

Obama plan offers no relief for jobless

Gov't bank to boost business profits



Job fair in Southfield, Michigan, August 25. State has one of highest jobless rates in country. AP Photo/Paul Sancya

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

At a Labor Day speech in Milwaukee September 6, President Barack Obama announced a jobs plan to repair the country’s transportation infrastructure. Even though he rolled up his sleeves to suggest he was getting to work, there is likely to be little impact on unemployment or the deterioration of roads, railroads, and runways.

Obama announced the plan on the eve of midterm elections when incumbents in both parties are facing

stiff challenges because of the grinding economic crisis. It calls for spending \$50 billion over the next year to set up an “infrastructure bank” run by the government that would seek investments from banks and other financial institutions.

The bank will “focus on the smartest investments,” based on “competition and innovation,” said Obama. He promised that it will “not only create jobs immediately” but “make our

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White House policies aimed against Cuban Revolution

BY SETH GALINSKY

The Barack Obama administration recently leaked news that it may ease some restrictions on travel and communication with Cuba. These measures, like the ongoing U.S. economic embargo, seek to foster internal opposition to the Cuban government and subvert the Cuban Revolution.

While refusing to confirm the details, deputy White House spokesper-

son William Burton said that Obama would “continue to do things . . . that help to create a more democratic environment and expand freedoms for the Cuban people.”

According to the August 6 *Miami Herald*, the key change is the expansion of existing “purposeful” educational, religious, and cultural travel between Cuba and the United States.

U.S.-Cuba flights, currently allowed only from Miami, Los Angeles, and John F. Kennedy airport in New York, could be permitted from some 35 U.S. airports. The measures would also make it easier to pay in the United States for telephone and other services, the *Herald* said, “in hopes of increasing communications between the island and Cuban exiles.”

Washington has been stepping up its aid to counterrevolutionary groups in Cuba. Some \$15 million for the “Cuba Democracy” programs of the U.S. Aid for International Development (USAID) were released in June, including \$3 million for “groups that are particularly marginalized” to help

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September protest to back Black farmers

BY SUSAN LAMONT

WASHINGTON—Black farmers plan to gather here September 21–23 to protest the U.S. Senate’s continued refusal to approve \$1.25 billion in funding to settle long-standing claims of discrimination by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

“The Black farmers’ lawsuit was cut short after 1999 and many farmers were left hanging,” said Robert Binion, 56, a farmer and long-time civil rights activist from Clanton, Alabama, in a telephone interview with the *Militant*. “We should have finished the job back then.”

“Our gathering in Washington is urgent,” continued Binion. “When the Civil War ended, they told us we would get ‘40 acres and a mule.’ But all we’ve had is empty promises and more promises. We’re not asking for a handout, but for simple, equal justice. Both the Democrats and Republicans are responsible for this situation. It’s

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California: Court voids antigay nuptial law

BY BETSEY STONE

SAN FRANCISCO—The debate on same-sex marriage is intensifying nationally. At issue is the right to equal treatment under the law.

Five states and the District of Columbia now allow same-sex marriages. Thirty-nine states have laws that prohibit them.

At the federal level, the Defense of Marriage Act, signed into law by William Clinton in 1996, defines marriage as a union of a man and a woman. In July, a federal judge in Massachusetts ruled that this law is unconstitutional. The federal government has not indicated whether it will appeal.

A recent CNN poll found that a majority of U.S. residents support same-sex marriage by a narrow margin.

On August 4 Federal District Court Judge Vaughn Walker struck down Proposition 8, California’s law banning gay marriage. The measure was adopted by referendum in 2008, win-

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South African public workers press wage demands on gov’t



Reuters/Siphiwe Sibeko

Public-sector workers in South Africa on strike in capital Johannesburg August 26

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

A three-week nationwide strike by some 1.3 million public workers in South Africa was suspended by union officials for 21 days September 6. Workers will consider again a revised government offer that the largest unions had voted down earlier. The government, led by the African National Congress (ANC) and headed by President Jacob Zuma, has campaigned against the workers’ walk-out.

The strike began August 18 after the federal government refused union de-

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The Militant September 20, 2010

Art show by Cuban Five prisoner opens in N.Y.C.

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

NEW YORK—A month-long exhibit of artwork by Antonio Guerrero, one of five Cuban revolutionaries locked up in U.S. prisons on trumped-up charges, opened here September 3 with a public event that drew 100 people. The exhibit is being shown until October 1 at the Clemente Soto Vélaz Cultural and Educational Center, a historically Puerto Rican arts center on Manhattan's Lower East Side.

The exhibit, titled "From My Altitude," features 28 works by Guerrero, who learned to paint and draw from fellow inmates at the maximum-security federal prison in Florence, Colorado, where he has been held for most of the 12 years he and the other four Cubans have been kept behind bars.

Guerrero's work includes pencil drawings as well as paintings employing oil, pastels, watercolor, acrylic, and airbrush techniques.

His subjects range from Havana's harbor to a view of the Rocky Mountains from the Florence prison, nudes, cats, birds, and portraits, including of Fidel Castro, Ernesto Che Guevara, his mother Mirta Rodríguez, and other relatives of the Cuban Five. One striking work portrays his beige prison outfit, with name and prisoner number, hanging from a wall. At the bottom Guerrero wrote in Spanish, "One day my prison shirt will be left hanging there."

The September 3 inaugural event was moderated by Nancy Cabrero, president of Casa de las Américas, a Cuban American organization here that supports the Cuban Revolution. Manuel Morán, president of the executive board of the Clemente Soto Vélaz Center, spoke and introduced from the audience actor-director Nelson Landrieu, cofounder of the center.

Also speaking were New York City Council member Rosie Méndez, human rights lawyer Michael Warren, and Pedro Núñez Mosquera, Cuba's ambassador to the United Nations. Celebrated actor Harry Belafonte, a longtime supporter of the campaign to free the Cuban Five, was also introduced.

Warren explained that on Sept.

12, 1998, FBI agents arrested "our five brothers"—Guerrero, Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Fernando González, and René González. They were convicted on trumped-up charges including "conspiracy to commit espionage" and, in the case of Hernández, "conspiracy to commit murder," receiving long sentences.

Warren noted that in reality, the five had been monitoring the activities of right-wing Cuban exiles who launch armed attacks on Cuba with Washington's knowledge and complicity.

The frame-up methods used against the five show that "we can expect no justice from the courts of this country," Warren said. Nonetheless, thanks to pressure created by the international campaign for their freedom, he added, three of the five won reductions in their sentences in the past year, including Guerrero.

Warren asked those present to call on the Obama administration to grant visas to Adriana Pérez and Olga Salanueva in order to visit their hus-



Roberto Mercado

One hundred people turned out for opening night of Antonio Guerrero art show at Clemente Soto Vélaz Cultural and Educational Center on New York's Lower East Side.

bands, Hernández and René González respectively.

A number of those attending the event had heard about it through the cultural center and were learning about the Cuban Five for the first time. Dozens signed up for more in-

formation and picked up literature about the case.

The exhibit is open at the Clemente Soto Vélaz Center Mondays through Fridays from 4:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Other hours can be arranged by appointment.

White House policy targets Cuban Revolution

Continued from front page

"empower them," including aiding them in setting up private businesses.

USAID boasts that it "directly supports" groups like Ladies in White that organize provocative actions against the Cuban government and that it sends "international experts" to Cuba to train "independent" groups.

On August 5 the U.S. State Department announced that it was keeping Cuba on its list of "state sponsors of terrorism." On August 31 a federal appellate court upheld a Florida law that prohibits state funding of academic and research trips to nations on the list.

Embargo aimed at crippling Cuba

Since the early 1960s, every U.S. president, Democrat and Republican alike, has maintained the economic, commercial, and financial embargo imposed on Cuba. Their aim is to cripple the country's economy and punish the Cuban people for having made a revolution that overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista. Except for a brief period in the late 1970s and early '80s, Washington essentially banned travel to Cuba by U.S. citizens, with exceptions for journalists and some academic exchanges.

An integral part of Washington's efforts has been combining violent armed actions against Cuba with what the U.S. imperialist rulers call "Track II," creating opposition political groups that could aid in overturning the revolution. An October 1962 State Department memo states that U.S. advisors would keep their "direct participation" to a minimum, while financing such groups.

In 1992 President George H. Bush signed the Cuban Democracy Act—often called the Torricelli bill—which tightened the embargo of Cuba, including restrictions on remittances by family members and travel to the island, and at the same time stepped

up Track II organizing and financing of internal opposition.

In March 1996 President William Clinton signed the Helms-Burton bill into law, further tightening the embargo and adding penalties to businessmen from other countries who invest there. Clinton justified the law as a way to punish Cuba for shooting down two hostile aircraft flown by counterrevolutionaries who had repeatedly violated Cuban airspace.

By January 1999 Clinton announced he was initiating steps to expand "people to people" contact, two-way exchanges of scientists and academics with Cuba, emphasizing the Track II approach.

President George W. Bush tightened up interaction in 2003, limiting remittances sent by Cuban Americans to their families on the island and cutting back on cultural and academic exchanges.

