

THE MILITANT

INSIDE
**Malcolm X: 'Matter of time
before capitalism collapses'**
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 74/NO. 43 NOVEMBER 15, 2010

French gov't passes retirement age hike

Workers anticipate more attacks



Militant/Claude Bleton

Union contingent marches in demonstration October 28 in Paris against raising retirement age. New law also raises payroll taxes for government workers.

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN
AND DEREK JEFFERS

PARIS—Claiming a victory for “the French people,” President Nicolas Sarkozy welcomed the adoption of the government’s anti-working class pension “reform” by both houses of parliament October 27.

The government and union leaders alike were startled when millions of workers took to the streets in recent weeks to oppose the proposal to raise the minimum retirement age from 60 to 62 for those who have worked 41.5 years. Those who have less time working will have to wait until they are 67 to get benefits. Besides hik-

ing the retirement age, the new law includes a 2.7 percent increase in the retirement payroll tax for government employees, effectively a 2.7 percent wage cut.

Dock laborers, rail workers, garbage handlers, those in oil refineries, and others struck for weeks against government moves. Seven separate days of actions were called, which involved strikes by many workers who had never taken such action before.

Millions of workers took part in hundreds of demonstrations. They were joined by students and youth of Arab descent impacted by 50 percent

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Washington expands Yemen operations, ‘security’ checks

BY CINDY JAQUITH

U.S. and European officials have stepped up “counterterrorism” operations aimed at working people in response to reports that two packages containing explosives were recently shipped from Yemen, addressed to Chicago-area synagogues.

Authorities said the packages—one shipped by Fedex and the other by UPS—contained printer cartridges packed with explosives and were intercepted in Dubai and the United Kingdom respectively, October 29. U.S. Homeland Security secretary Janet Napolitano said the packages showed the “hallmarks of al-Qaeda, particularly al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP),” which is based in Yemen.

U.S. “anti-terrorism experts” arrived in Sana’a, Yemen’s capital, November 1 to join a military offensive against AQAP in two provinces, Xinhua reported. Sana’a has been reluctant to wage an all-out war against AQAP because such Islamist groups have helped keep in check independence forces in the south of the country and Houthi rebels in the north who face government discrimination.

Meanwhile, a Yemeni court began the trial in absentia of Anwar al-Awlaki, a U.S. citizen alleged to be an AQAP leader in Yemen. He is charged with conspiring to kill foreigners. President Barack Obama had earlier ordered his assassination.

The Yemeni government arrested, then released, a woman in Sana’a charged with mailing the packages. She was freed after fellow students at Sana’a University, many of them women, demonstrated to protest her innocence. Government officials then said it appeared her ID had been used by another person. Hundreds marched

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Many costs rise, but not Social Security

BY CINDY JAQUITH

Although the costs of food, fuel, and medical care continue to rise, there will be no cost-of-living increase in Social Security checks in 2011. For the second year in a row the government has decided to freeze benefits. This is the first time since the cost-of-living allowance (COLA) was added to Social Security that monthly checks remained flat for two consecutive years. Recipients last got a cost-of-living increase in 2008, when they received an insulting \$24 per month.

Further attacks on Social Security can be expected in December when the Bipartisan National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform issues its report. That body was set

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Elections in 2010 signal no change for workers

BY PAUL MAILHOT

November 3—Reams are being written, and hours of airtime are being filled, about the outcome of the 2010 U.S. midterm elections. With most votes now counted, Republicans are the new majority in the House of Representatives, having taken some 60 additional seats. In the Senate, Republicans took at least six additional seats, leaving them in the minority.

Widely touted as a “rebuttal” of President Barack Obama’s policies and the majority Democratic Party Congress over the past two years, the results of the elections signal no change for the working class.

For the most part the politicians who won elections in 2010 campaigned on

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‘Workers Power,’ subscriptions sold at factories and protests



Militant/Ellen Brickley

Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate from Illinois, right, talks with workers locked out by Roquette America in Keokuk, Iowa, October 24.

BY ANGEL LARISCY

“Campaigners outside the factory where I work sold a subscription to the *Militant* and a copy of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* to one worker, and four others picked up copies of the paper,” reported Dan Fein, Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of New York, who works at a pharmaceutical plant in the Bronx. “During the day I was able to sell two more subscriptions and books.” Socialists in the plant are nearing their goal to sell 18 subscriptions and 18 copies of the *Workers Power* book to coworkers.

The eight-week drive to sell 1,800 copies of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by Jack Barnes along with 2,100 subscriptions to the *Militant* is now in its

final week. So far 1,430 copies of the book and 1,708 subscriptions have been sold.

This week socialist campaigners in

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Florida forum discusses crisis in Haiti since quake

BY DEBORAH LIATOS

MIAMI—Ten months after a devastating earthquake left 300,000 people in Haiti dead, 1.5 million people are still living in makeshift camps; a few under tents, but most sleeping under tarps or even bed sheets.

The deplorable living conditions there are worsened by the recent outbreak of cholera. Haiti and the rest of the Caribbean have not seen cholera, which can dehydrate and kill rapidly, for at least 50 years. Though deadly, cholera can easily be treated if those who have contracted the bacteria are quickly rehydrated with water containing salts and sugars. As of October 31 the waterborne bacterial infection has killed 330 Haitians and infected more than 4,700.

The conditions in Haiti were the subject of a lively discussion at the Militant Labor Forum held here October 23 titled, “After the Earthquake, What Road Forward for the Haitian People?” The forum was held in English and Creole.

One of the speakers was Jean Louis Fadinier, a worker who recently returned from a trip to Haiti. He is a long-time fighter for peasant and democratic rights there, and now lives in Florida. “Even though the Haitian people won independence in 1804, they are not really independent,” he said. At that time the majority Black population overthrew French colonizers and abolished slavery, but Washington and Paris have continued to dominate and exploit the island.

For 29 years the U.S.-backed Duvalier family, which killed tens of thousands of political opponents, ruled Haiti. A popular uprising ousted the Duvaliers in 1986,

but the country has remained wracked by poverty and political instability. In 2004 Washington helped force elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide into exile, replacing him with a government more to Washington’s and Paris’s liking. When the earthquake struck, there were 9,000 United Nations troops in Haiti.

“I came not just to talk about what is going on in Haiti,” said Fadinier, “but about what is needed so the Haitian people can finally achieve their liberation. A lot of international aid was promised to get people out of tents and rebuild, but the government has no plan to improve the situation.

“Many doctors went to Haiti soon after the earthquake,” continued Fadinier, “but didn’t stay long. The United States, which is the country that exploits us, hasn’t sent doctors to do the work the Cuban doctors have. Cuban doctors not only give health care, but train other doctors who can continue their work when they go. These doctors work anytime. If they finish their shift and you knock on their door they will help you.”

“The U.S. government is responsible for the situation in Haiti today,” said Bernie Senter, speaking for the Socialist Workers Party. “The plunder continues



UN Photo/Pasqual Gorriz

Volunteer doctors from Cuban-Haitian medical brigade treat a woman and her child in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, February 15, one month after the earthquake.

to this day. Everything Washington does is to reinforce exploitation and class divisions. After the earthquake the U.S. government granted TPS [Temporary Protected Status] to Haitians who could prove they lived in the United States before the quake struck. At the same time, Washington has stepped up efforts to prevent Haitians from emigrating here when the need has been the greatest.”

