

THE MILITANT

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**Evolution of Malcolm X's
 views on women**
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VOL. 74/NO. 18 MAY 10, 2010

Oil rig blast highlights BP's unsafe track record

BY JACQUIE HENDERSON

HOUSTON, April 26—Eleven workers are still missing from the explosion that occurred April 20 at the Deepwater Horizon oil platform off the coast of Louisiana. The U.S. Coast Guard called off its search for them three days after the blast.

The rig is owned by Transocean, the world's largest offshore drilling contractor, and leased to the London-based oil giant British Petroleum (BP).

The platform burned for 36 hours before a second explosion sank it. The well could be spilling up to 336,000 gallons of crude oil a day into the Gulf of Mexico, U.S. Coast Guard petty officer Katherine McNamara told the press. Of the 126 workers on the platform, 115 escaped, at least four of whom were critically injured.

Lawsuits have been filed against the company for negligence on behalf of two of the missing workers.

Since 2001 the federal Minerals Management Service (MMS) has counted 69 offshore oil rig deaths, 1,349 injuries, and 858 fires and explosions in the Gulf alone. More than 500 fires occurred since 2006.

Deepwater drilling has been expanding, as shallow wells have begun

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Arizona protests hit anti-immigrant law

High school students lead walkouts



AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin

Hundreds of students in Phoenix protest new law against undocumented workers April 23

BY ELLIE GARCÍA

PHOENIX—More than 1,000 high school and middle school students walked out of classes here April 22 demanding Gov. Janice Brewer veto Senate Bill 1070. However, she signed

the anti-immigrant bill into law the following day.

More than 3,000 people marched on the state Capitol April 25 to protest the law, which takes effect in late July or early August. There have been daily protests here against the bill before and after it was passed.

The legislation makes it a crime under state law to be in the United States “illegally.” First time violations of the law are punishable by up to six months and a fine of up to \$2,500. A second arrest would be a felony.

Police are instructed to “make a reasonable attempt” to determine people’s immigration status if there is “reasonable suspicion” that they are undocumented. Knowingly transporting or attempting to “conceal, harbor, or shield” an “alien” is a criminal of-

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Nearly 1,400 ‘Workers Power’ books distributed

BY CINDY JAQUITH

Heading into the May 1 immigrant rights rallies we had sold 1,380 copies of the book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by Jack Barnes, along with 1,407 *Militant* subscriptions. This puts us in good position to take a big step forward in the next week.

Supporters in Los Angeles sold 32

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Deaths and commandos double in Afghanistan

BY DOUG NELSON

April 24—The tempo of Washington’s war in Afghanistan has accelerated in recent months. The number of U.S. special forces has more than doubled, as has the number of civilian deaths at the hands of U.S.-led troops.

A *Los Angeles Times* article said that the United States Special Operations Command (USSOC) now has 5,800 elite soldiers training and carrying out joint missions with Afghan troops. But the real size of the Joint Special Operations Command, a component of US-SOC, “is a highly classified secret,” the *Times* noted.

The recent expansion is part of a shift in the U.S. military that goes back to the conduct of the Iraq and Afghan wars under the George W. Bush administration, placing greater emphasis and reliance on special forces.

Special forces, which operate clandestinely, account for at least half of all missions being carried out in Afghanistan, the *Times* reported. In preparation for a major summer offensive in Afghanistan’s southeastern Kandahar Province, these elite forces and CIA operatives have reportedly been capturing and assassinating suspected Taliban leaders throughout the area.

Gen. Stanley McChystal, top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, has issued stricter guidelines on night raids, air strikes, and other rules of engagement. Commanders say the directives are aimed at reducing civilian casualties as part of an effort to “win hearts and minds” of Afghanis.

However, stepped-up offensive operations have killed more civilians. According to their own figures, U.S.-led NATO forces killed 72 civilians in the first three months of this year. The figure for the same period last year was 29.

A NATO troop convoy opened fire on a vehicle on its way home from a volleyball game April 19, killing four—a 12-year-old boy, a police officer, and two shopkeepers. NATO officials ini-

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90,000 protest U.S. base in Okinawa



Kyodo

More than 90,000 people rallied April 25 on Japan’s southern island of Okinawa, demanding removal of the U.S. Marine Futenma air base there. The demonstrators called for scrapping a 2006 agreement between Washington and Tokyo to move U.S. military operations from the base, located in a densely populated urban area of Okinawa, to a new base to be constructed by 2014 in a rural coastal area of the island. More than half of the 47,000 U.S. troops stationed in Japan are on Okinawa.

—BRIAN WILLIAMS

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Union power is needed for safety in the mines	5
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‘Guest worker’ program bolsters capitalist profits

BY SETH GALINSKY

The blueprint for so-called immigration reform promoted by senators Charles Schumer and Lindsey Graham has three key points: a national ID card for all U.S. workers; increased policing of the U.S.-Mexico border; and an expanded “guest worker” program. It also holds out the carrot of a “road to legalization” for some undocumented workers, but not others.

The “guest worker” program exposes what is at the heart of both the Democratic and Republican parties’ immigration policies: guaranteeing a superexploited layer of workers to bolster capitalist profits.

The best-known project to bring in immigrants as temporary workers was the 1942–64 *bracero* program instituted by the U.S. and Mexican governments. At its peak more than 400,000 Mexican workers a year harvested produce and cotton in the United States.

The Mexican workers were often put up in derelict housing and many worked 12 hours a day or more. Those who received medical care were frequently treated by veterinarians instead of doctors.

Under the agreement 10 percent of the farm workers’ pay was deducted, ostensibly to deposit into a bank for pensions after their return to Mexico. But the money was never paid out. In 2005 the Mexican government agreed to pay \$3,800 each to ex-bracero, or their descendant, who could prove they worked in the United States during World War II.

After the bracero program ended,

U.S. capitalists continued to recruit temporary workers from many countries under the H-2 visa program. Of the 121,000 H-2 visas issued in 2005, most were to workers from Mexico, Jamaica, and Guatemala.

Workers with H-2 visas have a few more tenuous rights than undocumented workers. The visas can be renewed for a maximum of three years, but are tied to a specific employer. If workers are fired, laid off, quit, or go on strike their papers are invalid and they can be deported.

Bosses use the visa process to blacklist those they consider troublemakers. Among the reasons bosses have placed workers on a “Ineligible for Rehire Report,” are “slowing up other workers,” being “lazy,” and abandoning a job because of “death in the family.”

On Nov. 21, 1986, more than 300 cane cutters from Jamaica and other Caribbean islands working on a Fanjul family sugar plantation in Florida went on strike because the company was paying them less than agreed to. The company called in the cops, who used guns and dogs to remove the “guest” workers from the company labor camp and had them deported.

In 2006, 500 metalworkers from India started repairing oil rigs for Signal In-



New Orleans Workers’ Center for Racial Justice

“Guest workers” from India protest in New Orleans March 2008 against false promises and work conditions repairing oil rigs for Signal International in Louisiana.

ternational in Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina under the H-2 program. When they complained that they had been misled about the work conditions and the opportunity to become permanent U.S. residents, the company threatened to fire them and have them deported.

Signal International sought “guidance” from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) on how to fire the “chronic whiners.” In testimony this year responding to a federal lawsuit filed by the workers in 2008, Signal CEO Ronald Schnoor said that an ICE agent told him: “Take them all out of the line on the way to work; get their personal

belongings. Get them in a van and get their tickets and get them to the airport and send them back to India.”

On March 9, 2007, Signal tried to carry out the ICE advice and put several workers into vans, but immigrant rights advocates found out and blocked the shipyard gates. In 2008 workers held a 29-day hunger strike to win support for their fight. The case is still in court.

