits in, he’s nonviolent, he sings ‘We Shall Overcome,’ and all that stuff. But when the property of the white man is threatened, or the freedom of the white man is threatened, he’s not nonviolent.”<sup>2</sup>

Thirdly, unlike any other Black lead-



Militant

Then national chairman of Young Socialist Alliance, Jack Barnes speaks at memorial meeting for Malcolm X hosted by Militant Labor Forum in March 1965.

1. “A Declaration of Independence” (March 12, 1964), in *Malcolm X Speaks* (Pathfinder, 1965, 1989), p. 34, [2009 printing].

# to our generation of revolutionists’

## ns of working people and youth fighting racism, exploitation

er, and unlike any other mass leader in my lifetime, he continually exposed the real role of the Democratic Party, and pointed out what a mistake it was to believe the federal government of this country would free Afro-Americans. He said, “The Democrats get Negro support, yet the Negroes get nothing in return. The Negroes put the Democrats first, yet the Democrats put the Negroes last. And the alibi that the Democrats use—they blame the Dixiecrats. A Dixiecrat is nothing but a Democrat in disguise. . . . Because Dixie in reality means all that territory south of the Canadian border.”<sup>3</sup>

Rather than simply direct his fire at the puppets, Malcolm X always sought to expose those who were *really* responsible for maintaining the racism of this society. When New York Police Commissioner [Michael] Murphy attacked him and others as “irresponsible,” Malcolm responded that Murphy was only doing his job. Mayor [Robert] Wagner, Murphy’s boss, was the one responsible for the charge, he said.

Malcolm never tired of explaining and demonstrating that it was the federal government currently headed by President [Lyndon] Johnson, a Democrat, that was responsible for maintaining racism in the North and South. In doing this, he showed the continuity between the inhuman treatment of Negroes and the responsibility for the condition of Black people borne by those who run this society today. As one of his comrades, Brother Benjamin [Karim], pointed out at a recent meeting of the Organization of Afro-American Unity, the North is responsible for the racism in the South, because “they won the Civil War.”

It was in talking about the Democratic Party that another aspect of Malcolm came clearly to the fore. This was his ability to translate the complex and important ideas which he developed and absorbed into the language of those he knew would change the world. The ability to speak clearly to the oppressed has been a unique genius of all great revolutionary leaders in history.

The *Militant* reported that Malcolm, at his press conference in Harlem following his return from Africa eight months ago, spoke of President Johnson as being hypocritical. He pointed out that LBJ’s closest friend in the Senate, Richard Russell, was leading the fight against the civil rights bill. Malcolm was challenged by a reporter who doubted that Johnson’s friendship with Russell proved anything. Malcolm looked at him with his usual smile and said, off the cuff, “If you tell me you’re against robbing banks and your best friend is Jesse James, I have grounds to doubt your sincerity.”<sup>4</sup> . . .

Though Malcolm X came from the American ghetto, spoke for the American ghetto, and directed his message to the American ghetto first of all, he became a figure of world importance, and developed his ideas in relation to the great events of world history in his time.

If Malcolm X is to be compared with any international figure, the most striking parallel is with Fidel Castro. Both of them belong to the generation that was shaped ideologically under the twin circumstances of World War II and the monstrous betrayals and defaults of Stalinized Communist parties. These men found their way independently to the revolutionary struggle, bypassing both Social Democracy and Stalinism.

Each started from the struggle of his own oppressed and exploited people for liberation. Each embraced the nationalism of his people as necessary to mobi-



Carl Nesfield

“If Malcolm X is to be compared with any international figure,” Barnes said, “the most striking parallel is with Fidel Castro.” Above, Malcolm welcomes Castro and Cuban UN delegation to Hotel Theresa in Harlem, New York City, Sept. 19, 1960.

lize them to struggle for their freedom. Each stressed the importance of the solidarity of the oppressed all over the world in their struggle against a common oppressor.

Fidel did not start out as a thoroughgoing Marxist or as a revolutionary socialist. Like Malcolm, he was determined to pursue the national liberation of his people by “whatever means necessary” and without any compromises with those with any stake in the status quo.