One forum participant, also from Haiti, said, “On January 12, the day the earthquake struck, President René Préal didn’t say one word. When the U.S. deployed 8,000 troops, they pri-

marily stayed in the airport. The Haitian people organized themselves to dig each other out.”

“The biggest challenge for the working class, like in other countries around the world is to build a party to lead the workers to take power,” stated Senter. “That party was built in Cuba through the mobilization of millions of working people to take control of their country. The revolutionary capacity of the Haitian workers and peasants has been demonstrated many times throughout its history. It will play a decisive role in the future of Haiti, like in Cuba.”

6,000 protest loyalty pledge to Israel as Jewish state

BY SETH GALINSKY

Some 6,000 people marched in Tel Aviv October 16 to protest a proposal by the cabinet to require non-Jews seeking to become naturalized citizens to pledge loyalty to Israel as a “Jewish and democratic state.”

Under the slogan “Together against racism—Arab and Jewish March for Democracy,” many demonstrators carried signs that combined the Israeli and Palestinian flags. Both Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel were on the speakers’ platform.

“Arabs constitute 20 percent of the population, yet make up roughly 6.5 percent of all public service employees,” wrote Ahmad Tibi in *Yedioth Aronoth*, a major Israeli newspaper. “There is almost no area of life here where equality between Arabs and Jews prevails.” Tibi is a deputy speaker of the Knesset, the Israeli parliament, and chairman of the United Arab List.

The Israeli cabinet approved the amendment to the citizenship law by a vote of 22 to 8 at the behest of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Three members of Netanyahu’s Likud Party

voted against the measure as did five Labor Party ministers who are part of the coalition government.

The amendment still has to be voted on in the Knesset.

Adalah, the Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel, explained that the loyalty oath bill “specifically targets Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel.” Arab citizens of Israel often marry Arabs from Israeli-occupied territories or other Arab countries and face obstacles getting permission for their spouse to move to Israel, much less be granted rights of citizenship.

In a transparent maneuver to blunt criticism that the loyalty proposal is racist, Netanyahu said he would modify the bill to require anyone seeking to become a naturalized citizen, including Jews from around the world, to sign the oath.



Free the Cuban Five

For more than 12 years Washington has incarcerated five Cuban revolutionaries on frame-up charges for gathering information on right-wing groups with a history of attacking Cuba. The ‘Militant’ covers their fight for justice. Don’t miss a single issue!



Mark Thomas

Rally at U.S. Embassy in London, October 19, demanding freedom for Cuban Five.

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Socialist candidates in Iowa advance solidarity

BY MARGARET TROWE

DES MOINES, Iowa—The last leg of the Iowa Socialist Workers Party campaign was busy and rewarding.

On October 27 WHO radio held a panel of “the other guys”—the four candidates excluded from the gubernatorial debates between Democratic incumbent Chet Culver and Republican challenger Terry Branstad. SWP candidate David Rosenfeld joined Jonathan Narcisse of the Iowa Party, Libertarian Eric Cooper, and Gregory Hughes, who calls himself the “Poor Party” candidate.

Narcisse laid out his perspective of strengthening family and religious faith, tax breaks for business investment in Iowa, and voting out the judges who overturned a state ban on same-sex marriage. Hughes attacked judges who enforce child support laws. Cooper called for letting the “free market” lower the minimum wage to solve unemployment.

In response, Rosenfeld said that Cooper “must not have a whole lot of acquaintance with the life of workers. Try to propose to my coworkers the idea we should be making less than \$7.25 an hour. It’s preposterous. These are poverty wages. You want to turn them into starvation wages. . . . The question is what we can do to strengthen our unions. Our watchword has to be solidarity.”

Rosenfeld addressed a candidates forum at the Islamic Center in Cedar Rapids, sponsored by the Council on American Islamic Relations Iowa Chapter. “The economic crisis has spawned long-term unemployment, massive cutbacks, and ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan,” Rosenfeld said. “Among the political consequences of this crisis has been a rise in demagogic scapegoating of immigrants and Muslims. These appeals are daggers aimed at the heart of working-class unity.”

Rosenfeld and this correspondent, while campaigning in front of the Family Dollar store in the Black community here, met Janna Bragg, who said, “I can’t buy your paper today, but I want you to know I respect the Socialist Workers Party.” Bragg is a laid-off laundry worker and student at the Des Moines Area Community College.

Both Rosenfeld and Rebecca Williamson, SWP candidate for U.S. Rep-

resentative in the 3rd District, took part in candidate panels on Iowa Public Television. Several of Williamson’s coworkers at the John Deere assembly plant in Ankeny told her they saw the show and liked her comments.

The *Daily Iowan*, student newspaper at the University of Iowa in Iowa City, ran an editorial reluctantly endorsing Culver for governor. In it they also commented, “Rosenfeld’s candidacy offers liberals unhappy with Culver’s waffling on workers’ and gay rights a clear alternative. . . . his anachronistic, ‘dictatorship of capital’ rhetoric is sure to turn off liberal voters otherwise amenable to a left-wing candidate.”

Margaret Trowe was the SWP candidate for Iowa secretary of agriculture.

N.Y. students discuss possibilities for revolution

BY HARRY D’AGOSTINO

NEW PALTZ, New York—The Young Socialist club at the State University of New York here hosted a meeting October 27 for Socialist Workers Party candidates to discuss issues facing working people and youth. The speakers were Willie Cotton, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate, and myself, a freshman here and the party’s candidate for lieutenant governor. Student Callie Miaoulis chaired the meeting of 10 people.

Cotton condemned Washington’s war in Afghanistan and Pakistan. He pointed to the example of Cuba, where working people overthrew the tyranny of a handful of wealthy property owners and carried out a socialist revolution. I spoke about the need for working people in the United States to take political power.

The candidates’ support for the legalization of undocumented workers led to some debate. Forrest, a freshman, questioned why undocumented workers don’t apply for legal citizenship. “I think some come to support their families, but some to sell drugs,” he said. “It is a confusing situation I have to think about.” Forrest said he had doubts about the ability of workers in the United States to make a revolution.

“I grew up in a downtrodden area, with poor housing on one side of the tracks and grand houses near the shore,” said Kevin, a student from Bayshore,



Militant/Lisa Rottach

Helen Meyers, who was the Socialist Workers Party candidate for lieutenant governor of Iowa, center, campaigning at August protest against efforts to deny gays right to marry.

Long Island. “I’m glad to hear from people noticing this division.”

“Under capitalism everyone feels they have to fight to keep what’s theirs,” said one participant. “How does the underclass prevent the same evils if we make a revolution?”

I responded to that question, “Under capitalism working people are made to think that we’re not capable of much of

anything beyond obedience. The example of Cuba shows that we can use the state to advance the interests of the vast majority once we have taken power.”

In the meeting, participants were encouraged to purchase and read *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by Jack Barnes, which addresses all of these issues. Four students decided to do so.