Immigration “reform” proposals from Schumer-Graham to a bill proposed by Congressman Luis Gutiérrez, include guest worker programs that would guarantee this reserve army of labor for U.S. corporations.

Rightists target interracial couple in Nova Scotia

BY BEVERLY BERNARDO

MONTREAL—Michelle Lyon and Shayne Howe, an interracial couple in Polar Grove, Nova Scotia, found their car in flames at 2:00 a.m. April 17. The torching left their car a charred shell.

This is the second attack on the couple in the last two months. In February a cross, with a noose hanging from it, was burned on their lawn. Howe, the only Black in Poplar Grove, and Lyon, who is white, woke up that February morning to shouts of “Die, nigger, die,” they told the *Toronto Globe and Mail*.

Police have charged Justin Rehberg, 19, and Nathan Rehberg, 20, with public incitement of hatred, criminal harassment, uttering threats, and mischief for the cross-burning. On April 19, Justin Rehberg pleaded not guilty; his trial is set for October 18.

The settlement of Blacks in Nova Scotia began in 1783. Some U.S. Blacks took up arms with the British during the war for U.S. independence because of a British promise of emancipation. After its defeat the British army brought 3,000

of these Blacks to Nova Scotia.

There is a long history of racist treatment of Blacks in Nova Scotia. In February the mayor of Halifax apologized for the destruction in the 1960s of Africville, a Black community on the city’s north end, in the name of “urban renewal.” As Mayor Peter Kelly promised \$3 million to build a replica church, some Blacks in the crowd yelled “Give it back,” “Compensation!” and “You forgot the people!”

On April 15, the province issued a rare free pardon to Viola Desmond, who was arrested in 1946 for sitting in the “whites only” section of a New Glasgow movie theater. Desmond was convicted of defrauding the province of the extra penny it cost to sit in the “whites-only” section and spent 12 hours in jail. She died 45 years ago.

THE MILITANT

Immigrant rights is key for working class

In the midst of the capitalist economic crisis, the bosses and their government are stepping up attacks on undocumented immigrants. The ‘Militant’ explains why this is an attack on the entire working class and reports on the fight for legalization.



Militant/Scott Breen
March in Seattle April 10

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Communists speak out in UK election debates

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON—"There is no economic recovery for working people," said Paul Davies, Communist League candidate for Parliament in the London constituency of Hackney South and Shoreditch.

Davies, a factory worker, was responding to claims by Meg Hillier, the Home Office minister and sitting Labour member of Parliament, that the issue in the UK general election is how to protect the "fragile recovery" and "Britain's place in the world and in Europe." The exchange took place at an April 20 elections hustings, or debate, attended by 100 people at the Rose Lipman Community Centre. Also on the platform with Davies were candidates from the Conservative, Liberal Democrat, Green, and the UK Independence parties.

The refrain of the three main capitalist parties in this election—Labour, Conservative, and Liberal Democrat—has been "our country." It is not "our country," Davies countered. "When the capitalist politicians speak of the 'national interest' they're trying to draw working people into support for the rulers' interests. Working people have no country. We have to think in terms of our class interests and act accordingly."

A parallel debate was taking place at the same time 400 miles to the north, in Edinburgh, Scotland. Called by the Church of Scotland, the city-wide meeting centered on the theme of child poverty and inequality.

"Today, world capitalism has entered the deepest social and economic crisis in living memory," said Communist League parliamentary candidate for Edinburgh South West, Caroline Bellamy, who opened the debate. "Whoever wins the election, Britain's wealthy ruling class is on a course to make the working majority pay for the crisis, both at home and abroad." The platform of the Edinburgh meeting also included candidates from the Labour Party, Conservative Party, Scottish National Party, Scottish Socialist Party, and the Green Party.

Figures issued earlier in the day by the Office of National Statistics reported a rise in unemployment to 2.5 million, the highest figure in more than 15 years.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CALIFORNIA

San Francisco

Immediate Legalization of All Immigrants—A Life-and-Death Question for the Entire Working Class. Panel of participants in May Day actions in Phoenix, Arizona, and Northern California. Fri., May 7. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 5482 Mission St. Tel.: (415) 584-2135.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

The Fight to Legalize All Immigrants. Panel: Walter Sinche, president, Alianza Ecuatoriana Internacional; José Pérez, Queens Street Vendors; representative, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., May 7. 8 p.m. 307 W. 36 St., 10th Fl. (use north elevators). Tel.: (212) 736-2540.

WASHINGTON

Seattle

Militant Fund Meeting: Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power. Speaker: James Harris, Socialist Workers Party. Sun., May 9. Dinner 1 p.m.; program 2:30 p.m. 5418 Rainier Ave S. Tel.: (206) 323-1755.

The number of people classed as "economically inactive" because they are ill, studying, or looking after children, also rose to a record high of 8.16 million.

Youth unemployment has soared to just under 1 million for 18 to 24-year-olds despite a number of government training schemes designed to hide it. The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development said that no matter which party wins the election, 600,000 jobs will be cut in the public sector over the next five years according to plans already announced by the main capitalist parties.

To combat unemployment, the Scottish National Party's Calum Cashley called for "growing the economy" and allowing small businesses to thrive. Rosemary Burnett of the Green Party recommended reducing taxes on small firms, investing in "green jobs," and allowing benefit claimants to work. Colin Fox of the Scottish Socialist Party called for cutting defense spending by not renewing the Trident nuclear weapons system and ending the war in Afghanistan.

Looking to benevolent measures by a capitalist government is not the solu-



Militant/Andrés Mendoza

At left, Caroline Bellamy, Communist League parliamentary candidate for Edinburgh South West, speaks at citywide election debate. To her left, Rosemary Burnett, Scottish Green Party; William Hewitt, moderator of General Assembly of Church of Scotland; Scottish National Party candidate Calum Cashley; Scottish Socialist Party candidate Colin Fox; Mark Lazarowicz, Labour Party member of Parliament; and Scottish Conservatives candidate Iain McGill.

tion, replied the Communist League's Bellamy, a factory worker. Bellamy pointed to the Cuban Revolution as an example of what is needed. "This is the only practical solution to the devastation of workers' lives being prepared by the capitalist crisis," she said. "Millions of workers and farmers in Cuba mobilized to overthrow the capitalist government and take political power into their own hands. This paved the way for reorganizing social relations from top to bottom."

She also pointed to the need to advance solidarity with trade unionists at British Airways and ScotRail who have taken strike action in face of cuts to jobs and conditions, to back campaigns against the closure of community centers and schools in Edinburgh, and to support counterprotests against ultrarightists when they take to the streets.

Tony Hunt in Edinburgh and Alex Xezonakis in London contributed to this article.

Arizona actions protest anti-immigrant law

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fense under the law.

The law also targets day laborers by banning people from stopping a vehicle on a road to offer employment if doing so "blocks" traffic. It also makes it illegal for workers without papers to solicit or accept work.

Brewer claimed she signed the law to "work to solve a crisis we did not create and the federal government has refused to fix—the crisis caused by illegal immigration and Arizona's porous border." Depicting undocumented workers as criminals, she said the measures were necessary to protect the "citizens of Arizona" from "the murderous greed of drug cartels" and other criminals.

In her statement Brewer noted that the section of the new law on "willful failure to . . . carry an alien registration document is adopted, verbatim, from the same offense found in federal statute."

Maricopa County sheriff Joseph Arpaio said that the new law won't change much of what he has already been implementing in the Phoenix area for several years, although he said it would give the cops more "tools" to use against undocumented immigrants. He said the law would

spur the federal government to take further action. Arpaio is notorious for using the local police force and volunteer posses to conduct immigration raids and harass Latino workers. He boasts that he has arrested some 38,000 undocumented workers over the past few years.

