Oil rig blast highlights BP’s unsafe track record

BY JACQUE E 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. MMS counted 69 offshore oil rig deaths. MMS counted 69 offshore oil rig deaths.

The legislation makes it a crime under state law to be in the United States “illegally.” First time violations 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 offense.

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.

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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
Continued on page 4

Arizona protests hit anti-immigrant law

High school students lead walkouts

By Jackie 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.

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Deaths and commandos double in Afghanistan

By Doug Nelsen
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 USSOC, “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 assasinating 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 Afghans.

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 said.

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Communists speak out in UK election debates 3
Union power is needed for safety in the mines 5
Truth behind so-called political prisoners in Cuba 7

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

Continued on page 7
‘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 supersized 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-braceros, or their dependents, 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.

Buses use the visa process to Black-list those they consider troublemakers. Among the reasons bosses have placed workers on an “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 International 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 Schmoo 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 get support for their fight. The case is still in court.

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.

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 2:50 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 resident in Polar 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 damage blacks were done in the 1960s at 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.
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. A platform of people on the platform with Davies were candidates from the Conservative, Liberal Democrat, Green, and the UK Independence parties.

The fight to Legalize All Immigrants.

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 on workers to defend themselves by newing the Trident nuclear weapons system and ending the war in Afghanistan.

Looking to benevolent measures by a capitalist government is not the solution, 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 everywhere are demanding 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.”

Arizona actions protest anti-immigrant law

The Militant/Andrés Mendoza

ARIZONA—Marches and student walkouts February 21 to April 22 registered a protest against Arizona Act 1001, the nation’s most anti-immigrant law.

Continued from front page

fense under the law. The law also targets day laborers by banning people from stopping a vehicle on 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 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.

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

“A student at Maryvale High School texted me and said they would let them out,” said Dueñas. “We’re rivals but we went over and helped them.”

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 Zentin, 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,” “Si 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 reference to Jim Crow laws.

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

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 Girvan, Labour Party member of Parliament; and Scottish Conservatives candidate Iain McGill.

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 ultra-rightists when they take to the streets.

Tony Hunt in Edinburgh and Alex Xezonakis in London contributed to this article.
Miami “When Malcolm was alive he was presented as a loose cannon,” said Emman uel Watson, a member of the Inter national Longshoremen’s Association (ILA) in Fort Lauderdale. “From what I’ve read so far this book helps enlight en people about what he was really all about...” 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.

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.

Campagne to sell ‘Workers’ Power with Militant’ subscriptions March 13–May 12 (week 6) reports Bill Ath. 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 Yaki ka, Washington, 13 people attending a Students of Color Conference purchased Militant subscrip tions and nine of them got the book. One of these students “was from central Wash ington, where five of 500 workers were recently fired as a result of an immigration audit,” writes Edwine Fruit. “He said he had been looking for ‘this kind of literature which tells the truth about the working class and its struggles.’”

Distributiones in Canada are finding an eager audience awaiting a publica tion of the new book in French. 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 Poul sen in Sydney, Aus tralia, says, “We had a successful Militant Labor Forum on the topic ‘No Miner Has To Die!’ Union Power Is Needed to En force 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 Hazelwood, right, sells Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power subscriptions to participants in April 25 rally in Phoenix opposing recently passed anti-immigrant law in Arizona.

Continued from page 3 reference to the connection between the struggle of Blacks against Jim Crow segregation in the South in the 1950s and ‘60s and the struggle for immi grants 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.”

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

Militant fund drive March 13–May 12 (week 6)

BY BEN JOYCE

With three cities now having raised their quotas, the Militant fund drive re quires a sustained effort to collect pay ments on all the pledges to reach the international goal of $10,000 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 Omar Musa give a presentation on the new Pathfinder book Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power, by Jacob 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.

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 Gutierrez from Chicago spoke at the rally, say ing he opposed the law because immi gration enforcement “is the responsi bility of the federal government” not local police.

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.
ON THE PICKET LINE

New York doormen defeat two-tier proposal by bosses

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 shock and condemnation from families of numerous government officials and other capitalist politicians.

They call for investigations and new legislation—warning this disaster won’t happen again.

Union power is needed for safety in the mines

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’ wives 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. The workers’ 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’ contempt for the health and insurable live for profits, which makes assaults on miners’ safety rights an everyday occurrence.

Over 1,000 of the 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 a 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,” 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 lowest pay rate 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 Kaiz

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!”

Machers wound their way 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-
Evolution of Malcolm X’s views on women

The following is from a 1987 speech by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, about Malcolm X, Revolutionary Leader of the Working Class.