Continued U.S. hostility to revolution

The Obama administration began a return to the Clinton-era Track II approach last year with the removal of restrictions on Cuban Americans traveling to Cuba and sending money to their families there. White House moves to further expand specific types of travel take place in the context of economic, social, and political challenges confronting the Cuban Revolution in a period of prolonged absence of revolutionary struggles worldwide and mounting consequences of the worldwide capitalist economic crisis.

Some liberal politicians, including California congresswoman Barbara Lee, who present themselves as "friends of Cuba," say that the expected Obama measures do not go far enough.

Lee, a Democrat and member of the Congressional Black Caucus, issued a statement August 18 titled "Mr. President: Lift the Travel Ban." She is a sponsor of the Travel Restriction Reform and Export Enhancement Act, a congressional bill that calls for fewer

restrictions on travel and trade with the Caribbean nation.

The 50-year embargo of Cuba "hasn't brought down Castro's government," Lee argues. "We need to try a new approach."

"When Cubans start buying our goods and forming relationships with Americans, the path to their future—a democratic and prosperous one—will become clearer than ever," she said.

This approach is also supported by many U.S.-backed counterrevolutionary groups and individuals inside Cuba who want to restore capitalism there. A letter to the U.S. House of Representatives backing the Lee-sponsored bill was signed by 74 Cuban "dissidents."

In a speech to Cuba's National Assembly of People's Power August 1, Cuban leader Raúl Castro pointed out that the Obama administration is not easing Washington's hostility to the revolution.

"In essence nothing has changed," Castro stated, "although there is less rhetoric and occasional bilateral talks are held on specific and limited topics, in reality the blockade continues to be applied."

"We will keep acting with the serenity and patience we have learned over the last 50 plus years," he concluded.

Two weeks after Castro's speech, the U.S. Treasury Department announced that it was fining Barclay's Bank \$176 million for violating U.S. sanctions against Cuba, Burma, Iran, and Sudan.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

CALIFORNIA

San Francisco

A Real Jobs Program—Why Working People Need a Labor Party. Speaker: Representative, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Sept. 17, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5; unemployed \$1. 5482 Mission St., Tel.: (415) 584-2135.



Join activities to free Cuban Five!

Events to demand freedom for the Cuban Five are taking place in U.S. cities from September 12 to October 8. To learn more go to:

freethefive.org or thecuban5.org

Workers at U. of Miami win gains in new contract

BY DEBORAH LIATOS

MIAMI—Nearly 400 cleaners and landscapers at the University of Miami won a new contract with the Boston-based contractor UNICCO September 1.

The three-year agreement includes a 7.5 percent wage increase, improves benefits, including sick days and holidays, and increases employer contributions to the health-care fund up to 23 percent.

The workers will get three weeks' vacation after eight years on the job instead of 10, gain Martin Luther King Jr. Day as an additional paid holiday, and receive four personal days, up from three.

The workers won a strengthening of seniority rights so they can bid on jobs, change shifts, and get higher classification jobs.

On August 21 the Service Employees International Union 32BJ, which represents the workers, held a rally after which the unionists unanimously voted to authorize a strike if UNICCO maintained its position of freezing wages, health care, and other benefits.

In the spring of 2006, cleaners at the University of Miami held a nine-week strike that included marches, sit-ins, and a hunger strike.

The walkout received national attention because the president of the university is Donna Shalala, former secretary of health and human services under the William Clinton administration. She was widely criticized by workers at the time for not responding to their demands.

The 2006 strike won union recognition and led to a contract that increased wages and provided health care and other benefits. It gained wide support among students, faculty, and other workers in the area.

At the August 21 rally speeches were translated into English, Creole, and Spanish. Josette, a worker at the Fort Lauderdale airport, said, "Our bosses are like animals that suck blood. If we unite stronger we will be victorious."

Students have been among the strongest backers of the workers' struggle at the university. Many were active in supporting the organizing drive in 2006. Stephanie Sandhu, a member of Students Toward a New Democracy, spoke at the August 21 rally. "We will not let the university push you back to save a few pennies," she said.

Deborah Liatos is the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from Florida.



Militant/Deborah Liatos

University of Miami cleaners and landscapers march August 21 for better contract. Unionists won wage increase, more benefits, and better seniority rights.

Drive opens to sell 'Workers Power' book

Continued from front page

campaign will run through November 9.

The drive builds on the success of socialist workers last spring in introducing 1,870 people to the *Workers Power* book, many of whom also subscribed or renewed their subscription to the *Militant*.

As Barnes's introductory sentence describes, the book is "about the dictatorship of capital and the road to the dictatorship of the proletariat." It is a must read for any militant worker or young person today, as it puts in perspective the last century and a half of the class struggle in the United States to illustrate the weighty role that workers who are Black will play in the mass social movement that will make a socialist revolution.

Barnes explains the necessity of working people wresting power from the hands of the capitalist rulers and

how the toilers can wield that state power to end all forms of oppression and exploitation. In this context, the book discusses the last year of Malcolm X's life and "how he became the face and the authentic voice of the forces of the coming American revolution."

As communist workers begin selling the book and introducing workers, farmers, and young people to the *Militant* this fall, there has been no letup in the capitalist crisis. It continues to grind on with its economic, political, and social consequences for the world's toilers. At the same time, the rulers are expanding their war in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the surrounding region, and increasing the economic and political pressure, including plans for military action against Iran. These are the conditions that make working people look for the perspectives presented in *Malcolm X*, *Black Liberation*, and *the Road to Workers Power*.

The heart of the effort this fall will be sales in working-class communities, especially where many Black workers live. In addition socialist workers will reach out on the job and at plant gates. They will go to political events and onto the campuses for the type of exchange that will advance an understanding of the capitalist dictatorship and the road to workers power. This effort will be substantially aided by the election campaigns of socialist candidates in cities across the country presenting a working-class alternative to the Democratic and Republican parties.

Recent experience indicates the kind of response we can expect. Socialist campaigners at the August 28 march in

Washington, D.C., which was called to counter a rally organized by conservative talk-show host Glenn Beck, sold 23 copies of the *Workers Power* book, along with 23 subscriptions to the *Militant*.

At the August 28 demonstration in Detroit, an auto worker who is Black bought the book. He told John Hawkins, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of Illinois, "You see all this going on—layoffs, closing down plants, foreclosures. You know people who are going through it. At a certain point you just have to stop sitting there and do something."

In conjunction with the drive to sell the *Workers Power* book and subscriptions to the *Militant*, the Socialist Workers Party has launched a party-building fund to raise \$95,000. The fund-raising campaign will also run from September 11 to November 9. The money raised will help finance the work of the party to reach out to working-class struggles in the United States and around the world.

Socialist workers around the world, whose campaign halls are listed on page 10, will spearhead the *Workers Power* book sales and subscription drives. SWP branches in the United States will organize the fund-raising campaign. Quotas adopted by local areas will be printed in next week's issue of the *Militant*, along with the overall goals.

Readers of the *Militant* are encouraged to join in the effort and send articles, pictures, and short pieces that illustrate the discussions with working people that are helping to advance these campaigns.

Support Troy Davis case, say Georgia socialist candidates

BY JANICE LYNN

ATLANTA—The Socialist Workers Party candidates for public office in Georgia condemned the August 24 action of U.S. District Judge William Moore upholding the conviction of Troy Davis for the 1989 killing of a white Savannah police officer. The party is running Jacob Perasso for governor, Lisa Potash for U.S. Senate, and Rachele Fruit for agriculture commissioner.

Davis, who is Black, has been on death row for 19 years. Three attempts by state authorities to execute him have been stayed due to widespread international support for Davis.

At a June 23 and 24 evidentiary hearing for Davis the judge heard from several of the seven prosecution witnesses who recanted their testimony at the original trial. Three have told how they were coerced by police to finger Troy Davis. Others have said they could identify another man as the one who killed the officer.

In his ruling, however, Moore said Davis failed to prove his innocence, stating, while "new evidence casts some additional, minimal doubt on his conviction, it is largely smoke and mirrors."

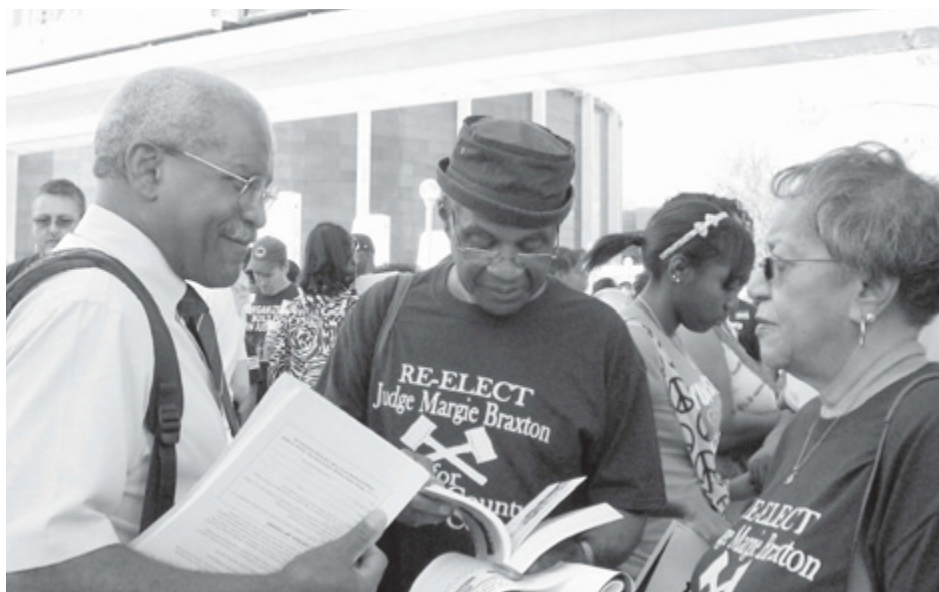
"This decision is a blow to the pre-

sumption of innocence, an important democratic gain for working people," said a socialist campaign news release. "Putting the burden of proof on the accuser, not the accused, is a fundamental democratic conquest that the working class must defend."