Fidel Castro’s dedication to political independence and to economic development for Cuba led him to opposition to capitalism. So, also, Malcolm’s uncompromising stand against racism brought him to identify with the revolutions of the colonial people who were turning against capitalism, and finally to conclude that the elimination of capitalism in this country was necessary for freedom. Just as Fidel Castro discovered that there can be no political independence and economic development in a colonial country without breaking from capitalism, so Malcolm had come to the conclusion that capitalism and racism were so entangled in the United States that you had to uproot the system in order to eliminate racism.

## N.Y. court tells cops to release racial data on shootings

BY DOUG NELSON

NEW YORK—The New York City police department (NYPD) was recently ordered to turn over data on the race of people shot at by cops between 1997 and 2006.

In October 2007, the New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU) filed a freedom of information request for police department figures on cop shootings over the previous 10 years. The NYPD responded with reports that excluded racial data.

After the NYCLU sued for this information, the NYPD agreed to turn over the figures but refused to disclose the race in incidents where officers shot but missed their target.

A New York State Supreme Court judge ruled December 15 that the NYPD had no legal basis to deny any aspect of the request and must give up all the racial data on those the cops shot at during the 10-year period.

“The records we’ve obtained thus far paint a troubling, but incomplete, picture,” Donna Lieberman, NYCLU executive director, stated.

Other figures compiled by the NYCLU show an increasing use of arbitrary, unconstitutional searches by the NYPD.

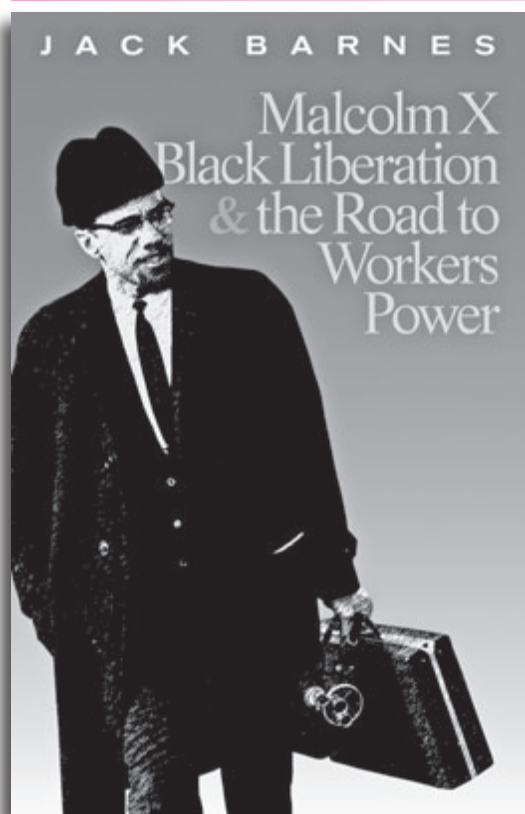
The number of stops on the street of people in New York City has steadily increased from 97,000 in 2002, to 531,000 in 2008. In about 90 percent of cases, cops find no reason to arrest those they stop.

On average, just over half of those stopped on the street in the city over the last half decade were Black, although the Black population is about 17 percent. Blacks in New York are statistically about eight times more likely to be stopped than whites. About 30 percent of those stopped were Latinos, who comprise a similar portion of the city’s population.

Among most common documented reasons for the stops were “area has a high crime incidence,” “furtive movements,” and “change direction at sight of officer.”

2. “Speech on Black Revolution” (April 8, 1964), in *Two Speeches by Malcolm X* (Pathfinder, 1965, 1987, 1990), p. 12 [2008 printing], and the question period from that speech in *Malcolm X, By Any Means Necessary* (Pathfinder, 1970, 1992), pp. 45–46 [2008 printing].
3. *Two Speeches by Malcolm X*, p. 21.
4. “Malcolm X Back from Africa—Urges Black United Front,” in the June 1, 1964, issue of the *Militant*.

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# Internationalist missions boost Cuban Revolution

*Printed below is an excerpt from Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution by Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui, and Moisés Sío Wong. In this book, the authors talk about the historic place of Chinese immigration to Cuba, and how the victory of the Cuban Revolution in 1959 transformed their lives and those of millions of working people in Cuba. The piece below is from the chapter on Cuba's internationalist mission to Angola. Between 1975 and 1991 more than 375,000 volunteers from Cuba responded to a request for solidarity from the government of Angola that helped beat back an invasion of that country by the South African apartheid regime's armed forces. Copyright © 2005 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.*

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

MARY-ALICE WATERS: How did the anti-imperialist struggle in Africa strengthen the Cuban Revolution?