Arizona is a main entry point for workers from Mexico and Central America who want to work in the United States. There are an estimated 460,000 undocumented immigrants in Arizona, many of them in the Phoenix area. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, the number of workers without "proper" papers declined by 18 percent in the past year.

In an action that helped create an atmosphere favorable to passage of the bill, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) deployed more than 800 agents April 15 to carry out arrests and searches in Phoenix, Tucson, Nogales, and Rio Rico, Arizona, to break up an alleged immigrant smuggling operation.

Students walk out

Vanessa Ayala and Hector Dueñas, both 16 years old and students at Trevor Brown High School, described the April 22 walkout to protest the bill.



Militant/Betsey Stone

More than 3,000 demonstrators rally in Phoenix April 25 to oppose anti-immigrant law

"On Thursday at 11:00 a.m. everybody walked out. On Friday, no one showed up," said Ayala. "Students walked out at Estrella Middle School and we took them with us."

"A student at Maryvale High School twittered me that security wouldn't let them out," said Dueñas. "We're rivals but we went over and helped them out."

Students walked out of at least a half dozen high schools and either marched, took public transport, or caught rides to the state Capitol building. Once there they joined a vigil begun by students from Arizona State University.

Jeff Zetino, an Arizona State University graduate, said that he and six other students from that campus began the vigil April 18. "By lunch we were 30; by night, 100; on Monday, 200; Tuesday, 300. We kept a sustained vigil going," he said.

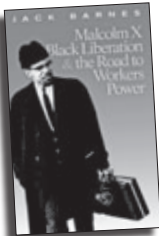
Radio station La Campesina de César E. Chávez stationed a truck with a sound stage at the Capitol, which the students used to speak out against the bill. Two, three, or more times an hour they would break into a run and energetically march around the Capitol, chanting, "Veto 1070," "Sí se puede," and "We are here to stay." Students and young workers marshaled the actions.

At the April 25 rally, organizers of the action announced from the stage that demonstrators had come from California, Colorado, and Texas. A delegation from the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition in Texas drove 22 hours to Phoenix.

"We're not criminals, just humans trying to get a better future." Patricia Balderas, a 27-year-old student at Phoenix College, said in an interview. She described the law as "pure racism."

One demonstrator carried a sign saying, "No Juan Crow laws," a ref-

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Read, Sell, & Discuss

Malcolm X, Black Liberation, & the Road to Workers Power

London

Most of the sales of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* have been through tables set up Saturdays in working-class shopping areas here, as the Communist League election campaign hits the streets, reports Ólöf Andra Proppé. Last Saturday, six copies of the book were sold along with eight *Militant* subscriptions.

Ahmed Kiar, a health-care worker originally from Eritrea, is among the dozens who have picked up a book and subscription at one of these tables. At a program sponsored by supporters of the *Militant*, Kiar described the title as a “must buy” book. He pointed to a quote by Malcolm X of the coming clash “between those who want freedom, justice, and equality and those who want to continue the system of exploitation.” He has since sold a copy of the book to a co-worker and has joined in campaigning for the Communist League candidates.

—Jonathan Silberman

Miami

“When Malcolm was alive he was presented as a loose cannon,” said Emmanuel Watson, a member of the International Longshoremen’s Association (ILA) in Fort Lauderdale. “From what I’ve read so far this book helps enlighten people about what he was really all about. I’m looking forward to reading the rest.”

Watson is one of 11 members of the ILA there who in the past six weeks have purchased copies of *Malcolm X, Black*

Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power. Seven of them purchased *Militant* subscriptions along with the book. An additional four subscriptions have been sold to workers there.

In addition to sales at the ILA hall, five people attending a meeting to free the Cuban Five, Cuban revolutionaries unjustly incarcerated in U.S. jails for more than 11 years, bought the Spanish edition of the book. Two of them also got subscriptions. After getting back in touch with four people *Militant* supporters had met recently, they each purchased the book and a subscription.

—Ernest Mailhot and Deborah Liatos

Nebraska

Militant supporters from Des Moines, Iowa, recently visited Fremont and Omaha, Nebraska, to discuss with working people their views on a ballot initiative approved by the State Supreme Court that starting this summer will prohibit renting apartments to immigrants who don’t have work papers. In Fremont, supporters went door to door in two trailer parks, one near the large unionized Hormel meatpacking plant, and sold one *Workers Power* book in Spanish and five *Militant* subscriptions.

In discussions with workers by a Family Dollar store in Omaha’s Black community, two copies of the new book along with *Militant* subscriptions were sold. One retired Black worker said there should be a monument at Malcolm X’s birthplace a few blocks away.

—Maggie Trowe

Sales drive enters final weeks

Continued from front page

copies of the book, 22 of them with subscriptions, at the Los Angeles Times Festival of Books April 24–25,

reports Bill Arth. Eight copies of the book and 11 subscriptions were purchased at the April 25 march in Phoenix against the new anti-immigrant law in Arizona.

In Yakima, Washington, 13 people attending a Students of Color Conference purchased *Militant* subscriptions and nine of them got the *Workers Power* book. One of these students “was from central Washington, where over 500 farm workers were recently fired as a result of an immigration audit,” writes Edwin Fruit. “He said he had been looking for ‘this kind of literature which tells the truth about the working class and its struggles.’”

Distributors in Canada are finding an eager audience awaiting publication of the new book in French. “An African we met at a regular literature table we set up in the workers district where our book center is located, came to the center, subscribed, pre-ordered two of the *Workers Power* books in French, and bought other books as well,” reports Joe Young in Montreal.

Ron Poulsen in Sydney, Australia, says, “We had a successful *Militant* Labor Forum on the topic ‘No Miner Has To Die! Union Power Is Needed to Enforce Safety’ here.” It followed a March 28 accident at the Patrick Port Botany dock in Sydney, where a worker was crushed to death. A dock-worker who was a former *Militant* subscriber participated in the meeting and afterward renewed his subscription and bought the book.



Militant supporter Dean Hazlewood, right, sells *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* and *Militant* subscriptions to participants in April 25 rally in Phoenix opposing recently passed anti-immigrant law in Arizona.

Arizona immigrant rights rally

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erence to the connection between the struggle of Blacks against Jim Crow segregation in the South in the 1950s and ’60s and the struggle for immigrant rights today.

Many carried signs denouncing the new law as “racial profiling.” The law is widely seen as giving the green light to cops to stop people based on their skin color or accent to demand proof of citizenship.

A young woman marched with handcuffs. She wrote on her T-shirt, “I’m Mexican. Arrest me.”

Martín Hernández, an organizer for the United Food and Commercial Workers union, said he had come not only to fight against the law but also to get support for about 300 workers who were fired April 20–21 from Pro’s Ranch Markets’ six supermarkets in the Phoenix metropolitan area after a federal immigration audit.

Hernández explained that the workers have no union but “union or no union we should fight for them.”

President Barack Obama issued a statement saying that the Arizona law was “misguided” but did not say that he would take any actions to block implementation of the law other than to “closely monitor” the situation.

U.S. congressman Luis Gutiérrez from Chicago spoke at the rally, saying he opposed the law because immigration enforcement “is the responsibility of the federal government” not local police.

The Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund and the American Civil Liberties Union have said they will challenge the law in court.

Organizers of the April 25 action announced a march on May 1 at the state Capitol in Phoenix to continue the fight against the law.