"Having to prove your innocence beyond a reasonable doubt in order to get off death row and receive a new trial—a virtually impossible task—is a travesty of justice faced by many working-class prisoners, especially Blacks, Latinos, and Asians," said the SWP statement.

It also pointed out that the protections against the state that working people have won over centuries, such as the presumption of innocence, Miranda rights, defendants' rights of appeal, the Bill of Rights, and other amendments to the Constitution, are under attack. "Davis's case is a powerful illustration of how the death penalty is a class-biased and racist weapon used by the rulers against working people," the socialist candidates said.

The candidates pledged to continue fighting with others for freedom for Troy Davis, for the abolition of the death penalty, and for defense of workers rights.



Militant/Alyson Kennedy

John Hawkins, Socialist Workers candidate for governor of Illinois, campaigns with *Malcolm X*, *Black Liberation*, and *the Road to Workers Power* at August 28 demonstration in Detroit.

Stem cell ruling aims to undercut abortion rights

BY SETH GALINSKY

A federal judge granted an injunction on government funding of human embryonic stem cell research August 23. The lawsuit seeking the halt was brought by opponents of a woman's right to choose abortion.

In their original filing to block government funds, antiabortion doctors James Sherley and Theresa Deisher were joined not only by two antiabortion groups; they also sought to include human embryos as plaintiffs in the case.

In some stem cell research, cells are removed from fertilized ova (human eggs), destroying the embryo in the process. The embryos are from fertility clinics where they are no longer needed for in vitro fertilization. The embryos at this early stage are smaller than the period at the end of this sentence. Judge Royce Lamberth dismissed the case in October 2009, saying that those bringing the suit "lack[ed] standing."

In June this year an appeals court overturned the dismissal and ordered Lamberth to hear the case, but with Sherley and Deisher as the only plaintiffs.

After a new hearing, Lamberth ruled that government guidelines changed by the Barack Obama administration violate a law passed by Congress and "threaten the very livelihood" of Sherley and Deisher, who depend on government funding for their research using stem cells extracted from human tissue, not embryos.

Many scientific experiments show that stem cells could open advances for

treating currently incurable diseases such as diabetes, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, spinal injuries, and some types of blindness. In spite of this, in 1996 U.S. Congress passed the Dickey-Wicker Amendment, which prohibited the use of federal funds for "the creation of a human embryo" for research purposes or research in which human "embryos are destroyed, discarded, or knowingly subjected to risk of injury or death."

The William Clinton administration interpreted the law as allowing government-funded research on embryonic stem cells that were created using only private funds. President George W. Bush imposed tighter restrictions, but still allowed government funds to be used for researching stem cells extracted before his Aug. 9, 2001, policy statement.

After taking office, Obama loosened the restrictions, allowing greater use of stem cells from embryos discarded from fertility clinics. Sherley and Deisher filed their suit after the National Institutes of Health issued new guidelines implementing Obama's executive order.

Proponents of using stem cells from embryos argue that these cells are more versatile than stem cells that are grown from other sources, such as skin tissue or bone marrow. In 2009 the government allocated \$143 million on more than 330 scientific projects that use human embryonic stem cells. Many of those programs are now in jeopardy.

The opponents of these programs claim that non-embryonic stem cells are as good or better for developing new

New Zealand: 400 protest child care cuts



Militant/Terry Coggan

TAURANGA, New Zealand—Four hundred people marched here August 28 to protest planned cuts in government funding for early childhood education. The march and rally was organized by two local preschools in conjunction with the New Zealand Educational Institute, the union covering junior school and preschool teachers.

The cuts target child care centers with the highest proportion of trained staff, including all the fully state-funded kindergartens and many private centers that charge fees. Many will be forced to lay off teachers or raise prices.

"This is a really important cause. We don't want to settle for a lower quality education for our children," said Greta Doyle, a junior school teacher currently retraining as a preschool teacher.

—FELICITY COGGAN

ways to treat disease. But in their statements they make clear they are suing to promote their belief that human life begins with conception and that embryonic stem cell research is immoral.

Ron Stoddart, executive director of Nightlight Christian Adoptions, one of the original plaintiffs who were removed from the suit, told the *New York Times*, "Embryos are preborn human life that should be protected and not destroyed."

The group's Web site features a page promoting "frozen embryo adoption" to help "frozen embryos realize their ultimate purpose—life."

Deisher works in Seattle for AVM Biotechnology, which says it is "dedicated to the discovery, development, and commercialization of safe, effective, and affordable pro-life therapeutics." Sherley works at Boston Biomedical Research Institute, which gets more than 75 percent of its funding from federal grants.

Judge Lamberth ruled that harm to people who have diseases that embryonic stem cell research could aid, by closing the door to government funding, "is speculative," but the harm to Sherley and Deisher, from the "increased competition for limited funds is an actual, imminent injury."

The Justice Department has said it will appeal the injunction, but the White House has yet to issue a public statement on the ruling.

Iowa socialist defends access to abortion pills

The following statement was issued by Rebecca Williamson, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress, Third District, in Iowa in response to an effort by Operation Rescue and other antiabortion groups to end a program that provides abortion pills to rural Iowa clinics. The program, run by Planned Parenthood, allows patients to consult a doctor via computer videoconference and get abortion pills prescribed.

Efforts by Operation Rescue and other antiabortion groups to shut down Planned Parenthood's telemedicine program should be vigorously opposed. I and the other SWP candidates call on working people to defend Planned Parenthood's efforts to expand access to abortion services to rural women.

Since the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion, a woman's right to choose abortion has

been under sustained attack by successive Democratic and Republican administrations on both the state and federal level. Many of these attacks have been aimed at limiting access to abortion.

Access to safe, legal abortions is a precondition for equality and liberation of women. Women's rights and workers' rights are under attack as

the depression drags on. We need to build a movement that will organize the power of the working class to defend the rights and the living standards of all workers. Defending a woman's right to choose means she can control what she will do with her life, including whether or when to have children.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



September 20, 1985

The Reagan administration has imposed some mild sanctions against the racist apartheid regime in South Africa. This is a concession to the deepening anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa and to the growing anti-apartheid movement here in the United States. The most important of the economic sanctions will ban further imports of the Krugrand, the South African gold coin.

Reagan said he was banning loans to the South African government. But he excepted those "which improve economic opportunities or educational, housing, and health facilities that are open and accessible to South Africans of all races." In the past, Reagan has claimed that all U.S. investments and loans in South Africa help Blacks.

The imposition of sanctions is a blow to the apartheid regime. It reinforces the status of the murderous South African government as an international pariah.



September 19, 1960

NEWARK—Gladys Barkers Grauer, Socialist Workers nominee for U.S. Senator from New Jersey, has urged Gov. Meyner to act against local officials and racist hoodlums in Hamilton Township who are trying to prevent Roderick Woodward, a Negro, from moving into his newly purchased home there.

In an Aug. 29 letter to the governor, Mrs. Grauer demanded that he probe the failure of township officials to provide Woodward police protection when racists tried to burn down his home. She also urged investigation of the township's invoking a previously unused ordinance against Woodward requiring a health permit before a real estate sale is closed.

A reply to Mrs. Grauer from the Statehouse said that the governor agreed with her that discrimination in housing "has no place in the United States."



September 21, 1935

Reformists and liberals of all shades and varieties are fond of calling Marxists "sectarians," "dogmatists," fantastic "extremists." This is the way in which jelly-backed individuals always describe those who have principles and take them seriously. It is a verbal cover that reformists use to hide their own cowardly refusal to face facts and draw conclusions.

Nowhere is this more evident than on the question of war. Reformists are grievously "offended" when Marxists are not merely scornful of every form of pacifism but fight mercilessly against it. Pacifism, far from being a force against war, in practice aids the war-makers; they describe pacifism as the hypocritical front for imperialism, a means whereby, under the pretense of opposition to "war in general," this particular war—whichever is may be—is made morally respectable.



Militant/Diana Newberry

Rebecca Williamson (left) SWP candidate for Congress campaigning in Des Moines.

Chile mine owners never fixed unsafe conditions

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

As 33 trapped miners prepare for what will be the longest-ever mine rescue attempt, more facts are emerging on the unsafe working conditions that led to the mine disaster in Chile.

The copper and gold miners have been trapped 2,300 feet underground since August 5. The nonunion San José mine employs 140 workers and is owned by the San Esteban Mining Company.