CHOY: Well, it really strengthened us from an ideological standpoint. All of us who went had studied slavery, the exploitation of man by man, the exploitation of the countries in southern Africa. We had studied the evils



Juventud Rebelde/Pastor Batista; Inset, courtesy of Moisés Sío Wong  
**Cuban internationalist troops building road in Angola, 1988. Inset, Brig. Gen. Moisés Sío Wong, left, discussing military operation in Angola, 1976.**

that colonialism had wrought and was still creating. But we'd merely read about it in books.

In my own case—and I'm sure the same thing happened to other Cubans—I got there and could see with my own eyes what the colonial system really was. A complete differentiation between the whites, the Europeans—in this case the Portuguese—and the native population. We saw how these countries were exploited. We saw a country that was so rich, yet Angolans were living in what we saw as subhuman conditions. Because their country's riches were being stolen. Because the colonialists had not preserved the forests or the land.

Sometimes we'd be traveling in vehicles, and people walking along the road would run when they heard us coming. We learned why. Under Portuguese rule, if the native inhabitants didn't get out of the way, the colonialists would sometimes run them over. This went on for generations. So whenever they heard a vehicle coming, they'd run. And not just off to the shoulder of the road either. They ran because they'd been mistreated like this for years, for centuries.

The main lesson I learned from this mission was to fully appreciate colonialism's cruelty toward the native population, and the naked theft

of their natural resources. To see a country with great natural wealth like Angola, yet with a population facing needs of the most basic type!

That's why I say that knowing the truth strengthened us from an ideological standpoint. The same thing happens whenever we see how a layer of the population in capitalist countries lacks the most basic necessities. The first time I went to Madrid, for instance, it was December. It's cold there that time of year. In the Gran Vía, the main street of that large city, I saw people sleeping on the sidewalk near a heating vent, with bags and newspapers over them.

You read about things like that in books, and you believe they're true. But until you see them for yourself, you can't fully understand the reality Karl Marx wrote about. That, I believe, is one of the lessons we all learned from internationalist missions.

These are the same lessons our doctors have learned, our athletic trainers, and other specialists who go to many countries. This includes countries that have natural riches, yet suffer tremendous backwardness and have great contrasts. The resources aren't used to help the masses of the people. And such backwardness isn't only in Africa. It's in the Americas too.

Bolivia, for example, has many tin mines. It has oil and natural gas. Nonetheless, it's tremendously backward. Ecuador the same, even though it's one of the principal exporters of oil. There are permanent social problems, because much of the population lives in virtually subhuman conditions. Until you see these realities, you don't understand how deep the problem goes. You don't understand what the people need. Direct contact with these problems strengthens our understanding. Those missions made this understanding concrete. . . .

CHUI: As Choy was saying, this experience helped all of us develop politically and ideologically. But the biggest impact was among the soldiers. In Angola and other countries of Africa, they could fully grasp the illiteracy, the misery, the lack of education, the lack of sanitary conditions and health care—conditions that people continue to live under.

Let me tell you a story. One time we slaughtered a pig, and I told one of the Cuban soldiers to give a piece of the leg to the Angolans. The Angolans said no, they didn't want it. When we asked why, they said they wanted the viscera, the innards. That's what the colonial masters always used to give them, and they had developed a taste for it. They really didn't like anything else. They weren't used to it.

Our internationalist combatants observed what people in these countries lack, things we don't lack in Cuba. They learned, in general, a whole series of lessons, and acquired valuable experiences about the inequalities and injustices of today's world.

There are many in the world who denigrate our stance of helping the peoples of other countries who are fighting imperialist oppression. But within Cuba it enabled us to consolidate the political and ideological development of the young people who went to fight and to assist other peoples, who understood the justice of their cause and were later proud of their mission. You couldn't find a better example of this than the Five Heroes being held prisoner by the empire because of the internationalist mission they were carrying out to defend the people of Cuba against terrorist attacks. They are part of this generation, and three of them served in Angola.