Outcome of 2010 elections

Continued from front page

what they are against. Rand Paul, Republican Party victor in the U.S. Senate race in Kentucky who is closely associated with the tea party, described the elections as a message: “The American people are unhappy with what’s going on in Washington.” The *Wall Street Journal* put that in perspective in its editorial, admitting, “voters still view the GOP as skeptically as they do Democrats, a sign of the overall sour public mood.”

With millions out of work for years, falling real wages, and deteriorating social conditions for the great majority, a greater loss than usual for incumbents is to be expected. The middle class especially, and large numbers of workers, are frightened by a present and future that seems increasingly out of control. President Obama’s campaign message that the economic blows would have been worse for working people without his policies was not convincing.

Candidates from both parties avoided discussion of what they would do to change those conditions, and they avoided nearly all mention of the unending wars in Afghanistan and north-west Pakistan, the tens of thousands of troops that remain in Iraq, and the escalating military operations in Yemen and elsewhere.

Much of the media focus on the Republican victory has been about the anticipated rancor between the Obama White House and the incoming Republican majority. Wide publicity has been given to a statement by Rep. John Boehner, the likely new speaker of the House, that as far as Obama’s agenda is concerned, “We’re going to do everything—and I mean everything we can do—to kill it, stop it, slow it down, whatever we can.” But Obama has already appealed to Boehner, in a

telephone call congratulating him following the election, to begin working together “to find common ground.”

Between the factional discourse and appeals for compromise, the twin capitalist parties will continue to find common ground in their drive against the standard of living and rights of working people, as they attempt to shore up the profit rates of the ruling capitalists. Plans for cutting Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, and other social programs in order to rein in the massive federal budget deficit are at the top of the list for both Democrats and Republicans.

The government has no plans for a public works program or any other plan that could provide jobs. The owners of industry have no plans to increase productive capacity and put people back to work.

Aside from the Socialist Workers Party candidates who ran in 33 races in 11 states and the District of Columbia, workers had little voice during the elections. The union officialdom continued its policies of throwing away resources by backing the campaigns of Democratic Party “friends of labor.” Only in the sporadic mobilizations of workers on the picket lines, in fights for legalization of undocumented workers, and other such battles were the interests of working people advanced in the course of these elections.

The outcome of the 2010 elections did not change what working people continue to face with the world capitalist depression and ongoing imperialist wars abroad; neither did it change the political space that continues to exist for workers to organize and fight in their class interests, overcome divisions, and gain confidence along the road toward conquering political power.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

AUSTRALIA

Sydney

The Fight against Racist Cop Brutality: Reportback from Brisbane Protest against Police Taser Assaults. Speaker: Manuele Lasalo, Communist League. Sun., Nov. 14, 4 p.m. *Upstairs, 281-7 Beamish St., Campsie.* Tel.: (02) 9718 9698.

CANADA

Montreal

Tea Party Movement in U.S. Elections, Ford Victory in Toronto Mayoral Race: Turn to the Right? Speaker: Joe Young, Communist League. Fri., Nov. 12, 8 p.m. *7107 St. Denis, Room 204 (2nd floor).* Tel.: (514) 272-5480.

CALIFORNIA

San Francisco

The Fight against Police Brutality and Killings: A Working-Class Perspective. Speaker: Joel Britton, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Nov. 12, 7:30 p.m. *5482 Mission St.* Tel.: (415) 584-2135.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Why Working People Need a Labor Party and the Meaning of the Midterm Elections. Speaker: Laura Anderson, Socialist Worker Party. Fri., Nov. 12, 8 p.m. *3557 S. Archer Ave.* Tel.: (773) 890-1190.

IOWA

Des Moines

Housing Crises and Capitalism. Speaker: Rebecca Williamson, 2010 Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress, 3rd District. Sat., Nov. 13, 7:30 p.m. *3707 Douglas Ave.* Tel.: (515) 255-1707.

WASHINGTON

Seattle

The Meaning of the 2010 Elections for the Working Class. Speaker: representative, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Nov. 13, 7:30 p.m. *Donation: \$5. 5418 Rainier Ave. S. (#7 bus to Brandon St., walk one block south).* Tel.: (206) 323-1755.

‘Moderates rally’ held in D.C. ahead of elections

BY DOUG NELSON

A “Rally to Restore Sanity and/or Fear” called by political satirists Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert jam-packed the National Mall in Washington, D.C., October 30.

For many the three-hour rally/entertainment show was a response to the August 28 “Restoring Honor” event organized in Washington by conservative talk show host Glenn Beck. “We want to outdo Glenn Beck,” said Karl Kreiner, a young accountant from Alexandria, Virginia.

Among the participants were large numbers of professionals, small business people, and other middle-class layers, as well as office workers and students. “Well over 200,000 people” turned out for the event, according to an unofficial account by the Parks Service. The day set a new record for use of Washington’s Metrorail system with 825,000 trips—475,000 more than an average Saturday. Some 10,000 came from New York City on free buses provided by the *Huffington Post*.

The event was sponsored by Comedy Central, a division of Viacom, which broadcast the event live. The comedic duo pitched the event as the fusion of Stewart’s “Rally to Restore Sanity” and a tongue-in-cheek “counter rally” led by Colbert’s mock on-air conservative personality called “March to Keep Fear Alive.”

Stewart dubbed the event as a non-

partisan “Million Moderates March.” One of many handmade signs seemed to capture this spirit: “What do we want? Moderation. When do we want it? In a reasonable time frame.”

But held two days ahead of mid-term elections, the action was aptly characterized as “a Democratic rally without a Democratic politician,” by *New York Times* columnists.

A number of people dressed up as tea bags or other costumes directed against tea party Republicans. (Thousands were simply wearing various Halloween costumes.)

“This is a pro-Democratic rally,” said Maureen Mercurio, 59. “People here want sanity, not hate. The right is spreading lies about our president.”

Most organized political groups working the crowd were pro-Democratic Party, such as Naral Pro-Choice America and Barack Obama’s Organizing for America. Among them, however, were campaigners for the Socialist Workers Party candidates, who received a wide range of responses, reflecting a heterogeneity of political views and outlooks.

“Didn’t you listen to the speaker?” commented one passerby. “This is a rally for moderates.” Several others made similar remarks. Dozens were interested in the socialist campaign, and stopped to talk, subscribe to the *Militant*, and buy books on revolutionary politics. (See article on front page.)



Militant/Leah Morrison

Socialist Workers Party campaigners at “Rally to Restore Sanity and/or Fear” in Washington. At right is Glova Scott, who was SWP candidate for D.C. delegate to House of Representatives.

Many expressed frustration with the Democratic Party, President Barack Obama, or the state of the economy. “We thought Obama was going to do something different on the war, for immigrants,” said Tanya Tinsley, 47, a physical therapist and among the small percentage of Blacks at the rally. “He should move a little more to the left and he would get some support.”

“We need Obama to be what he said he would be,” said Tinsley’s friend Nadine Brown, 48, from Queens, New York, who was an event planner before she lost her job. “I want to go back to work, but I don’t want to go from \$100,000 to \$20,000 a year.”

“It’s hard to find a job today. I would like to go to graduate school and become a librarian,” said Cairty McCar-

thy, 23, who recently graduated college with an English major and works part-time at Best Buy for \$9 per hour.