Chile is the world's top copper producer, accounting for 35 percent of global production.

It took rescuers eight attempts to drill a bore-hole to the miners. "All 33 of us are fine in the shelter," wrote one of the miners 17 days later. Due to the depth of the mine, estimates are that it will take at least three months to rescue them. The miners are trapped in a 650-foot-square space.

San Esteban Mining said that it was thanks to company safety regulations that the miners were found alive. The comment outraged families of the trapped miners.

The mine is notorious for its unsafe working conditions. The most serious is the fact that there was no escape route out of the mine. After the cave-in, miners tried to escape up the emergency ladder in a ventilation shaft, but only got a third of the way because the mine owners never finished constructing the ladder to the top.

In 2004 a miner was killed by a cave-in. Two years later a truck driver was killed. That same year 182 workers were reported injured, 56 of them seriously. Following the 2007 death of a geologist in a mining accident, the mine was ordered shut by the government.

Despite the trail of fatalities, injuries, and safety violations, the mine was reopened in 2008, even though the company had not corrected many unsafe working conditions, like completing the escape route.

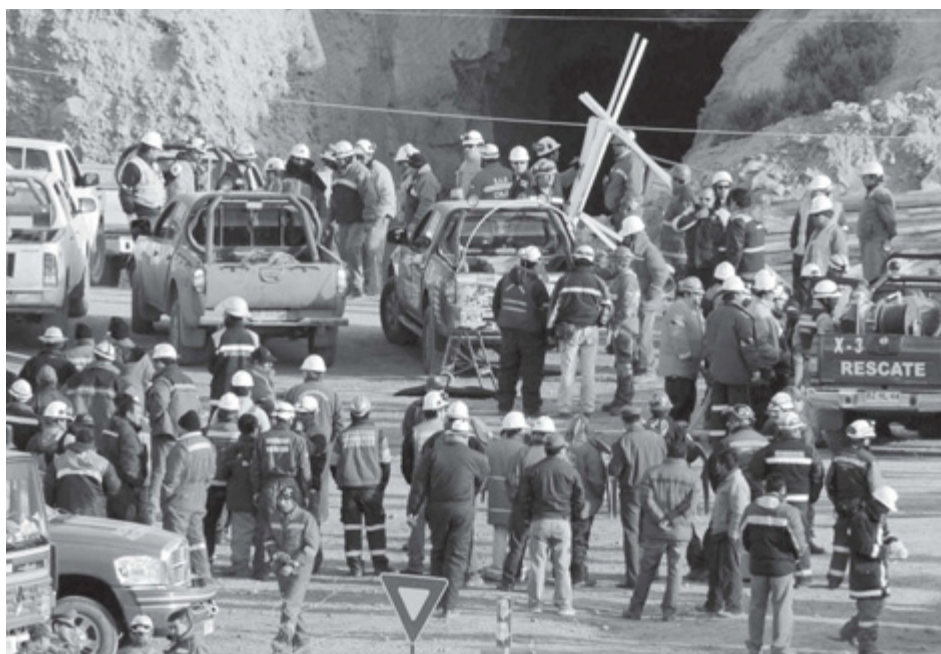
After communication was reestablished with the trapped miners, they reported that the company did not maintain the safety refuge. With the use of a small camera that had been lowered down the bore-hole, miners "showed their living conditions and took turns greeting their loved ones," reported the

GlobalPost.

The paper wrote, "'This is the famous refuge,' said miner Mario Sepulveda in the video, as he pointed to the shabby sign with 'Refuge' stamped on it. 'It was supposed to be in conditions to shelter us, but when we got here, the energy was cut off and there was no ventilation,' he said bitterly."

In response to the disaster, Chilean president Sebastian Piñera dismissed the national director of Sernageomin, a government agency responsible for miner safety, and created a work safety commission that does not include any miners. Piñera is also calling for increasing the number of inspectors from 18 to 45—a paltry figure for a country with 4,500 mines. Thirty-one miners have died in accidents so far this year.

One of the miners' families has filed



Martin Bernetti/AFP/Getty Images

Rescue crews outside San Esteban mine in Chile where 33 miners are trapped

a criminal lawsuit accusing both company owners and government officials of negligence by allowing the mine to be reopened in 2008. In response, San Esteban said it is considering filing

bankruptcy to protect its profits. However, many of the miners' families successfully petitioned a Chilean judge, who froze \$1.8 million of the mining company's assets as a "precaution."

Washington steps up covert actions in Yemen

BY DOUG NELSON

U.S. government officials are discussing how to step up Washington's covert military campaign against al-Qaeda forces in Yemen and allied groups in Somalia. Under consideration is increasing direct U.S. strikes in Yemen, including the feasibility of using aerial drones as the CIA and U.S. military regularly do in Pakistan.

Operations in Yemen are directed at disrupting al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), which took responsibility for a failed suicide bombing of a Detroit-bound flight last Christmas. Following the bombing attempt, Washington expanded its military cooperation with the Yemeni rulers, announcing \$155 million in additional military assistance. The White House has publicly ordered the assassination of Anwar al-Awlaki, a U.S. citizen and alleged leader of the group believed to be in Yemen.

U.S. operations in Yemen over the last nine months have included five reported strikes from fighter jets and sea-launched cruise missiles containing cluster bombs. One cruise missile strike killed more than 40 civilians. Washington appears to have taken a respite after an attack accidentally took out Jabir al-Shabwani, deputy governor of Marib Province.

Washington has for years been mounting pressure and providing incentives for the Yemeni government to pursue a military campaign against AQAP. Initially apprehension was widespread among the Yemeni rulers, as the weak government of Ali Abdullah Saleh has traditionally relied on alliances with armed Islamist groups and tribal militias to maintain its hold on power. But AQAP's increasingly frequent attacks directed at the government—and most recently its declaration of war against the Yemeni state in June—has helped steel the resolve of government officials.

Following an ambush on an armored personnel carrier that killed at least eight soldiers, the Yemeni military launched an offensive August 20 on the southern town of Lawdar. Troops besieged the city and distributed pamphlets calling on the city's entire population of 80,000 to immediately evacuate.

At least 33 people were killed during the four-day assault, including 11 sol-

diers and at least three civilians. Conflicting reports of the number of al-Qaeda fighters killed was between 12 and 19. Among those reportedly killed was Adel Saleh Hardaba, AQAP's second in command; at least five professed al-Qaeda members surrendered. Conflicting reports in the *Yemeni Observer* have put the number of al-Qaeda combatants in the city between 60 and 200.

The government claims AQAP is allied with groups fighting for separation for southern Yemen, which existed as an independent nation from 1967–1990. The nationalist movement denies any connection with al-Qaeda.

A range of exiled leaders from south Yemen, both those for and against independence, have denounced the siege, pointing out that the government has used its war against AQAP to justify its violent repression against rising discontent in the south.

Amnesty International accuses the government of organizing a violent crackdown on all government opposition and criticism under the pretext of combating terrorism.

Obama plan little aid on jobs

Continued from front page

economy hum over the long haul." The White House has not stated how many jobs it expects this project will create.

"The outside investors would expect a competitive return on their money," noted the *New York Times*, "so many of the completed projects would have to charge fees, taxes, or tolls."

In a recent opinion piece lauding the proposal as "a first step," *New York Times* columnist Bob Herbert acknowledged that "it's not in any way commensurate with our overwhelming infrastructure needs or the gruesome scale of the nation's unemployment crisis."

The official unemployment rate has hovered around 10 percent over the past year. With the 9.6 percent rate reported for August, more than 17 million workers are jobless and nearly 9 million others seeking full-time jobs have been forced into part-time hours. Since January 2009 bosses have eliminated 940,000 construction jobs alone.

A report issued last year by the

American Society of Civil Engineers on the deterioration of U.S. infrastructure said it would take \$2.2 trillion over five years to get the roads, bridges, levees, schools, water supply, and other infrastructure into decent shape.

Allocating \$50 billion over the next year toward infrastructure repairs is also just a drop in the bucket compared to the \$700 billion the federal government allocated in bank bailouts with passage of the Troubled Assets Recovery Program in October 2008.

Speaking in Cleveland two days after his Labor Day speech, Obama announced a cut of nearly \$200 billion in business taxes over two years. This includes allowing companies to fully deduct the cost of purchasing equipment through 2011 and a permanent extension of research tax credits.

The White House hopes these incentives will spur employers to spend, invest, and create jobs. But employers continue to be reluctant, in spite of these gifts, while their profit margins are under pressure in a declining economy.

for further reading

New International no. 12

Capitalism's Long Hot Winter Has Begun

by Jack Barnes



Today's sharpening interimperialist conflicts are fueled by the opening stages of what will be decades of economic, financial, and social convulsions and class battles. Class-struggle-minded working

people must face this historic turning point and draw satisfaction from being "in their face" as we chart a revolutionary course to confront it.

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Glenn Beck rally in D.C. prompts counterprotest

BY NED MEASEL
AND PAUL PEDERSON

WASHINGTON—A rally called by conservative media personality Glenn Beck at the location and on the anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington drew a counterprotest here August 28. Nearly ten thousand responded to the call from Democratic Party politician Rev. Al Sharpton, the NAACP, and the National Urban League to rally to “Reclaim the Dream,” a reference to the speech given by Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. at the mass civil rights demonstration 47 years ago.