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# Read, help distribute new book

We urge our readers to purchase, read, and study—and join the campaign to distribute—Pathfinder’s newly published book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*.

The book is essential for understanding that the dictatorship of capital that we live under today, with deepening attacks on workers’ standard of living, democratic rights, and expanding imperialist war moves, must be replaced by the dictatorship of the proletariat, where the working class led by a politically class-conscious vanguard—in the millions—takes state power and utilizes this mighty weapon to rid society of all forms of exploitation and human degradation.

It is something new in politics that a growing layer of workers are more open to a discussion of this revolutionary perspective. That is why the winter/spring propaganda campaign to sell subscriptions to the *Militant* can be a bridge to getting *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* into the hands of new and long-term readers of the paper.

The book describes the vanguard role played by workers who are Black in proletarian-led struggles

in the United States. It is about the last year of Malcolm X’s life and how he became one of the most outstanding revolutionary working-class leaders to emerge in the 20th century.

Distributing the special supplement published by the *Militant* that contains the book’s introduction, and follow-up discussions about it, will also boost sales of the book.

*Militant* subscribers can take advantage of the discounted price of \$10 to purchase the book. Those who haven’t yet decided to subscribe or renew their subscriptions can also get this offer if they purchase at specially reduced prices at least one of three other Pathfinder titles: *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution, Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?* and *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning*.

Join the campaign to distribute *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* at your workplace, in Black communities and other working-class areas, and on the campuses. And join with others interested in discussing the road forward that this book provides for workers and farmers in the fight against the dictatorship of capital.

## Millions of people in U.S. face evictions

Continued from page 3

“could position Fannie and Freddie to get more aggressive” in “taking troubled mortgage investments off banks’ books,” noted the Associated Press.

Such a move would bolster what the Federal Reserve has been doing for the banks. In a program projected through March 2010 the Fed is spending \$1.25 trillion to purchase banks’ mortgage-backed securities, many of which are nearly worthless or of questionable value.

Legislation passed by the House of Representa-

tives in December to supposedly regulate the financial system promises more of the same in huge bailouts for the largest banks. The bill “authorizes Federal Reserve banks to provide as much as \$4 trillion in emergency funding the next time Wall Street crashes,” reported Bloomberg News December 30. “That is more than twice what the Fed pumped into markets this time around.” Payments are guaranteed for the wealthy bondholders—the capitalist rulers—as the bill “allows the government, in a crisis, to back financial firms’ debts.”

## U.S. military deepens role in Yemen

Continued from page 4

fighters to the war in Afghanistan in the 1980s. These forces were welcomed as heroes on their return to Yemen and remain an integral part of the government and military apparatus.

Until recently Yemeni president Saleh has pursued a policy of deal-making with al-Qaeda as he sought help from Islamist forces against “domestic enemies of the state.” Hundreds of jailed al-Qaeda members were released on a pledge not to engage

in “terrorism,” according to the *Washington Post*.

Abu Bakr al-Qirbi, Yemen’s foreign minister, gave the *New York Times* the following explanation for why Sanaa recently went to war with al-Qaeda: “There was intelligence that they were targeting the British Embassy and a number of government institutions as well as private schools,” he said. “The second reason is that they have become more vocal, trying to show that they can undertake terrorist activities in an open fashion.”

## LETTERS

### Minneapolis janitors’ fight

One hundred fifty janitors and their supporters marched through downtown Minneapolis’s indoor skyways December 30 to oppose concessions demanded by the employers.

Service Employees International Union Local 26 represents more than 4,000 janitors who clean the majority of commercial buildings in the Twin Cities area. The union currently is bargaining on a new contract with cleaning contractors. Employers are insisting on the right to convert many full-time jobs to part-time and the right to increase the intensity of the work.

One worker told me that in the building he cleans the bosses have increased the workload by 20 percent, after firing 1,200 janitors last year, allegedly for having inadequate work papers.

Tom Fiske

Minneapolis, Minnesota

*We received the following letter of appreciation for Mo Geary, who was a member of the Socialist Workers Party from the late 1970s to the late 1990s.*

### Mo Geary

Maurice “Mo” Geary, a member of the SWP for some 20 years, died December 29 at the age of 88 in Ferndale, Michigan. Mo, a former Catholic priest, joined the Detroit SWP branch in the late 1970s, when he was in

his late 50s.