A common thread was aversion to the coarsening of political discourse and factionalism in bourgeois politics, as well as the interest in reactionary conspiracy theories—manifestations of the deepening economic and social crisis of capitalism. “We need to take it down a notch,” said Ali Arman, a telecommunications engineer. “Politics has gotten ugly.”

One handmade sign simply read, “Relax, everything will be O.K.” But what seemed to lay under the facetious tone and mockery that marked the rally was unease about the future and idle hope that it will all stop, turn around, and everything will be as it was.

campaign to sell							
‘Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power’ & ‘Militant’							
Sept. 11–Nov. 9 (week 7)							
Country	‘Workers Power’ books			‘Militant’ subscriptions			
	quota	sold	%	quota	sold	%	
UNITED STATES							
Boston*	58	55	95%	70	59	84%	
Philadelphia	65	57	88%	75	60	80%	
Atlanta	120	102	85%	150	132	88%	
New York	375	315	84%	325	298	92%	
Chicago	130	109	84%	130	109	84%	
Miami*	60	50	83%	70	65	93%	
Washington	145	112	77%	125	120	96%	
Seattle	130	97	75%	140	116	83%	
Des Moines	110	81	74%	125	112	90%	
Houston	50	28	56%	50	46	92%	
San Francisco	130	69	53%	155	102	66%	
Twin Cities	100	51	51%	135	85	63%	
Los Angeles	135	62	46%	120	80	67%	
Total U.S.	1608	1188	74%	1670	1384	83%	
UNITED KINGDOM							
London*	110	101	92%	105	96	91%	
Edinburgh	25	18	72%	35	34	97%	
Total U.K.	135	119	88%	140	130	93%	
Canada	62	58	94%	70	64	91%	
New Zealand*	30	26	87%	65	57	88%	
Australia	25	22	88%	55	50	91%	
Sweden	18	17	94%	22	23	105%	
Total	1878	1430	79%	2022	1708	81%	
Should be	1800	1575	88%	2100	1838	88%	
* Raised both quotas							

‘Workers Power’ and ‘Militant’ sales

Continued from front page New Zealand and London raised their quotas. Local quotas for the *Militant*, however, are still shy of the 2,100 international goal, so a day-to-day effort by every area to sign up as many subscribers and sell as many books as they can by the November 9 deadline will make the difference.

A dozen supporters of the paper from three cities campaigned at the October 30 Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert rally in Washington, D.C., selling 33 *Workers Power* books, 28 *Militant* subscriptions, and 120 copies of the paper.

Fein soapboxed with a bullhorn, explaining what the SWP campaign stands for. “Workers live under a dictatorship of capital and are getting hammered every day,” he said, drawing rally participants to the campaign table.

In Seattle, socialist campaigners made two trips to Western Washington University in Bellingham where they signed up 22 new subscribers and sold 11 books, reported Edwin Fruit. “Another team staffed a table at a ‘Race and Pedagogy’ conference at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma,” he wrote. “Eleven people got subscriptions to the *Mili-*

tant and 10 got the *Workers Power* book.”

In France, communist workers have been getting a good response to sales of revolutionary working-class literature. Since early September they have sold 109 copies of *Workers Power*.

Building on the momentum of the

last two weeks of the drive, every area can organize to go over their local targets.

It’s not too late to join in the final push! Sign up a coworker or friend or call distributors (on page 8) to ask how you can help in the final days of the campaign.

Best week for party fund drive

BY TOM FISKE

Supporters of the Socialist Workers Party have had their best week to date in the party-building fund drive, raising more than \$20,600 towards the goal of \$98,000 for the communist movement. At the end of the sixth week a total of \$73,985 has been collected.

A meeting for the fund was held October 30 in Miami. Twenty-four people participated in a wide-ranging political discussion about world politics, following talks by Ma’mud Shirvani from the SWP in New York and Jean Baptiste Silas from the SWP in Miami.

Contributions totaling \$1,169 gave a big boost to the \$3,000 goal in Miami.

“Why the Working Class Needs a Revolutionary Party to Confront the Capitalist Economic Crisis” was the topic of an October 30 fund meeting in Los Angeles. Rebecca Williamson, SWP candidate for U.S. Congress in Iowa, was the featured speaker.

“The party utilizes tremendous resources to go where we need to go, to show what a revolutionary party stands for,” explained Williamson. “Each contribution makes a difference.” More than \$500 in new pledges were made and \$2,005 collected.

The fund ends on November 9. All

contributions received by Monday, November 15 will be counted in the final chart. Make your check out to SWP and send it to 306 W. 37th St., 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Party-building fund Sept. 11–Nov. 9

City	Quota	Paid	%
Twin Cities*	\$7,500	\$6,835	91%
Des Moines*	\$3,000	\$2,600	87%
Seattle	\$8,600	\$7,556	88%
Philadelphia	\$3,600	\$3,036	84%
New York	\$20,000	\$15,431	77%
Houston	\$3,000	\$2,310	77%
Washington*	\$8,000	\$6,154	77%
San Francisco	\$13,500	\$10,575	78%
Boston*	\$3,800	\$2,845	75%
Atlanta	\$7,800	\$5,216	67%
Miami	\$3,000	\$1,665	56%
Chicago	\$10,000	\$5,535	55%
Los Angeles	\$8,000	\$3,627	45%
Other		\$600	
TOTAL	\$99,800	\$73,985	75%
Should be	\$98,000	\$73,500	75%
* Raised quota			

Boston students march against beating by cop

BY SARAH ULLMAN

BOSTON—"We're from the community. When we found out what happened, we had to do something about it!" said Kieashia Hartfield, a first-year student at Roxbury Community College (RCC). She and her friend India Cox organized a protest at this majority Black school after viewing a seven-minute video posted on YouTube about a sixteen-year-old being beaten by police during his arrest on campus October 22.

In the video Boston police officer Michael McManus is seen repeatedly raising his fist and pounding the youth, then slamming his knee into him again and again, while at least six other cops pin him down. After his arrest he was treated at the hospital for a head wound and released to the police.

Because of the wide publicity and reaction among many workers and students, city officials promised an investigation. McManus has been placed on desk duty, for now.

McManus was among police officers exonerated in the 2008 death of 22-year-old David Woodman, a student at Emmanuel College. The city paid \$3 million to Woodman's family to settle a civil rights lawsuit, after an independent panel ruled there were

"missteps" by the Boston police during Woodman's arrest.

Some three dozen mostly RCC students and faculty gathered on the campus October 29, then marched a half-mile to the Boston police headquarters, chanting, "Come one! Come all! United we stand! Divided we fall!" Once there, a spirited rally demanded justice and an end to police brutality.

That same day some 2,000 people attended a memorial service at the Boston Convention and Exposition Center for Danroy Henry, Jr., 20, a football player from Massachusetts who was attending Pace University in Pleasantville, New York. He was killed by New York cops on October 17.

The police say he tried to hit them with his car. Witnesses say a cop jumped on the hood and shot him as he was responding to a police order to move the car out of the fire lane, where he was waiting for friends.



Militant/Sarah Ullman

Roxbury Community College students march October 29 to protest police brutality.

