

Int’l efforts help keep subscription drive on pace

BY PAUL MAILHOT

Militant Army volunteers in the United Kingdom are giving a boost to the international campaign to sell more than 2,000 subscriptions to the paper. Members of the Communist League in London upped their quota for a second time, from 90 to 100. In Manchester, socialists raised the goal from 25 to 35. And volunteers in Canada increased theirs to 70.

A bus driver in Manchester recently bought a subscription from a door-to-

Door to door with the Militant Army

door team. “At first he said he wasn’t interested in politics,” wrote Dag Tirsén. “But he went on to say he expects ‘major fightbacks’ in coming years if the increasingly grim future many workers face doesn’t turn around.”

The response in working-class communities in Manchester, where

Continued on page 3

Illinois coal miners vote UMWA, fight for contract

BY CINDY JAQUITH

Coal miners at the large Willow Lake underground mine facility in Equality, Illinois, voted last week to join the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA). The union is now fighting for a new contract.

The Peabody Energy–owned mine employs 444 workers and has a long record of safety violations.

Since 2008 Peabody has been fined \$230,000 for dangerous conditions at Willow Lake, including inadequate roof support and excessive coal dust. In 2009 the mine had an accident rate more than double the national average. In 2010 a supervisor at the mine was killed when a shuttle car hauling coal struck him.

Willow Lake is one of two Peabody mines under investigation by the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA). On May 25 an administrative law judge ordered Peabody to release files on accidents, injuries, and work-related illnesses that it withheld from MSHA, claiming concern for the “privacy” of its workers. Massey Energy Co., another coal company with a deadly safety record, was ordered to do the same.

Prior to voting in the UMWA, miners at Willow Lake were represented by the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Ship Builders, Blacksmiths, Forgers and Helpers Union.

Volunteers from the Militant Army are headed to Equality, Illinois, to talk to miners and workers in the local community about the struggle at the Willow Lake mine. A report will appear in next week’s issue.

Abortion rights curbed by Indiana state gov’t

Attacks fall hardest on working-class women



“Walk for Choice” rally in Tallahassee, Florida, February 26, one of several around country in response to February 18 vote by U.S. House barring federal funds for Planned Parenthood.

BY JOHN HAWKINS

CHICAGO—Taking direct aim at women’s right to abortion, Indiana governor Mitch Daniels signed into law May 10 the first bill in the country prohibiting the use of Medicaid at clinics that provide abortion services.

Making clear the intent of the legislation is to deny women access to abortion, Daniels declared that after a “careful review” he was confident

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White House ‘peace plan’ v. fight for a democratic secular Palestine

BY SETH GALINSKY

U.S. president Barack Obama’s remarks that “the borders of Israel and Palestine should be based on the 1967 lines with mutually agreed swaps” as a starting point for negotiations sparked a public clash with Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Despite the prominence given to it by the media, the dispute has nothing to do with resolving the Palestinian

struggle for national rights or with the interests of working people—Jewish and Arab alike—in Israel.

Seated next to Obama in the Oval Office May 20, Netanyahu said Israel “cannot go back to the 1967 lines”—to the borders before the 1967 Six-Day war, when the Israeli Army occupied parts of neighboring countries.

Netanyahu also took issue with Obama for not restating Washington’s long-standing rejection of the “right of return” for descendants of Palestinian Arabs expelled from Israel.