Campaign to sell ‘Workers Power’ with ‘Militant’ subscriptions March 13–May 12 (week 6)				
Country	Books sold	Subs sold	Subs quota	Subs %
UNITED STATES				
Seattle*	102	106	115	92%
New York	291	232	265	88%
Miami	58	62	80	78%
Los Angeles	102	100	130	77%
Philadelphia	75	65	90	72%
San Francisco	90	107	150	71%
Twin Cities, MN	83	107	155	69%
Washington, D.C.	97	73	110	66%
Atlanta	78	91	140	65%
Houston	58	42	65	65%
Chicago	86	75	120	63%
Boston	28	38	65	58%
Des Moines, IA	46	60	125	48%
Total U.S.	1194	1158	1610	72%
UNITED KINGDOM				
Edinburgh	18	21	30	70%
London	81	74	90	82%
Total UK	99	95	120	79%
Canada	27	53	100	53%
New Zealand	26	49	65	75%
Australia	19	32	50	64%
Sweden	15	20	20	100%
Total	1380	1407	1965	70%
Should be		1500	2000	75%
* Raised quota				

3 cities raise fund goals

BY BEN JOYCE

With three cities now having raised their quotas, the *Militant* fund drive requires a sustained effort to collect payments on all the pledges to reach the international goal of \$110,000 in full and on time. After the sixth week of the eight-week drive, just over half of the amount of the goal has been collected.

Some \$1,300 was collected at an event sponsored by supporters of the *Militant* in Houston last week. Participants heard Omari Musa give a presentation on the new Pathfinder book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, by Jack Barnes. A Houston city bus driver who attended the event purchased the new book, along with a subscription to the *Militant*, as well as a copy of the *Communist Manifesto*.

Following the weekend, supporters of the effort raised their quota to \$2,800.

Local fund organizers will need to redouble their efforts to get pledges collected and sent to the *Militant* by the Tuesday evening weekly deadline. If you haven’t made a pledge yet, join the effort! Send a check or money order payable to “The Militant” to 306 W. 37 Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.

‘Militant’ fund drive March 13–May 12 (week 6)			
Country	Quota	Paid	%
UNITED STATES			
San Francisco	\$14,000	\$10,025	72%
Seattle	\$8,000	\$5,725	72%
Philadelphia	\$3,700	\$2,620	71%
New York*	\$20,000	\$13,505	68%
Atlanta	\$7,800	\$4,470	57%
Chicago	\$9,600	\$5,290	55%
Twin Cities, MN	\$7,000	\$3,805	54%
Des Moines, IA*	\$2,700	\$1,452	54%
Boston	\$3,500	\$1,570	45%
Los Angeles	\$8,700	\$3,510	40%
Houston*	\$2,800	\$820	29%
Miami	\$3,000	\$785	26%
Washington, D.C.	\$6,500	\$1,485	23%
Other		\$600	
Total U.S.	\$97,300	\$55,662	57%
Canada	\$6,650	\$2,150	32%
New Zealand	\$3,000	\$677	23%
Australia	\$1,500	\$865	58%
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	\$750	\$185	25%
Edinburgh	\$300	\$0	0%
Total UK	\$1,050	\$185	18%
Sweden	\$500	\$175	35%
France	\$300	\$225	75%
Total	\$110,300	\$59,939	54%
Should be	\$110,000	\$82,500	75%
* Raised quota			

ON THE PICKET LINE

New York doormen defeat two-tier proposal by bosses

NEW YORK—Thirty thousand doormen, superintendents, and other residential building workers, organized by Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 32BJ, have pushed back an employer attempt to impose a two-tier contract on the union.

Negotiations between the union and the Realty Advisory Board (RAB) ended April 21 with announcement of an agreement. Workers had authorized a strike if no contract was reached by that time.

The union represents workers at co-ops, condos, and rental apartments. The last time SEIU Local 32BJ doormen struck was for 12 days in 1991. In addition to two tiers, the RAB was demanding cuts in sick days, no pensions for new employees, and a worker copayment for health care. They failed to get any of these.

“In exchange,” reported the *New*

York Times, union negotiators “agreed to try to help the owners find ways to reduce the cost of providing the workers’ health benefits by \$70 million annually starting in 2012.”

The negotiated contract provides for doormen’s hourly pay to go from the current \$15 to \$23 by 2013.

Union members will be voting on the new contract over the next few weeks.

—Sarah Katz

Hundreds march in Boston to support grocery strikers

BOSTON—Hundreds of workers rallied April 15 in downtown Boston to show support for more than 300 warehouse workers on strike against the large grocery chain store Shaw’s. They are members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 791.

“What do we want?” shouted strikers, with the crowd responding, “A contract!” Marchers wound their way



Militant/Ted Leonard

Demonstrators outside Shaw’s supermarket in Boston April 15 urge people not to shop there in solidarity with warehouse workers’ strike for better contract.

to a downtown Shaw’s store to discourage people from shopping there until the company settles with the union. The strikers work at the distri-

bution warehouse in Methuen.

At the rally Hector Medina, 37, who has worked at the warehouse for more than nine years, said, “We were paying about \$28 a week for health coverage. We would have to pay about \$50 or \$55 a week under their proposal, and for less coverage.”

He said the company proposal would also force workers to pay \$50 to see a doctor. They now pay \$20 for each visit.

“Instead of a raise each year they wanted to give us a Shaw’s card which could only be used to go shopping at their stores,” Medina added. The company wants to lay off some workers while bringing in contract workers who would not be in the union and have no benefits.

On April 1 the company stopped paying for health-care coverage for the strikers. About three dozen workers have crossed the line to return to work, strikers said, but the majority continues the fight.

Yobany Diaz, 27, worked six years at the warehouse. Interviewed while picketing at one of the stores a few weeks earlier, he said, “By doing the strike we showed we do have a backbone and we’re not going to take them cutting our wages.”

—Laura Garza

Union power is needed for safety in the mines

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The deaths of 29 coal miners in the massive explosion at the Massey Energy-owned mine in Montcoal, West Virginia, April 5 have drawn expressions of sorrow and condolences to the families from numerous government officials and other capitalist politicians. They call for investigations and new legislation, declaring this disaster won’t happen again.

AS I SEE IT

But absent from the discussion is what’s really needed—to organize the mines and use union power to enforce safety on the job.

Speaking at a memorial meeting in Beckley, West Virginia, April 25, President Barack Obama said that miners’ were aware of the inherent “risks” and “perils” of working in the mines. “They knew their wives would wait for a call when their shift ended saying everything was okay. They knew their parents felt a pang of fear every time a breaking news alert came on, or the radio cut in,” he said. All this was just part of these miners’ “pursuit of the American Dream.”

Obama said, “We are all family and we are all Americans and we have to lean on one another.” But “we”—the coal miners and other workers—have nothing in common with “them,” the boss class.

Mining is not inherently unsafe. The “risks” come only from the coal bosses’ control over production and their insatiable drive for profits, which makes assaults on miners’ safety rights an everyday occurrence.

Obama’s talk at the memorial service said not one word about taking action against Massey Energy for the disaster at the Upper Big Branch Mine. Nor did he mention the fact that the Mine Safety and Health Administration, a government agency, knew for years about the hazardous work conditions imposed on these miners and took no action to shut down the mine.

Consider some of the latest revelations to surface about this mine. According to the *New York Times*, an unnamed “longtime” foreman at the Upper Big Branch Mine said that a major source of the methane gas buildup that exploded

there was a coal shaft, unused for years, that was never properly sealed. Rags and garbage were used to create a sealant, the foreman said, and “every single day, the levels were double or triple what they were supposed to be.”

In January the air flow was going in the wrong direction, according to an MSHA report, but no steps were taken to shut the mine.