New Zealand: Teachers protest cutbacks



Militant/Baskaran Appu

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—Six hundred teachers and supporters turned out October 30 for a march and rally called by the New Zealand Educational Institute, the union that organizes 44,000 junior school and pre-school teachers. Marking World Teachers' Day, the action supported the union's campaigns against government education policy—especially funding cuts that will result in the loss of teachers' jobs and increases in fees for workers sending their children to preschools.

—PATRICK BROWN

'We're shouting union and solidarity now'

The following is a short message and article sent to the Militant from a locked-out worker at the Roquette America, Inc., plant in Keokuk, Iowa.

I wanted to put some thoughts down about how the lockout at Keokuk is affecting the town, my family, and the workers at Roquette. I also wanted to thank many of you for visiting our picket lines and Labor Temple. Good luck to David, Helen, Margaret, Rebecca, and Laura [Socialist Workers Party candidates in Iowa and Illinois] in the elections.

Just two months ago our union, Local 48G of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers [BCTGM] had 5 to 10 members attending our biweekly meetings out of 239 members.

Since our employer Roquette America (a French-owned company) offered us a late hour, throw down, take it or leave it, union-busting contract, we

have awakened.

As Roquette tried to put its stranglehold on our community, the people have decided Keokuk wasn't for sale.

Many businesses have refused to cater to the company while putting union signs in their windows and providing discounts or special solidarity days for the workers. Some restaurants bring food to the picket lines.

Other unions have joined us at our rallies, donated money and/or food, and walked the picket lines with us.

We have slapped pickets up at six entrances to the plant, picketed their offices, the scabs' hotels, and company officials' homes.

People drive by and honk and show their fist in support. We are actually shouting the words "Union" and "Solidarity now," a total turnaround from a couple months ago.

It's heartening to see children being educated about the union while they are holding signs shouting "Scabs go home"

as they walk beside their parents.

My kids were educated 25 years ago when we went through another lockout when this plant was owned by the H.J. Heinz company.

Now my daughter is a proud UFCW [United Food and Commercial Workers] member and brought my granddaughter to march with my wife, my son, and I.

This gives me hope someday that maybe the workers will be in charge and we'll be able to open our daily newspaper and find the labor section as easy as the business section.

My daughter said it all in her e-mail she sent me. "Dad, I was proud to come march with you. The company will come to their senses and get the scabs out of there. What do we want? Contract! Who are we? UNION!!!" No matter what happens I am very proud of my family, my town, and my union.

*In Solidarity,
Buddy Howard
BCTGM 48G*

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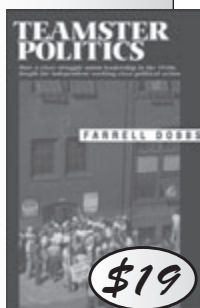
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25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



November 15, 1985

NEW YORK—The cover-up of the racist cop murder of Michael Stewart is unraveling in a courtroom here. As the trial of six transit cops charged with criminally negligent homicide, assault, and perjury enters its eighth week, the extent of the cover-up—reaching beyond the cops to the district attorney, the chief medical examiner, and possibly the mayor—is being demonstrated.

Stewart, a Black man, 25, was arrested by transit cops in September 1983 for allegedly drawing graffiti on a subway station wall. After his arrest, Stewart was taken from the subway to a nearby street and beaten by the cops.

The cover-up began within hours of the murder when Chief Medical Examiner Elliot Gross issued an autopsy report that claimed Stewart had died of spontaneous cardiac arrest. Protests by the Stewart family and others compelled Gross to issue a new autopsy report.



November 14, 1960

Nov. 8—As the "great debate" between Kennedy and Nixon drew to its dreary close it became evident that the two candidates of big business had made one contribution to truth. Their controversy over which had the best program for smashing the Cuban Revolution provoked well-informed sources to reveal some of the facts about Washington's plans to overthrow the Cuban government the way it had the Arbenz government in Guatemala in 1954.

When Cuban Foreign Minister Raul Roa informed the United Nations that the U.S. was plotting Guatemala-style military aggression against his country, U.S. spokesman James Wadsworth piously declared that the charges were "monstrous distortions and downright falsehoods." But as various newspaper partisans of Nixon and Kennedy set out to prove that one or the other was wrong in his handling of the Cuban issue they proceeded to split the beans.



November 16, 1935

MINNEAPOLIS, Nov. 8—The offensive of the old time, reactionary craft-union A. F. of L. bureaucrats against the progressive, militant leadership of the general drivers union, Local 574, was met this evening by a mass meeting in which the machinations of Meyer Lewis, personal representative of William Green, were exposed. The mass meeting, held in Local 574's hall, was attended by almost four thousand workers and was addressed by numerous leaders in the labor movement.

The chairman of the meeting, Bill Brown, president of the union, opened the meeting by declaring that Green-Lewis and Company had formed a "united front with the Citizens Alliance in order to break up everything 574 had gained for its members. Lewis says that Minneapolis is the worst spot in the United States. It is—for Citizens Alliances. But it is now the best place for workers."

Washington's 50-year economic war on Cuba

BY SETH GALINSKY

October 19 marked the 50th anniversary of the start of Washington's economic embargo of Cuba. Begun under the administration of President Dwight Eisenhower to punish the Cuban people for having made a revolution that overthrew a U.S.-backed dictatorship, it continues to this day.

Prior to the revolution, Cuba was little more than a sugar colony. Sixty-one of Cuba's 165 sugar mills, the source of more than half the island's sugar production, were owned by U.S. capitalists.

Like much of the semicolonial world, Cuba was a supplier of raw materials for U.S. imperialism and a market for its finished goods. Although it had rich agricultural land, Cuba imported most of its rice and beans from the United States; famous for its tobacco, Cuba imported U.S. cigarettes; even though it exported sugar, Cuba imported candy.

In January 1959 working people in Cuba, led by the July 26 Movement, overthrew the dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista. Washington hoped that the changes would be cosmetic, and that whatever government replaced the old regime would continue business as usual.

Instead, the revolutionary government began an agrarian reform that distributed land to small peasants and confiscated the holdings of large landowners, outlawed racial discrimination, reduced rents and electric rates, and created militias with thousands of workers and peasants to defend these gains, opening the road to a socialist transformation.

On June 7, 1960, when U.S.-owned refineries in Cuba refused to process a shipment of crude oil from the Soviet Union, massive mobilizations of workers and peasants accompanied nationalization of the refineries.

U.S. economic war on Cuba begins

In retaliation, Eisenhower canceled Cuba's sugar quota for exporting to the United States for the year. The quota was permanently ended by President John Kennedy. This marked the beginning of Washington's economic war against Cuba.

On Oct. 19, 1960, Washington banned all exports to Cuba except for some food and medicine. After the U.S.-organized invasion at the Bay of Pigs failed in April

1961, Kennedy stepped up the economic war. On Feb. 2, 1962, the U.S. government embargoed all trade with Cuba.

It wasn't until 1988, under President Ronald Reagan, that the U.S. government ended its restrictions on the import and export of books to and from Cuba.

In the 1990s Washington further intensified the embargo, making it illegal for foreign subsidiaries of U.S. companies to trade with Cuba, closing U.S. ports to ships that had stopped in Cuba within six months, and declaring it would exclude from the United States officers of companies that "traffic" in property nationalized by the revolution.