The *Washington Post* called the dispute “The blowup with Israel” and said that Obama and Netanyahu were “once again publicly and poisonously

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Spring 'Militant' subscription campaign					
April 23–June 6 (week 4)					
Country	quota	sold	%	2,000	
UNITED STATES					
Los Angeles*	160	131	82%	1,433	
Philadelphia**	100	73	73%		
Miami*	85	58	68%		
Twin Cities*	150	102	68%		
San Francisco**	175	118	67%		
Des Moines*	160	103	64%		
Seattle*	160	103	64%		
Chicago*	150	95	63%		
New York	330	194	59%		
Houston*	65	38	58%		
Atlanta*	165	92	56%	should be	
Boston*	60	31	52%		
Washington	110	48	44%		
Total U.S.	1,870	1,186	63%		
Canada*	70	45	64%		
New Zealand*	65	52	80%		
Australia*	60	45	75%		
UNITED KINGDOM					
Manchester*	35	20	57%		
London**	100	85	85%		
Total UK	135	105	78%		
Total	2,200	1,433	72%		
Should be	2,000	1,333	67%		
*Raised goal ** twice					



Militant Army volunteer Sara Lobman, right, sells subscription in Maspeth, Queens, New York, to Andrew Los, active duty marine who served in Afghanistan and is on his way to Japan.

Also Inside:	
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Afghans protest U.S. hunter-killer raids

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Some 2,000 people demonstrated in a funeral march in the northern city of Taloqan in Afghanistan's Takhar Province May 18. They were protesting the killing of civilians in a night raid on a house by U.S.-led forces and Afghan troops in that town. The dead included the owner of the house, his wife, daughter, and a guest, the provincial governor's office told the media.

Shouting "Death to [Afghan president Hamid] Karzai! Death to America!" the marchers carried aloft the bodies of the two men and two women killed. Afghan police and NATO troops opened fire on the demonstrators, killing 10 of them and injuring more than 50. Protesters returned to the streets the following day.

The demonstration occurred in the same province where a U.S. special forces' operation last September mistakenly targeted and killed 10 people traveling as part of an election campaign convoy for a parliamentary candidate.

The May 18 raid is just one recent example of "collateral damage" from U.S. special forces' hunter-killer operations. In the last week alone, three other commando raids in eastern Afghanistan killed children, among other noncombatants. Afghan cops opened fire May 15 on marchers protesting a raid in Nangahar Province the night before, killing a 15-year-old boy. Among those killed at the protest was a 14-year-old boy.

NATO officials claim that the latest raid killed militants affiliated with the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, a group that backs the Taliban in northern Afghanistan. The protesters emphati-

cally pointed out that all four were civilians. U.S.-backed President Karzai condemned the assault, saying it was a case of mistaken identity.

In a statement on its website, the German Defense Ministry "admitted that its troops deliberately fired upon the demonstrators," reported Spiegel online, backtracking from its previous story that its troops only fired warning shots. Two German soldiers were killed. Berlin has nearly 5,000 troops stationed in northern Afghanistan.



March in Taloqan, Afghanistan, May 18 condemns night raid by U.S.-led forces that killed four civilians.

Reuters

Insurance companies profit as health care declines

BY SETH GALINSKY

While health insurance companies are enjoying their third year of record profits, growing numbers of workers—including those with insurance—are foregoing medical care.

In fact, a large part of the profit jump is because workers with insurance are increasingly putting off treatment because they can't afford the rising co-payments and deductibles.

David Welch, a nurse in California, delayed going to a specialist even though he has a history of skin cancer, because his deductible is \$4,000, cited the *New York Times*, in an article on this topic.

This is a win-win situation for the insurance capitalists. They fill their coffers with monthly premiums, but pay out less for health care.

Premiums are going up in part because federal and state regulators have already approved steep hikes to compensate insurance companies for the first stages of the health-care "reform" law, which will take full effect in 2014.

In early May Cigna, the fourth-largest health insurer in the United States, announced that its first quarter income jumped 52 percent, while health-care medical claims, its largest expense, fell 6 percent.

Rising numbers of uninsured

While the insurance companies' profits swell, the percentage of those without any coverage increased from 14.8 percent to 16.4 percent between 2008 and 2010, according to figures from Gallop-Healthways Well-Being Index.

Among the growing uninsured, ironically, are health-care workers themselves. According to the Paraprofessional Healthcare Institute, 14 percent of hospital workers, 26 percent of workers in nursing homes, and 37

percent of those employed by home-care agencies are uninsured.