“I felt the need for African Americans to come together based on the climate of racial tension,” said Imani Lumumba. She came on one of the nine buses from Philadelphia. “We needed this. We need to become more united and politically conscious.”

People came from as far away as Atlanta and Milwaukee. The rally was held at the athletic field of Dunbar High School. Participants then marched about five miles to the construction site of the National King Memorial.

Some 300 students from Howard University participated, according to Brandon Harris, president of the Howard University Students Association.

More than 500 members of the Teamsters National Black Caucus took a break from their 35th Annual Educational Conference and Banquet to attend.

Many of the 30-plus speakers at the rally expressed the point of view that the election of President Barack Obama was an advance for all African Americans. Many attacked the “Restoring

Honor” rally called by Beck.

“We are here to let those folks on the Mall know that they don’t represent the dream,” said Jaime Contreras, president of SEIU-32BJ, referring to those at the Beck rally. “They represent hate-mongering and angry white people. The happy white people are here today. We will not let them stand in the way of the change we voted for!”

“They think we showed up in 2008,” said Sharpton, referring to the get-out-the-vote effort for Obama. “We’re coming out in ’10 because we’ve just begun to fight and we’re not going to let them turn back the clock.”

The Obama administration’s education secretary, Arne Duncan, spoke, as did the front-running Democratic Party candidates for D.C. mayor.

John Boyd, president of the National Black Farmers Association, addressed the rally. He encouraged people to contact their representatives in Congress to demand they vote for the bill allocating \$1.25 billion for a settlement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture for discrimination against Black farmers.

A three-mile march to the site of the soon-to-be-unveiled monument to King followed the rally. The location is just a short distance from the Lincoln Memorial and the marchers interacted—generally in a cordial manner—with the thousands of participants streaming toward their buses as the “Restoring Honor” rally wound down.

‘Restoring Honor’ rally

A sizeable crowd stretching from the Lincoln Memorial to the Washington Monument gathered for the “Restoring Honor” rally. CBS reported the turnout at 87,000, based on figures provided by an aerial photography company it commissioned. NBC reporter Domenico Montanaro said a Parks Service official told him the attendance was likely somewhere between 300,000 and 325,000.

The event was billed as nonpartisan and nonpolitical to promote “American” values of “honesty, integrity, merit, personal responsibility, family, and God.” Beck’s address was much more religious and circumspect than his usual on-air diatribe.

A number of those in attendance wore T-shirts or hats with logos identifying themselves with the Tea Party movement. But most of those inter-



Militant/Leah Morrison

Thousands joined counterprotest to Glenn Beck’s “Restoring Honor” rally in Washington, D.C., August 28, anniversary of historic speech by Martin Luther King, Jr.

viewed by the *Militant* said they came on their own and weren’t affiliated with any organization.

Earl Rissel and his son run a two-man water treatment business in Coatesville, Pennsylvania. They came on a bus, but said they are not part of any particular organization.

“I wanted to get together with people of like mind,” Rissel told the *Militant*. “I’m fed up with rising taxes. I’m eating it on my end rather than raising the prices to my customers because I know that about one-third of them are out of work right now.”

“I don’t like how they’re trying to take every right you have away,” Douglas Smith, an auto worker laid off from a Mack truck engine plant in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, told the *Militant*. The rights Smith was particularly angry about were encroachments on the right to bear arms.

“I hate all politicians,” said Seth, a 22-year-old consultant for small businesses who wished to be identified only by his first name. He was unhappy that the rally was so “overly religious.”

His friend, John Firtin, also 22, said he came along because he was curious.

“There are too many executive abuses of power,” Firtin said. “I don’t think going back to 1776 is the solution. But I don’t like big government. I’m for social programs in a capitalist society.”

The rally began with, and was marked throughout, by tributes to honor U.S. troops. The event organizers strove to

make a point about lack of respect for soldiers fighting U.S. wars by President Obama and a layer of other Democratic Party liberals. The rally promoted a scholarship fund for children of special forces soldiers killed in the line of duty.

“I’ve been introduced here as the mother of a soldier,” former Republican vice-presidential candidate Sarah Palin told the crowd. “I’m proud of that distinction. I raise combat men. You can’t take that away.”

Palin said the rally was in the spirit of George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Behind them, Palin said, they were linked by “the unsung deeds of ordinary people: our men and women in uniform—a force for good in the world.”

Nearly every speaker gave a tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr. and spoke against racism.

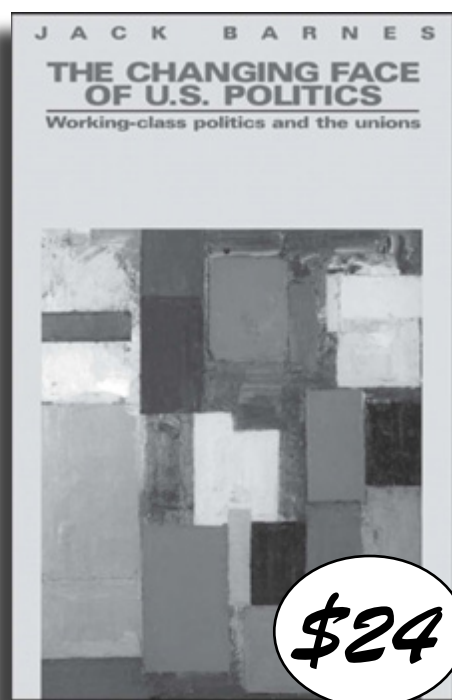
King’s niece, Alveda King, a prominent figure in the antiabortion movement, spoke flanked by leading Black ministers.

“The procreative foundation of marriage is being threatened, and the wombs of our mothers have become places where the blood of our children is shed in a womb war that threatens the fabric of our society,” she told the crowd.

Unlike previous rallies organized by Beck and other prominent figures in the Tea Party movement, rally organizers asked participants not to bring political signs—and virtually none were visible.

The Changing Face of U.S. Politics

by Jack Barnes



Building the kind of party working people need to prepare for coming class battles through which they will revolutionize themselves, their unions, and all society. A handbook for those seeking the road toward effective action to overturn the exploitative system of capitalism and join in reconstructing the world on new, socialist foundations.

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Jobs rally in Detroit builds October 2 action

BY LAURA ANDERSON

DETROIT—A couple thousand people marched and rallied here August 28 in response to unemployment and other effects of the economic crisis on working people. Organized to coincide with the 47th anniversary of the 1963 March on Washington led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the theme of the action was “Rebuild America: Jobs, Justice, and Peace.”

Auto workers comprised the bulk of the rally. Sponsored by the Rainbow PUSH Coalition and the United Auto Workers (UAW), contingents were also organized by the Service Employees International Union; American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; and other labor groups. A contingent from the Labor Council for Latin American

Advancement also marched.

Participants were overwhelmingly drawn from Detroit and the surrounding working-class suburbs, the traditional center of the U.S. auto industry. The majority were African American.

Michigan’s official unemployment rate for 2009 was 13.6 percent—16.6 percent for Hispanics and 21 percent for Blacks.

Participants included some of Michigan’s most prominent Democratic Party politicians. A major theme of the action was a protectionist call for “a trade policy that will create jobs [and] support manufacturing in America.”

“The owners get rid of union jobs, lay off workers, then bring in contract work at much less expense,” Cass Ford, an auto plant electrician told

the *Militant*. “We need better jobs and housing.”

Malcolm Morris, 20, said, “I’m here for schools and jobs. I can’t get a job.”

Others at the march drew attention to other aspects of the social crisis bearing down on working people. “I came because I’m tired of the government politicians not caring,” said Theresa Wells Dixon who helps run rehabilitation facilities for homeless and others in need.

The August 28 protest was organized as a building action for the October 2 national march on Washington for jobs, justice, and education. The Washington mobilization, first announced July 12 at the 101st annual convention of the NAACP in Kansas City, Missouri, has the backing of a broad array of unions and civil rights organizations.

Justice Dept. drops probe of fifty killings by Klan

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Despite promises by the federal government to pursue cases against former Klansmen and other rightists who got away with killing Blacks during the civil rights struggle of the 1950s and '60s, the federal government recently closed more than 50 cases without explanation.

In February 2007, Alberto Gonzales, attorney general under the George W. Bush administration, promised that the Justice Department would find and prosecute those who murdered Blacks and were never brought to justice. "You have not gotten away with anything. We are still on your trail," he stated.

"There have been no federal indictments since Mr. Gonzales's announcement, which heralded the Civil Rights-Era Cold Case Initiative," the *New York Times* reported August 23. "Very little of the millions of dollars approved by Congress to finance the initiative has materialized." No FBI field agents are currently assigned full-time to pursue any of the cases.

For several decades relatives of those killed by the Klan have been fighting for the government to indict and convict those guilty of these crimes. A few have had success. In some 20 cases the government prosecuted the rightists and won convictions.