For the first time since the start of the embargo, the U.S. Congress in 2000 passed a law allowing sales of some food and agricultural products to Cuba, while maintaining the almost total ban on sales of anything from Cuba in the United States. In 2005 Washington required all sales to be paid in advance.

This year, on October 26, the United Nations General Assembly voted overwhelmingly for the 19th year in a row to call on Washington to end the embargo.

During the debate, U.S. representative Ronald Godard gave the impression that under the Barack Obama administration, the embargo has been loosened. He repeated Obama's claim that Washington is taking measures to "overcome the decades of mistrust" and that it is in the Cuban government's hands to respond with "political and economic freedoms."

Godard implied Cuba can purchase medical supplies it needs, an outright falsification. Prior to the vote, the Cuban delegation presented a dozen examples of medical equipment, supplies, and



Workers of revolutionary Cuba's militia guard Esso oil refinery after Havana nationalized U.S.-owned refineries following Washington's refusal to process oil from Soviet Union. U.S. president Eisenhower retaliated, canceling imports of Cuban sugar. President John Kennedy banned all trade with Cuba.

medicine that Cuba has been unable to purchase due to the embargo.

In 2009 the U.S. Office of Foreign Assets Control levied fines of more than \$340,000 on companies and individuals accused of violating the embargo. During the first half of 2010 fines reached \$2.2 million.

Opponents of the revolution charge that the Cuban government blocks access to the Internet and other telecommunications. But Bloomberg News reported August 31 that Nokia, AT&T, and Verizon have complained that U.S. regulations block their ability to provide service to Cuba. Washington won't allow companies to pay fees to Cuba of more than 19 cents a call, way below Havana's proposal.

Because of the U.S. trade embargo, Cuba connects to the Internet via satellite, limiting the bandwidth available on the island. The U.S. government has refused to allow Cuba access to under-

water Internet cables just 20 miles from Havana. Cuba hopes to complete the installation of underwater fiber optic lines with the aid of the Venezuelan government by mid-2011, greatly increasing the island's telecommunications capacity.

Although the UN voted 187-2 calling for an end to the embargo, some governments, including members of the European Union, voted mainly in opposition to Washington's interference in their trade policies.

Belgium's representative to the UN General Assembly, speaking on behalf of the European Union, said, "We cannot accept that unilaterally imposed measures impede our economic and commercial relations with Cuba."

"The blockade is an act of economic war," Cuban foreign minister Bruno Rodríguez said at the UN. Washington would like "to install a pro-yankee government in Cuba. That is not going to happen."

Paris announces withdrawal from Afghanistan

BY DOUG NELSON

November 1—In the latest example of waning commitment to the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan among European powers, French defense minister Herve Morin announced October 28 that Paris will begin drawing down in early 2011.

Morin said the French forces would be pulled out from Surobi District of Kabul Province, east of the capital, where most of its 3,500 troops are deployed. The district is "a zone in which we hope we can transfer responsibilities to the Afghans during 2011," Morin told the press.

French officials denied that the announcement had anything to do with the release one day earlier of an apparent message from Osama bin Laden. In an audio tape broadcast by Al-Jazeera a man identifying himself as Bin Laden threatened to kill French citizens in retaliation for French involvement in the war and a recently passed law in France banning Muslim women from publicly wearing a burqa or niqab, which covers the face. The law is scheduled to go into effect in April.

An undisclosed number of French troops stationed in the adjacent Kapisa Province to the northeast of Kabul are to remain, according to the *Daily Telegraph*.

The Dutch government officially ended its Afghan mission in early August,

with a complete withdrawal scheduled for the end of the year. Its troop presence has declined from 1,600 to about 380.

The Dutch withdrawal was announced after the Labor party left the coalition government in protest over proposals to continue its military mission in Afghanistan. At the same time Prime Minister Mark Rutte said in mid-October that his government would soon consider a request from NATO to help train Afghan police.

The Canadian government confirmed in March that it will withdraw its

2,800 troops some time next year. Several weeks ago, Italian foreign minister Franco Frattini said 3,300 Italian troops would begin to draw down next summer and completely withdraw by 2014.

There are some 92,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan, according to *Army Times*. About 40,000 troops are deployed from 45 other countries, according to official NATO figures. Only 13 governments have more than 500 troops in the country. Deployments range from 9,500 from the United Kingdom to 3 from Austria.

U.S. intervention in Yemen

Continued from front page

in her support when she returned to school.

Before the most recent events U.S. Special Forces had already increased their numbers in Yemen, CNN reported, and the White House was considering "the possibility of having the CIA mount a drone operation in Yemen similar to the one in Pakistan." Washington's "counterterrorism" funding for Sana'a rose to \$150.5 million in 2010, more than double the 2009 figure.

Inside the United States, Napolitano announced "enhancements" that would increase the militarization of

the airports. Some, like increased use of dogs and frisking, would be visible, she said, while other steps are "not measures that we are making public."

The U.S., Canadian, French, Dutch, and British governments imposed a ban on shipments from Yemen. The government in Germany also banned passengers from Yemen.

Articles appearing in the big-business press hint at the way the Yemen events will be used by both employers and the government against workers rights. The *Boston Globe* editorialized that "even legitimate companies can be infiltrated by untrustworthy employees."

"There will be a victorious revolution in the United States before a victorious counterrevolution in Cuba"

—Fidel Castro, March 1961

That bold assertion remains as timely today as when it was spoken nearly 50 years ago on the eve of Washington's ignominious defeat at the Bay of Pigs.

Cuba and the Coming American Revolution
by Jack Barnes



About the struggles of working people in the imperialist heartland, the youth who are attracted to them, and the example set by the people of Cuba that revolution is not only necessary—it can be made.

PathfinderPress.com

‘Matter of time before capitalism collapses’

Part 3 of January 1965 interview with Malcolm X for ‘Young Socialist’

Below we continue our installments from the recently published book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. This week we reprint the third and final part of an interview with Malcolm X in January 1965 that originally appeared in the *Young Socialist* magazine. The interview was conducted by Barnes, then national chairman of the *Young Socialists Alliance*, and Barry Sheppard, a staff writer for the *Militant*. Copyright © 2009 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

YOUNG SOCIALIST: What is your opinion of the Democratic Party?

MALCOLM X: The Democratic Party is responsible for the racism that exists in this country, along with the Republican Party. The leading racists in this country are Democrats. Goldwater isn't the leading racist—he's a racist but not the leading racist.¹ The racists who have influence in Washington, D.C., are Democrats. If you check, whenever any kind of legislation is suggested to mitigate the injustices that Negroes suffer in this country, you will find that the people who line up against it are members of Lyndon B. Johnson's party. The Dixiecrats are Democrats. The Dixiecrats are only a subdivision of the Democratic Party, and the same man over the Democrats is over the Dixiecrats.²

YOUNG SOCIALIST: What contribution can youth, especially students, who are disgusted with racism in this society, make to the Black struggle for freedom?

MALCOLM X: Whites who are sincere don't accomplish anything by joining Negro organizations and making them integrated. Whites who are sincere should organize among themselves and figure out some strategy to break down the prejudice that exists in white communities. This is where they can function more intelligently and more effectively, in the white community itself, and this has never been done.