Let’s again face reality. In a world as backward as the one we live in, the women are in bondage. In America—where scarcely any moral values are left—

Malcolm X was still an unequivocal opponent of intermarriage. As public rebukes by conservative Black thugs and the National Guard—as well as 20th-century insistence on the road to the dictatorship of the proletariat. A book about the last century and a half of class struggle in the United States—from the Civil War and Radical Reconstruction to today—and the unimpeachable evidence it offers that workers who are Black will comprise a disproportionate weighty part of the ranks and leadership of the mass social movement that will make a proletarian revolution. . . .

This is a book about the dictatorship of capital and the road to the dictatorship of the proletariat. A book about the last century and a half of class struggle in the United States—from the Civil War and Radical Reconstruction to today—and the unimpeachable evidence it offers that workers who are Black will comprise a disproportionately weighty part of the ranks and leadership of the mass social movement that will make a proletarian revolution. . . .

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

by Jack Barnes

“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 prosperous. 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 re- 

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 oppression of women as he watched them help lead the fight for Black rights in this country. When Fan- nie Lou Hamer came to New York in December 1964 to win support for the freedom struggle in Mississippi, Mal- 

spoke alongside her at a rally in Harlem and gave her a platform that night at the meeting of the OAU [Organ- ization of African-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 their human worth, sharply increased the potential forces of revolution in this country and around the world.

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 1967 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—a draft of which had been completed, with the help of journalist Alex Haley, only two weeks 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 assassins of the Nation of Islam, and the road to workers power. . . .

This is a book about the dictatorship of the proletariat. A book about the last century and a half of class struggle in the United States—from the Civil War and Radical Reconstruction to today—and the unimpeachable evidence it offers that workers who are Black will comprise a disproportionate weighty part of the ranks and leadership of the mass social movement that will make a proletarian revolution. . . .

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Available online for only $15. Or for $10 with Militant subscription from one of the distributors listed on page 8.

PathfinderPress.com
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. authorities have released a statement that to prevent the Cubans from meeting their legal obligations.

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

The Militant May 10, 2010

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The Militant May 10, 2010

The Militant

The Militant

The Militant
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 in America. As we have emphasized, Cuba has shown by its example, truthfulness, and biting humor. 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 back- ward, and to buy a victory by any country's defeat is a victory for the main 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 broken. And 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 ideology, to contribute to our efforts to make this liberation as rapid and deep-going as possible.

The 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 are not asking this with no intention whatsoever of blackmail or theatrics, nor are we looking for an easy way to get closer to the Afro-American masses. The macro-victory 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. 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 a victory by any country’s defeat is a victory for the main enemy and is one step more toward the final victory.

If we establish that kind of relation between the two groups of countries, we must agree that the socialist countries are, in a certain way, accomplices of imperial exploitation. It can be argued that any exchange with the underdeveloped countries is an insin- part of the foreign trade of the socialist countries. That is very true. But we must agree that the imperial character of the exchange.

Che: ‘Proletarian internationalism is a necessity’
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 largest 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

would not be an effective counterinsurgency tactic.

Meanwhile, with Washington’s blessing Islamabad has initiated a new offensive of its own in the tribal ar- eas of Pakistan that border Afghanistan. The Pakistani military has relied heavily on air and artillery strikes in what officials say 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 the hearts and minds.” The recent assault has displaced hundreds of thousands. Pakistani operations through- out 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 of- ficial 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 Kandahar military intelligence official told the Post. The Kookikhel tribe, an area considered hostile to the Kandahar

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.

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

Kiva then provides capital to microfinance firms

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‘Microlenders’ spin massive web of debt slavery

BY DOUG NELSON

The practice of loaning relatively small amounts to “entrepreneurs” in underdeveloped countries, re- ferred to as microcredit, has for decades been ped- dled as a “harmless” act to combat poverty. Today microloans have become increasingly prolific and predatory, expanding a massive web of debt slavery to tens of millions with the lowest in- comes.

The concept is credited to Muhammad Yunus, an economics professor from Bangladesh. In 1976 he established Grameen Bank, “rural bank,” as a re- search 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 per- cent of whom are women. It has 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 mil- lion.

The bank’s Web site claims 65 percent of its bor- rowers’ 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 created microcredit institutions in Peru about 13 years ago. The initial investment was $3.5 million, which in- cluded $450,000 in government funds. Last year it sold it to Barclays de Credit, one of Peru’s largest banks, for $96 million, of which the nonprofit pocketed $74 million.

With total assets of some $60 billion worldwide, mi- crocredit has rapidly expanded and become a very lucrative field of investment. Last August the Wall Street Journal pointed out that during the 12 preced- ing months microfinance funds returned 4.5 percent to investors. Dozens of international 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 2008. 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 Remanganapur in southern India, a revolt against payments was developed.

Interest rates vary widely, averaging about 37 per- cent annually in interest and fees. With high demand, some institutions are charged interest rates of more than 100 percent, according to the Times. Compa- nies (let’s share) in Mexico started as a “nonprofit.” Today it’s the largest microfinance institution in the world.

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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 per- cent annual interest. In order to conceal the actual amount it fiches 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.

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