In response to inadequate ventilation, miners demanded the company cut through rock to create a dedicated air pathway, but the company rejected this “along the lines of: We dig coal, not rock,” according to the *Times*.

Unsafe working conditions at Upper Big Branch Mine and other Massey operations are not unique to this company, though it has been one of the leading companies compiling safety violations. In mid-April a congressional panel on mine safety released a list of 48 mines cited for serious safety violations. But no preventative action was taken. Among them was Upper Big Branch.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



May 10, 1985

The May 1 announcement by the White House of plans to impose an embargo on all trade with Nicaragua is a qualitative escalation of the U.S. war against that country.

The tens of thousands of unionists, Blacks, Latinos, students, and other young people who demonstrated against U.S. intervention in Central America on April 20 should build on the success of that action by protesting this latest attack on Nicaragua. Through our unions, civil rights organizations, solidarity groups, and April Action Coalitions we must answer this escalation of the U.S. war.

The U.S. economic sanctions include: halting the purchase by the United States of all Nicaraguan products; stopping U.S. exports to Nicaragua except those destined for the “organized democratic resistance”; cancellation of landing rights in the United States for Aeronica, the Nicaraguan Airline.



May 9, 1960

LOS ANGELES—The truth about the Cuban revolution was brought to more than a million people here this weekend as Farrell Dobbs, presidential nominee of the Socialist Workers Party, opened a national speaking tour intended to combat the campaign of smear and slander inspired by the State Department against Cuba. Dobbs recently returned from a visit to Cuba, where he studied the revolution at first hand.

Last night Dobbs addressed an overflow May Day rally of the Socialist Workers Party and tomorrow night he is scheduled to be interviewed on the popular TV program the Tom Duggan show.

“The only presidential candidate who supports the Cuban revolution. That’s how Farrell Dobbs of the Socialist Workers Party described himself in Los Angeles today,” reported Ed Fleming of KABC.



May 11, 1935

TOLEDO, Ohio—As we go to press, word comes from Toledo that the Chevrolet strikers have rejected the company’s “peace” proposals by an overwhelming majority. The election conducted by the U.S. Department of Labor, showed a vote of 1,251 against acceptance and only 605 for. The strikers are jubilant at their victory. The militancy of their ranks has been strengthened all along the line.

After a week of decisive and militant action in which the Toledo strikers tied up almost the entire Chevrolet division of General Motors and spread the strike to Cleveland, Atlanta, and Norwood, Ohio, Francis Dillon, national A. F. of L. organizer in the automobile industry, succeeded in diverting the strike from the picket lines to the ballot booths and in curbing the walkout of 9,000 Buick workers in Flint who had previously voted to go on strike.

Evolution of Malcolm X's views on women

The following is the 16th in a series of excerpts the Militant is running from Pathfinder Press's latest book, Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power, by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. We encourage our readers to study, discuss, and help sell the book. The following is from a 1987 speech by Barnes printed under the title "Malcolm X: Revolutionary Leader of the Working Class." Copyright © 2009 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

When Malcolm left the Nation [of Islam], he didn't initially have much to say about the rights or social position of women. But in the *Autobiography* [of Malcolm X]—the draft of which had been completed, with the help of journalist Alex Haley, only shortly before the assassination—Malcolm tells a story that sheds light on the speed and degree of his later evolution on this question. (In reading the *Autobiography*, we should always keep two things in mind. First, that the interviews were begun while Malcolm was still in the Nation, with Elijah Muhammad's approval. And second, that Malcolm was denied the opportunity to review and edit the final draft, or bring it in line with his views at that time. According to Haley, the assassination coincided with the days he and Malcolm had tentatively set aside for that review.)

Toward the end of the *Autobiography*, Malcolm is describing his visit to Beirut, Lebanon, on the last day of April 1964. Going out for a walk, he says,

immediately my attention was struck by the mannerisms and attire of the Lebanese women. In the Holy Land [Saudi Arabia] there had been the very modest, very feminine Arabian women—and there was this sudden contrast of the half-French, half-Arab Lebanese women who projected in their dress and street manners more liberty, more boldness. I saw clearly the obvious European influence upon the Lebanese culture. It showed me how any country's moral strength, or its moral weakness, is quickly measurable by the street attire and attitude of its women—especially its young women. Wherever the spiritual values have been submerged, if not destroyed, by

an emphasis upon the material things, invariably, the women reflect it. Witness the women, both young and old, in America—where scarcely any moral values are left.

So that's how Malcolm still approached the question of women's social position a month or so after his break with the Nation. The emphasis remained on religious standards of modesty and sexual morality.

At roughly this same time, Malcolm was still an unequivocal opponent of what he called "intermarriage." In the *Autobiography*, once again, Malcolm writes: "I'm right with the Southern white man who believes that you can't have so-called 'integration,' at least not for long, without intermarriage increasing. And what good is this for anyone? Let's again face reality. In a world as color-hostile as this, man or woman, black or white, what do they want with a mate of the other race?" . . .

By the end of Malcolm's second trip to Africa and the Middle East in 1964, between early July and late November, however, his views had undergone a striking change—one that paralleled the evolution of how he thought and acted on other social and political questions. At a news conference during a stopover in Paris following that trip, Malcolm said that one of the things he had noticed during his travels was that

in every country you go to, usually the degree of progress can never be separated from the woman. If you're in a country that's progressive, the woman is progressive. If you're in a country that reflects the consciousness toward the importance of education, it's because the woman is aware of the importance of education.

But in every backward country you'll find the women are backward, and in every country where education is not stressed it's because the women don't have education. So one of the things I became thoroughly convinced of in my recent travels is the importance of giving freedom to the women, giving her education, and giving her the incentive to get out there and put the same spirit and understanding in her children. And I am frankly proud of the contributions that our women have made in the struggle for freedom



"One thing I noticed in both the Middle East and Africa," Malcolm said during a December 1964 radio interview, "in every country that was progressive, the women were progressive. In every country that was underdeveloped and backward, it was to the same degree that the women were undeveloped, or underdeveloped, and backward." Above, women soldiers march in Burkina Faso, West Africa, August 1985, two years after popular revolutionary government led by Thomas Sankara took power.

and I'm one person who's for giving them all the leeway possible because they've made a greater contribution than many of us men.

[. . .]

This is a very advanced level of political understanding: that you can measure the degree of progress and development of a society by the place of women in its social, economic, and political life. Unlike Malcolm's remarks just a few months earlier about women in Beirut, where female "modesty" and religious "morality" had been his starting point, now Malcolm was using *political* criteria. He overcame simple prejudice—which is what Malcolm's earlier views reflected, whether expressed by him or by anyone else—and began replacing them with facts about the social position of women. He began talking about what women can and do accomplish to advance human progress, to advance revolutionary change, if barriers erected against them begin to be torn down.

Malcolm also changed his mind on interracial marriage. Appearing on a television talk show in Toronto, in mid-January 1965, Malcolm was asked by the host, Pierre Berton, whether he still held his earlier views on this question. Malcolm replied: "I believe in recognizing every human being as a human being—neither white, black, brown, or red; and when you are dealing with humanity as a family there's no question of integration or intermarriage. It's just one human being marrying another human being, or one human being living around and with another human being."

What needs to be attacked, Malcolm told Berton, is the racist society that produces attitudes "hostile toward integration and toward intermarriage and toward these other strides toward oneness" of human beings, not "the reaction that develops among the people who are the victims of that negative society."