YOUNG SOCIALIST: What part in the world revolution are youth playing, and what lessons may this have for American youth?

MALCOLM X: If you've studied the captives being caught by the American soldiers in South Vietnam, you'll find that these guerrillas are young people. Some of them are just children and some haven't yet reached their teens. Most are teenagers. It is the teenagers abroad, all over the world, who are actually involving themselves in the struggle to eliminate oppression and exploitation. In the Congo, the refugees point out that many of the Congolese revolutionaries are children. In fact, when they shoot captive revolutionaries, they shoot all the way down to seven years old—that's been reported in the press. Because the revolutionaries are children, young people. In these countries the young people are the ones who most quickly identify with the struggle and the necessity to eliminate the evil conditions that exist. And here in this country, it has been my own observation that when you get into a conversation on racism and discrimination and segregation, you will find young people are more incensed over it—they feel more filled with an urge to eliminate it.

I think young people here can find a powerful example in the young *simbas* [lions] in the Congo and the young fighters in South Vietnam.

Another point: as the dark-skinned nations of this earth become independent, as they develop and become stronger, that means that time is on the side of the American Negro. At this point the American Negro is still hospitable and friendly and forgiving. But if he is continually tricked and deceived and so on, and if there is still no solution to his problems, he will become completely disillusioned, disenchanted, and disassociate himself from the interest of America and its society. Many have done that already.

YOUNG SOCIALIST: What is your opinion of the worldwide struggle now going on between capitalism and socialism?

MALCOLM X: It is impossible for capitalism to survive, primarily because the system of capitalism needs some blood to suck. Capitalism used to be like an eagle, but now it's more like a vulture. It used to be strong enough to go and suck anybody's blood whether they were



“Chi Lang village youth volunteer in anti-U.S. war of national salvation,” reads banner at demonstration in Vietnam, 1960s. “It is the teenagers abroad who are actually involving themselves in the struggle to eliminate oppression and exploitation,” Malcolm X said. “Young people here can find a powerful example in the young fighters in South Vietnam.”

strong or not. But now it has become more cowardly, like the vulture, and it can only suck the blood of the helpless. As the nations of the world free themselves, then capitalism has less victims, less to suck, and it becomes weaker and weaker. It's only a matter of time in my opinion before it will collapse completely.

YOUNG SOCIALIST: What is the outlook for the Negro struggle in 1965?

MALCOLM X: Bloody. It was bloody in 1963, it was bloody in 1964, and all of the causes that created this bloodshed still remain. The March on Washington was designed to serve as a vent or valve for the frustration that produced this explosive atmosphere.³ In 1964 they used the civil rights bill as a valve.⁴ What can they use in 1965? There is no trick that the politicians can use to contain the explosiveness that exists right here in Harlem.

And look at New York Police Commissioner Murphy. He's coming out in headlines trying to make it a crime now to even predict that there's going

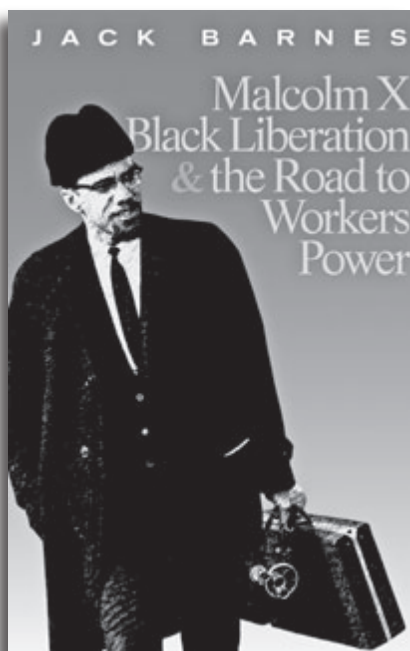
to be trouble.⁵ This shows the caliber of American thinking. There's going to be an explosion, but don't talk about it. All the ingredients that produce explosions exist, but don't talk about it, he says. That's like saying 700 million Chinese don't exist. This is the same approach. The American has become so guilt-ridden and filled with fear that instead of facing the reality of any situation, he pretends the situation doesn't exist. You know, in this country it's almost a crime to say there's a place called China—unless you mean that little island called Formosa.⁶ By the same token, it's almost a crime to say that people in Harlem are going to explode because the social dynamite that existed last year is still here.⁷

So I think 1965 will be most explosive—more explosive than it was in '64 and '63. There's nothing they can do to contain it. The Negro leaders have lost their control over the people. So that when the people begin to explode—and their explosion is justified, not unjustified—the Negro leaders can't contain it.

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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1. In the 1964 presidential election, the Republican candidate Barry Goldwater was defeated by Democratic incumbent Lyndon B. Johnson.
2. The “Dixiecrats” were the openly segregationist wing of the Democratic Party dominant at the time in most of the U.S. South.
3. The August 28, 1963, March on Washington drew more than 250,000 people for a rally at the Lincoln Memorial. The march called for passage of civil rights legislation then pending in Congress. Malcolm X opposed the political perspectives of the leadership of the march, but he participated in the action. That evening, speaking with a *Militant* reporter covering the demonstration in D.C., Malcolm, at the time still the leading spokesman for the Nation of Islam, said that while march leaders were “talking about a ‘civil rights revolution,’” the truth is that revolution is not a halfway process. “You are either free or not free.” (The *Militant*, September 16, 1963.)
4. The Civil Rights Act of 1964, signed into law by President Johnson, barred discrimination in voting, public facilities, schools,

and employment.

5. On January 10, 1965, New York Police Commissioner Michael J. Murphy sharply condemned Black leaders such as Malcolm X who had pointed to growing frustration among Blacks and predicted outbreaks of resistance. Such statements, Murphy implied, were causing the trouble.
6. Until the early 1970s, the U.S. government refused diplomatic recognition to the People's Republic of China, maintaining that the capitalist government of Taiwan (Formosa) represented China.
7. In what the government and big business press called a “riot,” the anger of Blacks in Harlem and the Brooklyn neighborhood of Bedford-Stuyvesant had exploded into the streets for five days in July 1964 in the aftermath of the cop killing of a fifteen-year-old Black youth, James Powell. The uprising was sparked by the actions of New York police. The cops had broken up a demonstration demanding the arrest of the officer who had killed Powell. They arrested protest organizers and then staged a cop riot, beating and arresting Harlem residents and killing one.

Join fight for a socialist world

The 2010 elections are over, but the candidates of the Socialist Workers Party, the only voice for the working class in this election, have not stopped campaigning. They and their supporters plan to continue joining union picket lines; marching in demonstrations against the U.S.-led wars in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq; defending abortion clinics from right-wing attacks; and speaking out on behalf of working farmers.

They will continue to demand a massive public works program to provide jobs at union scale, legalization of undocumented workers, and guaranteed lifetime medical care for all—demands that unite the working class in the face of the deepest economic and social crisis in living memory.

Socialists continue to join with their coworkers on the job in fights against speedup, safety violations, race and sex discrimination, and pay cuts. They will support and help build protests against cutbacks in education and health care, police brutality and frame-ups, and the U.S. embargo on Cuba.