At Lakeview Christian Home in Carlsbad, New Mexico, only 87 out of 200 workers are on the insurance plan. "When we started charging \$25 a month," Joanna Knox, Lakeview's chief executive, told the *Times*, "many employees dropped coverage."

Another trend is the increasing number of doctors who refuse to see patients covered under Medicaid, the government insurance program for those with low income, because it is less lucrative for them. As a result, Medicaid patients often turn to emergency rooms for care, the one place required by law to provide treatment without money up front or assurance of payment—just a massive bill in the mail.

But hospital emergency rooms are shutting down.

A study published in the May *Journal of the American Medical Association* found that the number of hospitals with emergency departments in nonrural areas declined from 2,446 in 1990 to 1,779 in 2009. During the same period the number of emergency room visits increased by 35 percent.

THE MILITANT

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The U.S. rulers' frame-up and incarceration of Puerto Rican independence fighters, like Norberto González Claudio and Oscar López Rivera, are an attack on the rights of all working people. The 'Militant' covers the fight to win their freedom. Don't miss an issue.



FBI agents take Norberto González Claudio from courtroom in Puerto Rico. Judge ordered him extradited to Connecticut.

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

Obama disclosure order is attack on political rights

BY JOHN STUDER

On April 13 President Barack Obama issued a draft presidential Executive Order that would force all companies and their officers to publicly disclose political contributions in order to bid on government contracts.

Entitled “Disclosure of Political Spending by Government Contractors,” Obama’s proposed order—like other “disclosure” requirements pushed by liberals since the 1970s—is packaged as an aid to greater “transparency” about big business interests in the United States. In reality, such measures—whether legislation, executive orders, or court rulings—provide another weapon to be wielded against working people by the capitalist state that serves the interests of the wealthy ruling families who own and control “big business.”

Claiming to promote “the integrity

of the federal contracting system,” the order makes public the political activity of businesses and executives through a “centralized, searchable, sortable, downloadable and machine readable format” on government websites.

The proposed disclosure order conveniently exempts those Obama considers key to his 2012 reelection prospects. These include trade unions whose class-collaborationist officialdoms, the administration hopes, will once again spend tens of millions on his campaign, as they did in 2008. Also exempt are “grant recipients” from the well-heeled, self-ordained “meritocratic” layers of professors and foundation personnel among whom Obama himself was groomed.

In an article headlined “When Capitalists Need Socialist Workers” in the May 6 *National Review*, which de-



Militant/Dan Fein

Hazleton, Pennsylvania, Socialist Workers campaign headquarters after 2004 firebombing by rightists. SWP has fought for and won exemption from disclosing names of its contributors.

scribes itself as “America’s conservative magazine,” Stephen Hoersting writes that Obama’s proposed order opens the door to attacks against those seeking government contracts who contribute to

political candidates and causes the administration—or others—oppose.

Hoersting notes that the Socialist Workers Party has fought—and won—an exemption from such disclosure regulations on federal, state, and local levels.

The party’s fight against turning over a “hit list” to the government and other anti-working-class forces by disclosing the names of its contributors and those who do business with it has been waged for some four decades.

In 1973 the party filed a federal lawsuit against spying and harassment by the FBI, CIA, Military Intelligence, and other federal agencies. It waged a decade-long political and legal campaign, forcing out thousands of pages of files showing how the government carried out systematic spying, harassment, and disruption against the party and its members and supporters because of their views and activities. Through this campaign, the SWP exposed evidence dating back to the 1930s, when its members helped lead militant working-class battles across the Upper Midwest and fought against the U.S. imperialist war drive.

The party won in federal court, with the judge ruling in 1986 that the government must stop targeting its members and supporters.