In assessing the evolution of Malcolm's attitude toward women's rights—including the place he had come to recognize women would occupy in coming revolutionary struggles in the United States and worldwide—we should also note the shattering impact on Malcolm of his discovery that Elijah Muhammad was sexually abusing young female members of the Nation of Islam. According to Malcolm, this was the single fact, more than any particular political conflict per se, that marked a turning point in his relationship with the Nation.

It deeply shook Malcolm's confidence in the religious, political, and moral integrity of Elijah Muhammad and of the Nation of Islam itself. . . .

Finally, Malcolm deepened his understanding of the importance of combating the oppression of women as he watched them help lead the fight for Black rights in this country. When Fannie Lou Hamer came to New York in December 1964 to win support for the freedom struggle in Mississippi, Malcolm spoke alongside her at a rally in Harlem and gave her a platform that night at the meeting of the OAAU [Organization of Afro-American Unity]. Malcolm also admired and worked with Gloria Richardson, who had refused to call off demonstrations in Cambridge, Maryland, in face of white-supremacist thugs and the National Guard—as well as public rebukes by conservative Black leaders—and who publicly solidarized with Malcolm's call for the right of self-defense against racist terror.

I mentioned earlier Malcolm's insistence that the aim of the movement he was working to build was to awaken Blacks "to their humanity, to their own worth." During the final months of his life, Malcolm also deepened his understanding that the fight to liberate *half of humanity* from their oppression, and to assert in action *their* political worth, sharply increased the potential forces of revolution in this country and around the world.

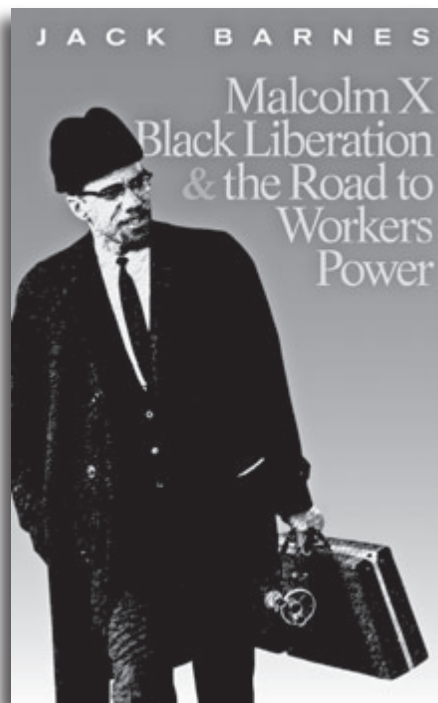


"When you are dealing with humanity as a family, there is no question of integration or intermarriage," Malcolm said in January 1965. "It's just one human being marrying another human being." It was not until 1967 that U.S. Supreme Court at last declared state laws barring interracial marriage unconstitutional, following struggle by Mildred and Richard Loving (above) to overturn their conviction in Virginia.

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Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power

by Jack Barnes



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Truth behind so-called political prisoners in Cuba

The following is an abridged version of an article by writer Michael Parenti and Alicia Jrapko, U.S. coordinator of the International Committee to Free the Cuban Five. It was published in MRZine, an online magazine, under the title “Cuban Prisoners, Here and There.” The full version can be found at: <http://www.mrzine.monthlyreview.org/2010/pj150410.html>. The subheading is added by the Militant.

BY MICHAEL PARENTI
AND ALICIA JRAPKO

For more than half a century Western political leaders and their corporate media have waged a disinformation war against socialist Cuba. Nor is there any sign that they are easing up. A recent example is the case of Orlando Zapata Tamayo, an inmate who died in a Cuban prison in February 2010 after an 82-day hunger strike.

Zapata’s death sparked an outcry from Western capitalist media and official sources, including of course the United States. Almost without exception, in literally thousands of reports, the corporate media portrayed him as a “political prisoner” and a “political dissident”—without offering any supporting specifics. In March 2010 the European Union voted to condemn Cuba for his demise.

Since 2004, Amnesty International has treated Zapata Tamayo as one of Cuba’s 75 “prisoners of conscience,” without offering evidence to buttress this assertion. Like the Western media, Amnesty failed to specify what were the political activities that had led to Zapata’s imprisonment.

An Amnesty International article (24 February 2010) stated that in May 2004 Zapata Tamayo was sentenced to three years in prison for “public disorder” and “resistance.” According to some reports he launched his hunger strike not only to protest his conditions of detention but to demand a personal kitchen in his cell, a television set, and a cell phone, amenities that were not likely to materialize.

Zapata was subsequently tried several times on charges of assaulting

guards and “disorder in a penal establishment.” The offenses began to add up. At the time of his fast he was facing a total sentence of 36 years. Again Amnesty made no mention of any political activities.

Cuban doctors attempted to keep Zapata alive with intravenous feedings and other stratagems. One psychologist testified that she tried to convince him to cease the hunger strike and try to register his grievances by other means. Zapata’s mother remarked that her son had the best Cuban doctors at his bedside and she thanked them for their assistance. Later she would change her story and claim that he was a “dissident” who had been mistreated.

According to the Cuban writer Enrique Ubieta Gómez, Zapata was a common criminal who was convicted of “unlawful break-in” (1993), “assault” (2000), “fraud” (2000), and “public disorder” (2002). One of his serious transgressions occurred in 2000 when he attacked someone named Leonardo Simón with a machete, fracturing his skull and inflicting other injuries.

Ubieta Gómez concluded that Zapata had been involved in a wide range of criminal doings, none of which were remotely political. He was in jail for breaching the peace, “public damage,” resistance to authority, two charges of fraud, “public exhibitionism,” repeated charges of felonious assault, and being illegally armed.

Despite this extensive rap sheet Zapata was paroled in March 2003, 11 days before the arrests of the 75 so-called “prisoners of conscience.” Later that same month he was charged with another crime and imprisoned for parole violation.

To repeat: while his 2003 arrest happened to come within days of the imprisonment of the 75, Zapata was never part of that group. The Cuban government never accused him of conspiring with—or accepting funds and materials from—a foreign power, charges that were leveled against the 75.

Since 2003, at least 20 of the 75 have been released due to health problems, shrinking the number still incarcerated to 55—a level of humanitarian leniency not likely to be emulated in



Militant/Tom Baumann

June 2009 demonstration in New York City to protest Supreme Court’s refusal to hear case of Cuban Five, political prisoners framed up by FBI and incarcerated in U.S. jails since 1998.

the U.S. criminal justice system. Apparently this news has yet to reach the U.S. media.

Term ‘dissidents’ misrepresents issue

The Cuban government argues that to describe the 75 (or 55) as being “prisoners of conscience” or “political dissidents” is to misrepresent the issue. They were never tried for holding dissenting views but for unlawfully collaborating with a hostile foreign power, receiving funds and materials from the U.S. interests section, with the intent to subvert the existing political system in Cuba.

Many countries have such laws, including the U.S.A. As Arnold August points out, the U.S. Penal Code, under Chapter 115 entitled “Treason, Sedition, and Subversive Activities,” Section 2381 stipulates that any U.S. citizen who “adheres to” or gives “aid and comfort . . . within the United States or elsewhere” to a country that U.S. authorities consider to be an enemy “is guilty of treason and shall suffer death, or shall be imprisoned not less than five years and fined under this title but not less than \$10,000.” So too, Cuba has legislation directed at those who are funded by hostile foreign powers.

In comparison to the media’s tidal outcry on behalf of Cubans imprisoned in Cuba, consider the coverage accorded the five Cubans imprisoned in the United States. During almost 12 years of incarceration, the Cuban Five have been largely ignored by the corporate media and consequently remain mostly unknown to the U.S. public.