The SWP is a revolutionary working-class party. Its candidates did not—and will not—tell working people that fundamental social change

can be achieved by voting for one or another candidate. The roots of the current crisis is the profit system, and workers need to build a revolutionary movement that can fight to overturn capitalist rule and take political power.

That will give working people the most powerful weapon possible to uproot race and sex discrimination, end wars, and replace the dog-eat-dog world of class exploitation with one based on working-class solidarity. A major step along this road is for workers to break from the Democrats and Republicans and fight for a labor party.

Socialists are circulating the *Militant* newspaper at plant gates, in working-class neighborhoods, and on campuses to get out the truth about resistance by working people to the employers' attacks and the history of past struggles workers can learn from. Along with the paper, they will introduce readers to the book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by Jack Barnes, which explains the need to replace the dictatorship of capital with the dictatorship of the proletariat.

We urge our readers to join the fight for a socialist world.

France: Refinery strikers win solidarity

BY HUGO WILS

GRANDPUITS, France—Workers here struck the Total oil refinery at Grandpuits near Paris October 12, part of the battle against the government's pension "reform." They voted to return to work October 29.

Striker Rodolphe Avice told the *Militant* that the strikes hit the government hard and took them by surprise. "They even had to use the strategic oil reserve," he said, kept for use in the event of war.

The police were granted a court injunction October 22 ordering individual workers who fuel the petrol tankers—on pain of prison sentences if they refused—to end their strike in the interests of "national security."

Pickets blocking the oil depot were dispersed by some 20 busloads of militarized police.

Workers at the refinery were boosted by solidar-



Militant/Jonathan Silberman

Union members block oil depot in Grandpuits, France, October 29 to protest government's plan to raise retirement age.

ity from other workers. The union received around 5,000 messages of support and hundreds joined their contingent during a national day of action in Paris.

Many prices rise, but not Social Security

Continued from front page

up in February by President Barack Obama to make proposals on how to cut the federal budget. "For far too long, Washington has avoided the tough choices necessary to solve our fiscal problems," the president said at the time.

One proposal being considered by the commission is raising further the age at which workers can start collecting Social Security benefits. House Republican Leader John Boehner and Democratic Majority Leader Steny Hoyer both favor this, as does Democrat Erskine Bowles and Republican Alan Simpson, cochairs of the fiscal commission.

Currently workers can begin collecting benefits at age 62, but they get only 75 percent of what they would receive if they waited until age 66. Despite this penalty more than three-fourths of all those filing for Social Security last year took early benefits, a measure of the severity of the capitalist economic crisis. At the same time the number of people remaining in the workforce even though they are over 65 rose in 2008 to 16.8 percent of that age bracket, up from 11.9 percent a decade ago.

Raising the age at which workers can receive full Social Security benefits is just a way of cutting payments overall. The Economic Policy Institute estimates that increasing the eligibility age from 65, which was set in 1935, to 67, which will take ef-

fect in 2022, reduces lifetime benefits for a retiree by \$28,000. If the age gets pushed to 70, the government will be stealing another \$63,573.

Refusing to pay a cost-of-living increase is another way of cutting benefits. When Social Security was first won in the 1930s, there was no cost-of-living clause. That was won as a by-product of the Black rights struggle in the 1960s and 1970s, which also led to establishing Medicare, Medicaid, and benefits for those with disabilities regardless of age.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics justifies the denial of COLA by claiming that prices only went up 1.1 percent in the last year, not enough to qualify for an increase in Social Security checks. But COLA figures are rigged in several ways.

The government no longer includes the cost of food or fuel in determining the Consumer Price Index. Over the past year food prices rose 1.4 percent; the energy index increased 3.8 percent, with gasoline up 5.1 percent.

The figures used to decide if Social Security should go up are also not based on the expenses of older retirees, but on those of younger people who are still working, whose medical expenses are far lower. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, people over 65 spent 5 percent more on health care in 2009 than they did in 2007.

Actions in France

Continued from front page

unemployment. A 33-day walkout at Fos-Lavera—the world's third largest oil terminal and port, near Marseille—and blockades of some 20 fuel depots were at the center of the opposition to the government's measures.

The day after parliament approved the retirement law, hundreds of thousands of workers again went on strike October 28, with demonstrations in 269 cities. According to police estimates, 560,000 took part in those marches, the smallest day of action to date.

On October 29 workers voted to return to work at the last of the 12 oil refineries that had been shut down by strikes. Workers at Fos-Lavera, who had been on strike against both the retirement law and substantial changes in their work conditions, also voted to go back to work after port authorities made some concessions. Their strike had left 82 boats, including 38 oil tankers, stranded, many for weeks.

The government stood firm in the face of workers' opposition. It ordered aggressive police action by specialized riot police to clear the blockaded fuel depots, and issued a legally binding order to striking refinery workers at Grandpuits, near Paris, to return to work. "If France had retreated from reforming [the retirement system] in the midst of social protests, this would have put it in a difficult position on the financial markets," said Economy Minister Christine Lagarde.

Attacks on workers' social wage

Through massive class battles over decades, workers in France have established a social wage that they consider their right. Previous attempts to cut it have been repelled by strikes and protests, like in 1995 against the plan put forward by Socialist Party prime minister Alain Juppé. Many workers are assessing what is different this time around.

France has the second largest economy in Europe after Germany, and is a nuclear power with a significant military. To continue competing with its imperialist rivals, the French rulers must offload the effects of the economic crisis onto the backs of working people. France spends proportionately more on pensions and health than any other European country and faces an 8.2 percent budget deficit this year.

The government has been emboldened by the signals it received from trade union leaders. In negotiations at the Elysée Palace, union leaders indicated that they "understood the pensions quandary" and were "prepared for the usual French face-saving social kabuki: after some pre-planned tactical retreats, a bit of symbolic give and take on implementation, a few exceptions made for women and manual labourers, the bill would have been accepted," reported the *Daily Telegraph*.

Instead, workers fed up with making concessions pushed union officials into sanctioning actions that went way beyond their intentions. Socialist Party leaders gave support to the protests in an effort to make gains in the 2012 presidential and legislative elections. But the SP endorses the government's main arguments, while offering schemes to raise taxes and make workers stay on the job longer in hopes of eventually rolling back the retirement age to 60.

'Pensions not final attack'

Strikers at the Grandpuits refinery told *Militant* reporters that governments across Europe are today cutting payments on pensions, health, and welfare. "We had to stand firm on the pensions because we know it's not the final attack," said Rodolphe Avice. Many unionists here point out that actions taken by top union officials after the large October 19 strikes and demonstrations were aimed at limiting the strike movement. The next large action was delayed for nine days, and the joint statement by union leaders calling the October 28 mobilizations made no mention of support to ongoing strikes in the refineries, on the railroads, and elsewhere.

Véronique Letourmy, 34, an assembly line worker for the past six years at the Peugeot auto plant in Poissy, near Paris, participated in two strike days for the first time in her life. She explained how the anti-working class measures of the government fall especially hard on women. "When we are off work to have a child, none of that time counts fully towards a pension," she said.

Unions have urged Sarkozy to not sign the bill and have called for demonstrations November 6.