But many families are still waiting for justice. "Everybody put me on the back burner for years and years," said Henry Allen, 65, whose father Louis Allen, a civil rights worker, was killed in front of his house in Liberty, Mississippi, in 1964. "Here's the people you can contact, here's their phone number, here's their address," he told the *Times*. "I don't have the authority to go knock on their door, but you do—and it still doesn't get done."

Stanley Nelson, editor of the *Concordia Sentinel*, a weekly newspaper pub-

lished in Ferriday, Louisiana, has been writing articles connecting the killing of a number of individuals in that area with the Silver Dollar Group, a Klan organization. "Some of those killed were civil rights activists, others were not. Some whites were killed as well as Blacks," he told the *Militant* in a phone interview.

Among the cases he has been writing about are: Joseph Edwards, a Black hotel porter who was killed because he had a relationship with a white woman, and Frank Morris, a Black cobbler who did work for whites as well as Blacks. He died when his shop was set on fire. Three years after the arson attack, a Klan leader told the FBI that local Klansmen may have carried it out, accusing Morris of flirting with white women.

At the time, Deacons for Defense was active in Louisiana organizing armed self-defense to beat back Klan attacks in Black neighborhoods. Former Deacons members have been helpful in unearthing facts about the Klan's actions, noted Nelson.

Nelson said, "The FBI wants infor-



Courtesy Concordia Sentinel, Ferriday, Louisiana

Frank Morris, fourth from left, outside his shoe repair shop in Ferriday, Louisiana. FBI has never solved case of his death when rightists set fire to his shop in 1964.

mation from you but they won't tell you anything. It's hard to know what they're doing. The public and the families deserve a revealing answer."

In the fall of 2008, President Bush signed the Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act into law. Till was a Black teenager from Chicago who was beaten and killed in Mississippi in August 1955 for allegedly whistling at a

white woman. Two men accused as the killers were acquitted. The bill authorized spending \$13.5 million for each of the next 10 years to investigate unsolved racial killings before 1970. No money was allocated in fiscal year 2009. This year the Justice Department received \$1.6 million. The FBI received an \$8 million increase for its civil rights division, part of it for cold cases.

September protest to back Black farmers

Continued from front page

discrimination, pure and simple. Not even the Congressional Black Caucus has helped us. This action will be a wake-up call for everyone."

In late August Binion initiated efforts to bring farmers from Alabama, Texas, Georgia, Mississippi, and elsewhere to Washington, D.C., to demand Senate action on funds promised by President Barack Obama last February. The funding was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives in May and has since remained stalled in the Senate, which has refused passage seven times.

The February settlement, known

as *Pigford II*, will provide funds to some of the thousands of Black farmers wrongly denied loans and access to other farm programs by the USDA. The 2010 *Pigford II* agreement was won by Black farmers' decade-long fight to include thousands who had been excluded from the 1999 *Pigford v. Glickman* class-action settlement because they missed the filing deadline or for other reasons.

In the last few weeks, Binion has spoken to farmers living on the border of Texas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas, and to others in Houston and Dallas. On August 20 he spoke in Mobile, Alabama.

Binion spoke at Alabama A&M's main campus near Huntsville August 28, and in Uniontown and Centreville, Alabama, several days later. More than 100 farmers and others attended a meeting in Natchez, Mississippi, September 2, and Binion appeared on a radio show in Meridian the following day. He is planning to visit other farming areas in Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi to build the action.

"People will leave their local areas on September 20," Binion said. "The first day in Washington, September 21, will be for prayer. Then on September 22 we will be meeting with USDA officials and members of the Senate's Agricultural Committee and others in the Senate. On September 23, at noon, there will be a rally of farmers and supporters on the National Mall by the USDA Building."

On August 24 some 300 Black farmers from Louisiana and Mississippi gathered in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, for a meeting hosted by the National Black Farmers Association (NBFA). "When you lose your land, you lose your heritage," NBFA president John Boyd told the farmers. "We may have lost our land, but we're not going to lose this fight."

The Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Association (BFAA) and Land Loss Fund is hosting the 1st Black FarmAide Action October 22-23 in Tillery, North Carolina. Two days of educational and cultural activities are planned to increase awareness "of the continued decline of Black farmers and Black land ownership, the deterioration of Black land worth, and heirs being deprived of their inheritance via government policies, heir property laws, and other egregious means," according to the BFAA Web site. For more information visit www.bfaa-us.com.

For more information on the September 21-23 protest, contact Robert Binion at (205) 280-2634 (home) or (205) 299-1873 (cell).

Iowa egg firm known for unsanitary conditions

BY CHUCK GUERRA
AND REBECCA WILLIAMSON

CLARION, Iowa—At least 1,470 people have been sickened across the United States by a salmonella outbreak linked to eggs produced by two com-

panies in Iowa, resulting in the recall of 550 million eggs. The contaminated eggs came from Wright County Egg Company, owned by livestock magnate Austin DeCoster, and Hillandale Farms, which gets feed and hens from Wright County Egg.

At the center of the scandal is DeCoster, who owns both hog and egg-producing facilities in Iowa as well as egg farms in Maine and Ohio. DeCoster's operations have had run-ins with several state government agencies over failure to comply with environmental and food safety regulations. Wright County Egg also has a reputation among working people in the area for bad conditions and low wages.

Salmonella poisoning can be deadly, although no deaths have yet been reported in connection with the outbreak. Salmonella in eggs can be prevented through a combination of proper sanitation and rodent-control measures at hen houses and feed mills.

Wright County Egg is a large operation, with nine plants spread around Wright County, Iowa. The plants produce 1.4 billion eggs a year.

The Iowa state government classified DeCoster as a "habitual violator"

of environmental laws in 2000, but that didn't stop him from expanding his operations. He simply set up new facilities acting through intermediaries and then assumed control after the required permits were approved.

Conditions in the hen houses and feed mills on his farms, as with many others around the country, were not subject to food safety inspection under existing Federal Department of Agriculture regulations.

Most workers in the local egg industry are immigrants from Mexico. A woman employed at one of DeCoster's packing plants for 10 years, who declined to be identified by name, said she works "from 6:00 in the morning to 10:00 at night." She packs about two cartloads per hour, making \$4.25 for each cartload. There are no bathrooms with running water, she said, only a "filthy" portable latrine far away.

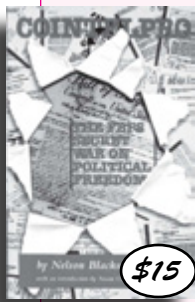
Antonio Pérez told the *Militant* he has friends who work at Wright County Egg plants. "They say the company doesn't provide gloves, face masks, or anything to cover your clothes," he said, not even for those who have direct contact with the animals. Pérez works at a plant that processes liquefied eggs.

**Cointelpro:
The FBI's secret
war on political
freedom**

by Nelson Blackstock

Describes the decades-long covert counterintelligence program—code-named Cointelpro—directed against socialists and activists in the Black and anti-Vietnam War movements. The operations revealed in the documents cited in this book provide an unprecedented look at the methods used by the FBI, CIA, military intelligence, and other U.S. police agencies.

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Malcolm X is relevant for fighters today

Studying speeches arms militants to rebut those who seek to dilute his message

Printed below is an excerpt from Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power, a book by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, recently published by Pathfinder Press. The excerpt is from the chapter titled "Malcolm X: Revolutionary Leader of the Working Class," a presentation by Barnes to a meeting in Atlanta in March 1987. Subheadings are by the Militant. Copyright © 2009 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BY JACK BARNES

The face of Malcolm X is seen worldwide today. It can be found everywhere. . . .

But those of us who continue learning from Malcolm's political example, and organize to keep it alive in word and deed, have a responsibility to recognize that with each passing anniversary, we are one year further away from Malcolm's *living presence* in politics and the class struggle. Malcolm's message, like that of other martyrs of the working classes, and of all great revolutionary leaders, becomes blurred. Different people give it a different political meaning, a different class content. Many try to tame it, to make it compatible with this or that illusory scheme to reform capitalism, to make imperialism "more peaceful," to support one or another bourgeois politician in the Democratic or Republican parties. But Malcolm never ceased denouncing such notions. With Malcolm no longer among us to speak and act for himself, and with the direct impact of his political activity receding further into the past, those who wish to distort his revolutionary course have an easier time. Malcolm's message seems to dissolve into an image, a simple commodity for sale.

As that happens, what gets lost—sometimes intentionally—is the modern revolutionary leader whose concrete political legacy is needed more than ever each time working people begin fighting. The idea, often unspoken, begins to be spread that while Malcolm was a "prophet" in his times, what he *said* and what he *did* have become less "rel-

evant" today. Not that Malcolm wasn't a great leader, the purveyors of such notions will say. Not that his traits as an individual don't remain praiseworthy. But he was operating "way back" in the 1960s, under different social and political conditions. So the political conclusions Malcolm began drawing, especially during the last few months of his life, have little relevance to today's world. Time marches on.

No matter how veiled or prettified, that's a fairly common view of Malcolm's significance more than two decades after his assassination.

Others narrow in on the fact that Malcolm was a wonderful speaker. But that, too, ends up being a way to devalue the significance of Malcolm's political legacy, to diminish the strategic course he had thought out and was organizing to implement. Because what Malcolm spoke about were *political* ideas with *practical* implications, carefully reasoned ideas based on decades of experience in struggle by the oppressed and exploited not only in the United States but in revolutions the world over.