The Five possessed no weapons and committed no act of terror, sabotage, or espionage. Gerardo Hernández, Fernando González, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, and René González came to the United States during the 1990s to infiltrate and monitor the terrorist activities of private right-wing groups of Cuban exiles.

In 1998 after receiving evidence of impending terrorist activities planned against Cuba, the FBI went into action. But instead of arresting the right-wing Cubans who were planning the attacks from U.S. soil, the feds apprehended the five Cubans who were working at uncovering such plots.

The five were tried in a federal court in Miami, home to over half a million Cuban exiles. Miami is a community with a long history of hostility toward the Cuban government—a record that a federal appellate court in the United States later described as a “perfect storm” of prejudice, designed to make a fair trial impossible.

The Cuban Five were kept in solitary confinement for 17 months, denied their right to bail and the right to a change of venue. After the longest trial in the history of the United States, they were sentenced by a jury in Miami to four life sentences plus 77 years collectively.

If U.S. rulers really are interested in fighting oppression and injustice, they might start closer to home. Thus far President Barack Obama has shown no interest in the case. (Why does this not surprise us?) But other more genuine souls at home and abroad continue to press for justice.

Cuba and the Coming American Revolution

by Jack Barnes
Also available in Spanish, French



United States vs. the Cuban Five: A Judicial Coverup

by Rodolfo Dávalos Fernández
Also available in Spanish

Rig blast highlights bosses’ disregard for safety

Continued from front page

to dry up and companies scramble to exploit new areas for profit. In late March President Barack Obama announced a proposal to open up drilling in new parts of the Gulf of Mexico and along the southeastern coast.

Just two days before the explosion, a worker was killed in a crane accident at the Motiva Enterprise’s refinery in Port Arthur, Texas. Two weeks earlier, five workers were killed in the Tesoro Refinery blast in Anacortes, Washington. An explosion and fire at Holly Corporation’s refinery in New Mexico killed two workers March 2.

The April 21 explosion on the BP-leased platform comes only a few months after the U.S. Occupational

Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) fined the company \$77.4 million for safety violations at its Texas City oil refinery. A blast at the refinery in 2005 killed 15 people and injured 170 others.

Since 2005 three more workers have been killed at the plant. OSHA has issued 270 safety notifications, noting that there were 439 instances of “willful and egregious” safety violations at the facility. BP is contesting the fines.

On March 16, U.S. district judge Kenneth Hoyt set aside punitive damages that a jury had awarded in December to 10 workers at the plant who sued the company for exposure to toxic chemicals. Hoyt wrote in his

ruling that, “the nature of refinery work is that workers are subject to a variety of toxic odors at all times.” BP was not guilty, he said, because both the workers and company “are fully aware of the potential hazards that exist in a refinery.”

Asked whether Obama had second thoughts on the expansion of offshore drilling, White House spokesman Robert Gibbs said, “No.”

“We need the increased production. The president still continues to believe the great majority of that can be done safely, securely, and without any harm to the environment,” he said.

Gibbs added cynically, “I doubt this is the first accident that has happened and I doubt it will be the last.”



Che: 'Proletarian internationalism is a necessity'

Below is an excerpt from Che Guevara Speaks, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for May. Che Guevara was a central leader of the Cuban Revolution. In early 1965 he visited several African nations, including Mali, Congo (Brazzaville), Guinea, Ghana, Tanzania, and Algeria, where he attended the Second Economic Seminar of the Organization of Afro-Asian Solidarity in Algiers. Part of the speech he delivered there on Feb. 24, 1965, is printed here. In his talk he points to the necessity of taking political power from the oppressor classes and then taking on the even more difficult challenge of economic underdevelopment, a product of imperialist rule. Copyright © 1967 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY ERNESTO CHE GUEVARA

Cuba is here at this conference to speak on behalf of the peoples of Latin America. As we have emphasized on other occasions, Cuba also speaks as an underdeveloped country as well as one that is building socialism.

It is not by accident that our delegation is permitted to give its opinion here, in the circle of the peoples of Asia and Africa. A common aspira-



Granma/Pastor Batista Valdés

Cuban combatant, right, teaching Angolan combatants to read and write. From 1975 to 1991, in response to request from government of Angola, Havana sent more than 375,000 volunteer troops to help defeat invading armed forces of South Africa's apartheid regime.

tion unites us in our march toward the future: the defeat of imperialism. A common past of struggle against the same enemy has united us along the road.

This is an assembly of peoples in struggle, and the struggle is developing on two equally important fronts that require all our efforts. The struggle against imperialism, for liberation from colonial or neocolonial shackles, which is being carried out by means of political weapons, firearms, or a combination of the two, is not separate from the struggle against backwardness and poverty. Both are stages on the same road leading toward the creation of a new society of justice and plenty.

It is imperative to take political power and get rid of the oppressor classes. But then the second stage of the struggle, which may be even more difficult than the first, must be faced. Ever since monopoly capital took over the world, it has kept the greater part of humanity in poverty, dividing all the profits among the group of the most powerful countries. The standard of living in those countries is based on the extreme poverty of our countries. To raise the living standards of the underdeveloped nations, therefore, we must fight against imperialism. And each time a country is

torn away from the imperialist tree, it is not only a partial battle won against the main enemy, but it also contributes to the real weakening of that enemy and is one step more toward the final victory.

There are no borders in this struggle to the death. We cannot be indifferent to what happens anywhere in the world, because a victory by any country over imperialism is our victory, just as any country's defeat is a defeat for all of us. The practice of proletarian internationalism is not only a duty for the peoples struggling for a better future, it is also an inescapable necessity. If the imperialist enemy, the United States or any other, carries out its attack against the underdeveloped peoples and the socialist countries, elementary logic determines the need for an alliance between the underdeveloped peoples and the socialist countries. If there were no other uniting factor, the common enemy should be it.

Of course these alliances cannot be made spontaneously, without discussions, without birth pangs, which sometimes can be painful.

Each time a country is liberated, we said, it is a defeat for the world imperialist system. But we must agree that the break is not achieved by the mere act of proclaiming independence or

winning an armed victory in a revolution. It is achieved when imperialist economic domination over a people is brought to an end. Therefore, it is a matter of vital interest to the socialist countries for a real break to take place. And it is our international duty, a duty determined by our guiding ideology, to contribute our efforts to make this liberation as rapid and deep-going as possible.

A conclusion must be drawn from all this: the socialist countries must help pay for the development of countries now starting out on the road to liberation. We state it this way with no intention whatsoever of blackmail or theatrics, nor are we looking for an easy way to get closer to the Afro-Asian peoples; it is our profound conviction. Socialism cannot exist without a change in consciousness resulting in a new fraternal attitude toward humanity, both at an individual level, within the societies where socialism is being built or has been built, and on a world scale, with regard to all peoples suffering from imperialist oppression.

We believe the responsibility of aiding dependent countries must be approached in such a spirit. There should not be any more talk about developing mutually beneficial trade based on prices forced on the backward countries by the law of value and the international relations of unequal exchange that result from the law of value.

How can it be "mutually beneficial" to sell at world market prices the raw materials that cost the underdeveloped countries immeasurable sweat and suffering, and to buy at world market prices the machinery produced in today's big automated factories?

If we establish that kind of relation between the two groups of nations, we must agree that the socialist countries are, in a certain way, accomplices of imperial exploitation. It can be argued that the amount of exchange with the underdeveloped countries is an insignificant part of the foreign trade of the socialist countries. That is very true, but it does not eliminate the immoral character of the exchange.

May BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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New law in Arizona is antiworker

High school students in Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona, who walked out of class to protest the new anti-immigrant law in that state, are setting an example for the struggle for immigrant and workers rights.