Mo had been very active in the civil rights movement, including going to Selma, Alabama, to join protests there. He officiated at the funeral of Viola Liuzzo, the Detroit woman who was killed by the Ku Klux Klan in Selma in 1965 following a civil rights march.

Mo’s history of political integrity helped him win countless endorsements and contributions to SWP defense campaigns. He championed the *Militant* and was usually among the top sub sellers in the Detroit branch during circulation drives.

Gary Boyers

Hamtramck, Michigan

**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.**

## Quake in Haiti

Continued from front page

tors have already set up field hospitals and are treating hundreds of injured Haitians. Prior to the disaster, the mayor of Port-au-Prince estimated that 60 percent of the buildings were poorly constructed and unsafe even in normal conditions. Many homes, public buildings, schools, and at least one major hospital collapsed during the earthquake. The pervasive lack of medical care and necessities like clean drinking water and electricity needed to power hospitals means that those who survived the initial shock are not yet out of danger.

A Voice of America article today blamed these conditions on the Haitian people, saying, “Years of political violence, corruption, deforestation, crime and natural disasters have severely hindered its development efforts.”

The article covered up the record of U.S., French, and other imperialist plunder of Haiti. It was a French colony until Black slaves overthrew their colonizers in 1804. Washington and Paris have continued to dominate and exploit the island. For 29 years the U.S.-backed Duvalier family, who killed tens of thousands of political opponents, ruled Haiti. A popular uprising ousted the Duvaliers in 1986 but the country has remained wracked by poverty and political instability. In 2004 Washington helped force elected president Jean-Bertrand Aristide into exile, replacing him with a government more to Washington and Paris’s liking. There are 9,000 UN troops in Haiti.

A tiny minority—1 percent of the Haitian population—owns nearly half the wealth produced. Haiti imports four times as many goods as it exports. Some two-thirds of the population lack full-time jobs. There were only 20,000 factory assembly jobs as of 2006.

Shortly after the quake January 12, U.S. president Barack Obama issued a curt, two-sentence statement that “we stand ready to assist the people of Haiti.” His office said, “The President asked his staff to make sure that embassy personnel are safe, and to begin preparations in the event that humanitarian assistance is needed.”

The next morning Obama read a four-minute statement to the press. Describing the images from Haiti as “truly heart-wrenching,” he said, “Our efforts are focused on several urgent priorities. First we’re working quickly to account for U.S. embassy personnel and their families in Port-au-Prince. . . . Second, we’ve mobilized resources to help rescue efforts.” He said search-and-rescue teams from three states were being dispatched. The U.S. Southern Command subsequently said it was sending 30 military personnel to “assess the situation,” Air Force troops to provide air traffic control at the main airport, and several Navy ships.

In contrast, Cuban doctors already stationed in Haiti went to work immediately to treat victims of the quake. There are 344 medical personnel from Cuba serving in Haiti on voluntary internationalist missions. Cuban foreign minister Bruno Rodríguez reported in Havana that they had established two field hospitals and had already treated 676 injured Haitians by the morning of January 13, reported *Juventud Rebelde*.

National television news in Cuba said an additional brigade of doctors, plus food and medical supplies, will be sent. Cuba’s Latin American School of Medicine has also trained 551 Haitians to become doctors in recent years at no charge.

At the same time Cuban doctors mobilized in Haiti, the Cuban government yesterday evacuated 30,000 people from their homes in Baracoa, Cuba, after a tsunami alert was issued due to the earthquake in Haiti. The Cubans were moved to higher territory where they would be safe in less than an hour by teams composed of Civil Defense volunteers, members of mass organizations, soldiers, and police. They returned to their homes in the early evening when the threat had subsided.

In Venezuela, Foreign Minister Nicolás Maduro announced that 50 experts in disaster response left for Haiti early in the morning of January 13.

The response of capitalist “disaster relief” organizations, meanwhile, was similar to the indifference of the Obama administration, given the scale of the damage. CARE said it is sending Haiti \$145,000 in relief and the American Red Cross is promising \$500,000.

*Emily Paul in Miami and Róger Calero in New York contributed to this article.*