Malcolm spoke the truth clearly

Malcolm *was* an effective speaker. To be in the same room with him, to hear him from a podium, had a powerful impact. He worked at speaking clearly, because he knew it was important to explain ideas. He knew it was not easy to dissect and clarify oppressive social relations that are papered over and obfuscated by the rulers. But Malcolm was never a "show-off" speaker. He had a quiet but powerful voice. He didn't fashion himself a revolutionary "preacher." He spoke the "King's English," not street talk. He didn't lace his words with rhymes, alliteration, or political doggerel, in order to get around difficulties or deflect attention from inconsistencies.

Malcolm spoke like he was having a conversation with you—an insistent conversation, but a conversation. He was the opposite of a demagogue. He appealed to the mind, to the determination, and to the selflessness of those he was addressing, not to your preconceptions, emotions, or prejudices. He tried



Militant
Jack Barnes, then national chairman of the Young Socialist Alliance, at March 5, 1965, memorial meeting for Malcolm X in New York City.

to wake you up to the facts, to the truth, including about yourself. In that, he was like other outstanding revolutionary leaders—from Karl Marx, V.I. Lenin, and Leon Trotsky, to Patrice Lumumba, Che Guevara, Maurice Bishop, and Fidel Castro.

Above all, however, what Malcolm said must be available *in writing*. Because that political record needs to be read, reread, thought about, and studied. It needs to be accessible, so it can be checked against various latter-day "memories" or "interpretations." That's why it's important that so many of his speeches and interviews, especially from late 1963 to his death in February 1965, are in print in hundreds of pages of books and pamphlets. Pathfinder Press, which publishes several of these collections, has announced plans to release in coming months another book by Malcolm, containing previously unpublished speeches.

Study Malcolm's speeches

Coming out of our discussion tonight, I hope many of us will go back and read Malcolm's last speeches and interviews, perhaps some of us for the first time. Because while it's great to listen to tapes of Malcolm's talks, *reading* and *studying* what he had to say is part of the irreplaceable work of absorbing and preparing to act on the lessons of revolutionary struggle from past centuries.

Malcolm was not the wild, violent hatemonger that millions have been taught he was by the bourgeois media, both during his lifetime and since. Those of you old enough to have been politically active during the late 1950s or in the 1960s can recall how Malcolm was portrayed by the daily newspapers, by magazines like the *Saturday Evening Post*, and by national television networks. Their aim was to get people to stop listening to him, and, eventually, that false image helped set him up to be killed. But their caricature of Malcolm was false and misleading when he was a leader of the Nation of Islam, and even

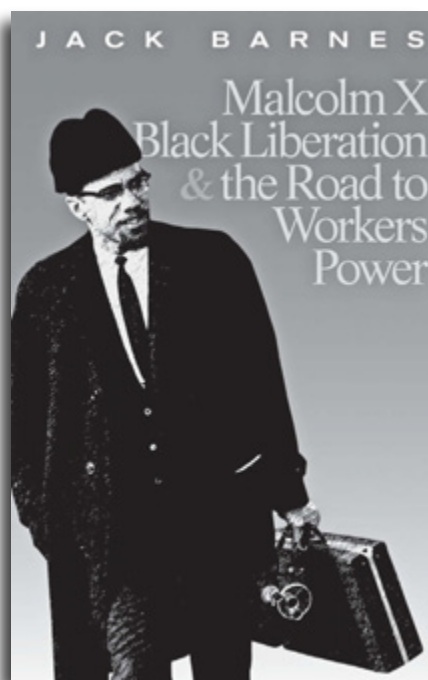
more so—were it possible—after his break with the Nation in early 1964.

There's an additional distortion that some since Malcolm's death have used to blunt the impact of his revolutionary political message. They imply that during the final months of Malcolm's life, he was converging with other prominent figures who made significant contributions to the fight for Black rights, including some who even gave their lives in the course of that struggle, but who acted on the conviction that U.S. capitalist society, its government, and its twin political parties could be pressured into advancing the interests of the oppressed. The main example, of course, is the "Malcolm-Martin" theme we hear so much about these days—from sentimental popular songs to drawings and wall hangings, from the mass media to academic research, writings by former revolutionaries, and so on.

Malcolm certainly was ready to show respect and appreciation to anyone who devoted their life to the fight against racism and for Black equality. He was ready for united action to advance common demands on the powers-that-be in the fight for Black liberation, colonial freedom, and other goals. But Malcolm was also always ready to expose and rebut not only the lies but the political dead ends offered by these same individuals. He punctured the pretensions of misleaders whose overall outlook, strategy, or tactics politically disarmed the oppressed, taught us to rely on the promises and "good will" of any section of the exploiters and their political parties, and left us defenseless in face of racist terror, police violence, or other imperialist horrors. Concretely, it's simply false that Malcolm during his last year was converging politically with Martin Luther King—with King's bourgeois pacifism, his social-democratic ideas, his commitment to the reformability of capitalism, his support for the imperialist Democratic Party and various of its politicians.

Special offer

Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power by Jack Barnes



"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. . . ."

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Malcolm X: internationalize struggle against racism

Below is an excerpt from By Any Means Necessary by Malcolm X, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for September. Through these speeches from the last year of his life, Malcolm takes his place as one of the outstanding revolutionary leaders of the working class. Malcolm sought, as he put it, to "internationalize" the fight against racism. He solidarized with the African freedom struggle and championed the revolutionary victories of the Chinese and Cuban people. The piece below is from his speech to a rally held by the Organization of Afro-American Unity, Nov. 29, 1964, in New York City. Copyright © 1970 by Betty Shabazz and Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY MALCOLM X

You waste your time involving yourself in any kind of organization that is not directly connected with our brothers and sisters on the African continent. Can I prove it? Yes. There was a time in this country when they used to use the expression about Chinese, "He doesn't have a Chinaman's chance." Remember when they used to say that about the Chinese? You don't hear them saying that nowadays. Because the Chinaman has more chance now than they do. And what makes the cheese so binding is he



Robert Parent
Malcolm X talking to reporters at Kennedy International Airport in New York City upon his return from Africa, Nov. 24, 1964. In background are Malcolm's wife and children.

has the same things they have, and will use it faster than they will.

It was not until China became independent and strong that Chinese people all over the world became respected. They never became respected by sitting-in, begging-in, praying-in, kneeling-in, or crawling-in. They became respected only when China as a nation became independent and strong. And then they had something behind them, they had someone behind them. Once China became independent and strong and feared, then wherever you saw a Chinaman, he was independent, he was strong, he was feared and he was respected.

It's the same way with you and me. They can pass every kind of bill imaginable in Washington, D.C., and you and I will never be respected, because we have nothing behind us. The law is not behind us. Washington, D.C., is not behind us. Nor are the Congress, the Senate, and the President behind us. We haven't got anything in this country behind you and me. You and I have to get our people behind us, our people in our own motherland and fatherland. Just as a strong China has produced a respected Chinaman, a strong Africa will produce a respected black man anywhere that black man goes on this earth. It's only with a strong Africa, an independent Africa and a respected Africa that wherever those of African origin or African heritage or African

likeness go, they will be respected.

But as long as Africa is not respected, it doesn't make any difference if you're a doctor or lawyer—why, they'll bounce your head like a knot on a log, no matter where you go. Can I prove it? Yes. While I was in Africa, this young Negro educator in Georgia—he wasn't ragged, he wasn't uncouth, he wasn't uncivilized; he was an educator, he was as uppity and dicty as they were—and they still shot him. Why? Because he had nothing behind him. His education couldn't save him, his degrees couldn't save him, his profession couldn't save him. No, because he didn't have anything behind him. The government wasn't behind him. But had Africa been a strong, independent entity that was respected and recognized by every other power on this earth, then the brother, who reflected all the characteristics of an African, whether he liked it or not, would have been respected by even the Klan and other people down there who are supposed to be so ignorant and don't respect the rights of our people.

So I say that we must have a strong Africa, and one of my reasons for going to Africa was because I know this. You waste your time in this country, in any kind of strategy that you use, if you're not in direct contact with your brother on the African continent who has his independence. He has problems, but he still has his independence, and in that in-

dependence he has a voice; in that voice there is strength. And when you and I link our struggle up with his struggle, so that his struggle backs our struggle, you'll find that this man over here will pay a little more attention. You can sit on his doorstep all day long nonviolently; he'll pay you some attention, but not the kind you want. . . .

Never let anybody tell you and me the odds are against us—I don't even want to hear that. Those who think the odds are against you, forget it. The odds are not against you. The odds are against you only when you're scared. The only things that makes odds against you is a scared mind. When you get all of that fright off of you, there's no such thing as odds against you. Because when a man knows that when he starts playing with you, he's got to kill you, that man is not going to play with you. But if he knows when he's playing with you that you're going to back up and be nonviolent and peaceful and respectable and responsible, why, you and me will never come out of his claws.

Let him know that you're peaceful, let him know that you're respectful and you respect him, and that you're law-abiding, and that you want to be a good citizen, and all those right-thinking things. But let him know at the same time that you're ready to do to him what he's been trying to do to you. And then you'll always have peace. You'll always have it. Learn a lesson from history, learn a lesson from history.