The Arizona law is an attack on the entire working class, giving the cops another tool to selectively intimidate working people. It will mean more arrests and deportations and more harassment of workers—both U.S.- and foreign-born.

Some Democratic Party politicians have likened the bill to measures imposed under Nazi rule in Germany. These exaggerations are designed to let the federal government, which is leading the assault on immigrant workers, off the hook.

Last year Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) carried out the highest number of deportations in U.S. history. It has conducted massive sweeps for alleged “criminal” immigrants, and has increased the militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border. The administration has made it harder for workers without papers to get jobs.

The charge of Nazism is also aimed at winning support for “lesser evil” anti-immigrant laws. President Barack Obama calls the Arizona law “misguided” and says it shows the need for Congress to quickly pass immigration “reform” legislation. The reform Obama favors is one being discussed by senators Charles Schumer and Lindsay Graham. It would force all workers to carry an ID card, beef up immigration

cops on the U.S.-Mexico border, and make undocumented workers pay fines and go through demeaning background checks before even being considered for residence papers some time in the future. It represents no step forward for workers.

We will see more anti-immigrant measures as the economic crisis continues and the capitalist class seeks to deepen divisions among working people. Their central goal is to maintain a superexploited layer of intimidated workers who will work for less and boost the profits of capitalist factory and farm owners.

Defending immigrant workers is vital to unifying the U.S. working class. Immigrant workers, with their experience and traditions of struggle, help internationalize and politically strengthen our class, putting us in a better position to build labor unions and forge a movement that can take political power out of the hands of the rich.

The answer to the antiworker, anti-immigrant course of the Arizona state government is to fight for unconditional legalization for all undocumented workers now. Workers should be able to move freely across borders to work wherever they choose without fear of harassment, arrest, or deportation for lack of “proper” papers.

Overtake Arizona law 1070! Stop immigration raids and deportations now! Legalize undocumented workers!

Afghanistan: U.S. special forces doubled

Continued from front page

tially identified the dead as two “known insurgents” and their “associates,” based on “biometric data.” But several days later, officials conceded that this was not true and issued a formal apology.

In a similar incident a week earlier, U.S. troops unleashed a barrage of gunfire on an approaching passenger bus, killing four and wounding at least 18 near Kandahar City. Hundreds of residents took to the streets in an hour-long protest, burning tires and shouting slogans against the U.S. and Afghan governments.

An aspect of Washington’s counterinsurgency strategy involves limited development projects and economic incentives in key areas designed to win local support. Under current discussion is a project to spend \$200 million over the next few months for power generators and diesel fuel in Kandahar City.

U.S. commanders are promoting the project in order to temporarily boost electricity output from 16 megawatts to 50 megawatts during a “narrow window of opportunity,” as U.S.-led forces move to displace Taliban forces in Kandahar, a U.S. military official told the *Washington Post*. The plan would be short-term, adding nothing to the city’s long-term power generation capacity. “This is not about development—it’s about counterinsurgency,” the official said.

Karl Eikenberry, U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan, has argued that the “expensive, unsustainable” project

would not be an effective counterinsurgency tactic.

Meanwhile, with Washington’s blessing Islamabad has initiated a new offensive of its own in the tribal areas of Pakistan that border Afghanistan. The Pakistani military has relied heavily on air and artillery strikes in what officers said is a several-month-long “clearing operation” that will be followed by ground assaults.

While majority sentiment has turned sharply against the Taliban in Pakistan over the last couple of years, Islamabad faces its own challenge in “winning hearts and minds.” The recent assault has displaced hundreds of thousands. Pakistani operations throughout the tribal areas and an intense campaign of U.S. drone strikes in North Waziristan Agency—30 so far this year—have killed untold numbers of civilians.

Air strikes April 10 in Pakistan’s Khyber Agency killed 71 people—all civilians—a senior Pakistani official told the *Washington Post*. Tribal leaders from the area reported the same figure to *Dawn*.

The plane dropped a bomb in a village inhabited by the Kookikhel tribe, an area considered hostile to the Taliban and from where the government has recruited to its paramilitary Frontier Corps. As residents rushed to assist the wounded, the jet dropped a second bomb on the crowd.

A military intelligence official told the *Post* that those killed were “mostly militants.” Several days later, however, the Pakistani military conceded that it killed at least 45 civilians.

‘Microlenders’ spin massive web of debt slavery

BY DOUG NELSON

The practice of loaning relatively small amounts to “entrepreneurs” in underdeveloped countries, referred to as microcredit, has for decades been peddled as a “humanitarian” activity that reduces poverty. Today microloans have become increasingly prolific and predatory, expanding a massive web of debt slavery to tens of millions with the lowest incomes.

The concept is credited to Muhammad Yunus, an economics professor from Bangladesh. In 1976 he established Grameen Bank, “rural bank,” as a research project. It requires no collateral and will loan to anyone, including those who beg on the street to get by. Grameen boasts a recovery rate of nearly 97 percent.

Today the bank has 8 million borrowers, 97 percent of whom are women. Its 2,500 branches service 81,000 villages, nearly all of those in Bangladesh. The annual interest rate for income-generating loans is 20 percent, and last year’s revenue was \$210 million.

The bank’s Web site claims 65 percent of its borrowers’ economic status has improved. Yunus and the Grameen Bank were awarded the \$1.4 million Nobel Peace Prize in 2006. Last August President Barack Obama gave Yunus the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Following the Grameen Bank example, “non-profit” organizations soon began to get involved in peddling credit to those in extreme poverty. Banks and finance firms followed the money as well and today account for 60 percent of all microloans. Rural banks like Grameen serve about 5 percent, with nongovernmental organizations taking the rest.

The *New York Times* provides an example of the shift toward mainstream banks. CARE, an Atlanta-based nonprofit charitable organization, started a microcredit institution in Peru about 13 years ago. The initial investment was \$3.5 million, which included \$450,000 in government funds. Last year it sold it to Banco de Credito, one of Peru’s largest banks, for \$96 million, of which the nonprofit pocketed \$74 million.

With total assets of some \$60 billion worldwide, microfinance has rapidly expanded and become a very lucrative field of investment. Last August the *Wall Street Journal* pointed out that during the 12 preceding months microfinance funds returned 4.5 percent to investors. During this same period Standard and Poor’s 500 stock index declined 22 percent.

In India, average household debt to microlenders increased from about \$27 to \$135 between 2004 and 2009. During that same period the number of people in the country living under \$1.25 per day rose from 300 million to 410 million. In some communities such as Remanagaram in southern India, a revolt against payment has developed.

Interest rates vary widely, averaging about 37 percent annually in interest and fees. With high demand, some institutions are charged interest rates of more than 100 percent, according to the *Times*. Compartamos (let’s share) in Mexico started as a “nonprofit.” Today it’s the largest microfinance institution in the Americas. It charges an average of 82 percent annual interest. Another Mexican microlender, Te Creemos (we believe in you), charges 125 percent.

Kiva is a well-known U.S. nonprofit microlender that claims to “connect people, through lending, for the sake of alleviating poverty.” It generates capital through soliciting loans on its Web site from individuals as a type of charitable cause that unlike direct aid promotes “dignity” and “accountability.”

Kiva then provides capital to microfinance firms in underdeveloped countries such as the Lift Above Poverty Organization in Nigeria (LAPO). Kiva disclosed to the *Times* that LAPO charges 83 percent annual interest. In order to conceal the actual amount it filches from working people, the company imposes a compulsory savings of 20 percent on each loan. Borrowers pay interest on the entire amount, bringing the real rate to well over 100 percent.



Reuters

Afghan police and residents gather around passenger bus that was fired upon by NATO troops in Kandahar April 12