I must say this once before we close. I don't want you to think that I'm coming back here to rabble-rouse, or to get somebody excited. I don't think you have to excite our people; the man already has excited us. And I don't want you to think that I'm ready for some unintelligent action, or some irresponsible action, or for just any old thing just to be doing something. No. I hope that all of us can sit down with a cool head and a clear mind and analyze the situation, in the back room, anywhere, analyze the situation; and after we give the proper analysis of what we're confronted by, then let us be bold enough to take whatever steps that analysis says must be taken. Once we get it, then let's do it, and we'll be able to get some kind of result in this freedom struggle.

September

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10 The Militant September 20, 2010

Oppose antigay discrimination

Federal Judge Vaughn Walker’s overturning of California Proposition 8, which bans marriage by two people of the same sex, strikes a blow against bigotry and unequal treatment. Denying gay couples the right to marry has also been a way to deny many access to health insurance, pensions, and other benefits obtainable through marriage—although such benefits should be available to all, regardless of marital status.

Both sides of the case presented their arguments in terms of supporting the institutions of marriage and family as a force for “social stability.” But this approach does not serve the interests of the exploited and oppressed; workers do not have an interest in helping preserve the stability of capitalist rule. We do have a stake in getting rid of laws that allow the state to interfere in people’s personal lives.

The family rose alongside the development of class society as an economic institution designed to perpetuate social systems in which those who owned property exploited the labor of those who did not.

Women, equals with men in pre-class society, became the private property of men and economically dependent on them. The marriage contract arose as a property arrangement.

The family system today continues to be a pillar of class rule, institutionalizing social inequality. Under capitalism, the working-class family functions as a social mechanism that reproduces human beings who can create surplus value for the propertied rich. To the degree possible, the capitalists foist upon indi-

vidual working-class families—especially under the depression conditions of today—the burden of feeding, clothing, and caring for the young, old, and infirm rather than these being a social responsibility.

As vital as it is to maintaining the social relations for stable capitalist rule, the family is disintegrating. That didn’t start with gay marriage, as supporters of Proposition 8 contend. While the legalization of same-sex marriage further undermines the traditional family concept, the institution began to disintegrate with the rise of industrial capitalism and the drawing of women into the labor force as a more exploitable layer of workers.

Women now comprise about 47 percent of workers in the United States. Achieving greater economic independence has raised women’s self-confidence and their ability to walk away from marriages or relationships they do not want to continue. The “biological” family—the man and woman who conceived a child or children together and continue living together—is less and less the norm. In 2007 more than 39 percent of births were to unmarried women.

The workings of capitalism itself are tearing apart the family institution at the same time that the ruling class attempts to foist greater social and economic burdens on the family unit.

As this proceeds, who is the capitalist government to say who one can or cannot marry? No to discrimination against gays and lesbians! No to government intrusion into our private lives!

Public workers strike in South Africa

Continued from front page

mands for an 8.6 percent pay raise and a doubling of the monthly housing allowance to 1,000 rand (US\$137). The government had offered a 7 percent raise and an R700 (US\$96) allowance, saying this would be imposed unilaterally after three weeks if the unions did not accept it.

The Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu), with more than 2 million members, organized support for the striking unionists. Nurses and health workers blockaded hospitals and teacher walkouts essentially brought public education to a halt.

The strikers defied a court order that “essential staff,” including doctors, nurses, and teachers, return to work. They faced provocative actions by the cops, including attempts to prevent unionists from demonstrating, and in some cases firing rubber bullets on crowds and arresting demonstrators. Some 2,800 troops have been deployed to hospitals nationwide.

Unable to halt the work stoppage through acts of intimidation, two weeks into the strike the government upped its offer to a 7.5 percent wage increase and an R800 housing allowance. But it was not enough to meet the strikers’ demands.

Two of South Africa’s biggest public unions—the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union and the South African Democratic Teachers Union, each with about 250,000 members—rejected the offer. The 9,200-member South African Democratic Nurses Union also voted down the proposal.

Rising food prices

The striking workers are insisting on higher wages because of rapidly rising costs of living, especially food prices. According to the government inflation is running 4.2 percent. But food costs are actually rising much more, said Sizwe Pamla of the National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union.

“Look at Mozambique—we are sitting on a potential time bomb,” he told the *Financial Times*. “Too many workers are living from hand to mouth; the costs for poor people are skyrocketing.”

Strikes and other protests erupted in Mozambique in early September because of rising food and fuel prices. The government there had announced a 30 percent rise in bread prices, 10 percent in the cost of both water and electricity, and the third increase in two months for gasoline. The average worker in Mozambique is paid about \$37 a month. With cops rioting against protesters, seven people were killed and

more than 280 wounded in Maputo, the capital, over two days.

During the course of the public workers strike in South Africa, other unionists have also walked out. On August 30 water workers organized by the South African Municipal Workers Union began strike action, demanding a sliding scale wage raise of up to 13.5 percent. The same day tire and rubber workers walked out after wage negotiations with the employers broke down. The workers are demanding a minimum wage of R20 an hour (US\$2.73) and wage raises of at least 10 percent.

The National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa, which organizes 70,000 workers at gas stations and car component manufacturers, struck September 1, calling for a 15 percent wage raise. Some 8,000 members of the National Union of Mineworkers struck Northam Platinum September 6 after rejecting the company’s offer for an 8 percent wage raise. The miners are demanding a 15 percent increase.

Over the past year South African bosses have eliminated 1 million jobs. The official unemployment rate is around 25 percent.

Rifts within coalition gov’t

In 2008, ANC leader Jacob Zuma was elected president with the support of Cosatu and the South African Communist Party. The three groups have functioned as part of the governing coalition.

The public workers strike has led to deep rifts within this tripartite alliance. Zuma has blasted Cosatu, saying the disruption of “essential services” by workers is “foreign” to the culture of the ANC and the alliance. “Even during the campaigns against the apartheid government we did not prevent nurses from going to work,” he stated. An ANC statement charged the unions with “acts of assault, intimidation and plain thuggery.”

In an August 22 statement the South African Communist Party, echoing the ANC’s position, urged unions to “take the lead in condemning acts of grave indiscipline which are, in effect . . . counter-revolutionary and anti-people.”

Cosatu has accused ANC leaders of pursuing “a caviar lifestyle” while expecting workers to scrimp. Cosatu leader Zwelinzima Vavi said the ruling alliance was now “dysfunctional.” He told reporters August 26 that the trade union federation would no longer “give the ANC a blank check” in next year’s local government elections.

Gay marriage law

Continued from front page

ning by a slim 52 percent margin. It reads, “Only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in California.” Two couples challenged Proposition 8 because it violates their rights by barring them from marrying.

“For me this decision means equal protection under the law. It means equal opportunity to marry the person that I love,” said Sandra Stier, one of the four plaintiffs.

The ruling is the first in a federal court to declare that a state law banning same-sex marriage is illegal on constitutional grounds. Walker cited the due process clause of the 14th Amendment—no state shall “deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law”—and the amendment’s equal protection clause—which says no state shall “deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.”

Despite the ruling, gay couples are still being blocked from marrying in California by decision of a three-judge panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. No same-sex marriages can take place during the appeal of this decision, the judges ruled.

Walker said his decision in the case was affected by changes in U.S. marriage laws over the past century and a half. These are connected to the struggles of African Americans and women for equal treatment. African slaves, Walker noted, were considered someone’s property and thus had no legal right to marry. Many U.S. states had laws barring people of two different races from marrying. These were finally ruled unconstitutional in 1967.

“Marriage between a man and a woman was traditionally organized based on presumptions of a division of labor along gender lines,” Walker wrote in his decision. “Women were seen as suited to raise children and men were seen as suited to provide for the family.” No-fault divorce has further broken down these distinctions, Walker said.

At the trial the defenders of Proposition 8 argued that the state has an interest in promoting marriages that can lead to the birth of children and that these children will have a more “stable” life if raised by their biological parents.

Witnesses called by the plaintiffs argued that there is no evidence that having two parents of the same sex is harmful to children.

Witnesses for both sides argued that the state has an interest in strengthening the family and marriage. The main witness in favor of Proposition 8, David Blankenhorn, founder of the Institute for American Values, said that making gay marriage legal would weaken marriage as an institution, increase the numbers of unmarried people living together, and raise the divorce rate.

One of the witnesses for the plaintiffs, marriage historian Nancy Cott, argued that same-sex marriage would provide “another resource for stability and social order.” She said that in place of men being the main providers, couples now “join in an economic partnership and support one another and any dependents.” She argued that gay marriage was a good thing in part because it meant assigning more individuals “to care for one another,” thus helping to limit “the public’s liability to care for the vulnerable.”

Cott’s line of argument echoes support for the anti-working-class course of the ruling class, which in the name of “family values” is cutting social services while seeking to put the blame on single mothers and working people for the capitalist economic crisis.

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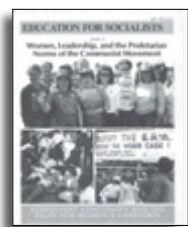
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