As the socialists were launching this effort some 40 years ago, however, Congress in 1974 adopted legislation forcing political parties and other groups to turn over lists of contributors and vendors during election campaigns. The law, making these names publicly accessible, had been vigorously pushed above all by

Continued on page 4

International ‘Militant’ subscription campaign

Continued from front page

the Communist League recently set up an organizing committee, encouraged *Militant* supporters there to go for the higher goal.

As readers may have noted in last week’s issue, efforts by Militant Army volunteers outside the United States—who were well ahead of schedule—helped lift the scoreboard several percentage points. This week is no different—London is already at 85 percent, New Zealand at 80, and Australia at 75. Time for another raise?

There are two more weeks in the door-to-door effort to win new readers. So far 1,433 subscriptions have been sold, just slightly ahead of schedule.

Plans to go over the top in the campaign include teams selling subscriptions in cities and towns in early June, as Militant Army volunteers head to an international socialist conference in Oberlin, Ohio. So far, socialist workers from Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom have signed on.

Four books about the working-class struggle to conquer political power are being offered along with subscriptions. These are *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics*; *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*; and *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning*, all by Jack Barnes; and *Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?* by Mary-Alice Waters.

The *Militant* gets numerous reports about workers’ responsiveness to the revolutionary perspectives written about in the paper. Many caught in the vise of the capitalist crisis—its wars, joblessness, debt burdens, and attacks on social and political rights—are more inclined now to take a look at a newspaper published

in the interests of working people.

Sara Lobman from New York writes, “Rudy Gush, a retired worker who has had ‘more jobs than I can say,’ bought a subscription from a door-to-door team in Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, last week.

“At first he said he’d just buy a single,” Lobman reported. “‘Five years ago if you’d come here with that paper, I’d have thrown you off the steps and told you if you don’t like it in America, go somewhere else.’ Gush said. ‘But here I am talking with you about revolution.’”

In the end Gush bought a subscription and took two blank sub cards in case any of his friends want to get the paper.

The Militant Army is also expanding—a major goal of the subscription campaign. Not only do we want new readers, but also recruits from workers and young people who find the paper useful and want to introduce it to coworkers, neighbors, and friends.

Arlene Rubinstein from Los Angeles writes, “Efren Quitana, pictured in the May 23 issue, has become an effective member of the Militant Army. Through his efforts showing the paper to coworkers, we have three new subscribers.

“Efren set up a lunchtime get-together with his coworker José, who in turn brought his friend Pedro, to talk about the *Militant* with a couple of us from the Socialist Workers Party. José said he has been trying to understand the economic crisis and appreciated discussing it with workers who have a communist outlook. Both he and Pedro subscribed.

“They told others back at work about the paper,” Rubinstein said. “Allen, another coworker, showed up at the Militant Labor Forum the next week due to their efforts and picked up a sub.”

John Naubert from Seattle writes,

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

TEXAS
Houston

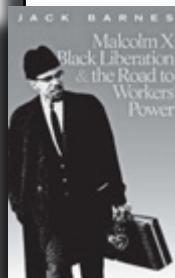
Free the Cuban Five! Speaker: Mike Fitzsimmons, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., June 3, 7:30 p.m. Suggested donation: \$5. 4800 W. 34th St., Suite C-51A. Tel.: (713) 688-4919.

—CALENDAR—

TEXAS
Houston

‘From My Altitude’: A Touring Exhibit of Artwork by Antonio Guerrero, One of the Cuban Five Political Prisoners in U.S. Jails. Opening reception and Cuba Solidarity night, Sat., June 4, 7 p.m. Exhibit ends June 15. *Houston Institute for Culture/East End Studio Gallery, 708C Telephone Rd. Tel.: (832) 390-7661. Sponsored by the Houston Peace Council, Houston Cuba Solidarity Committee, International Action Center.*

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by Mary-Alice Waters ~~\$7~~ **\$5 with subscription**

The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning
by Jack Barnes ~~\$3~~ **\$2 with subscription**

Contact distributors on page 8—subscription rates on page 2



Pathfinder Press

‘In Cuba, we tell people to read, not what to believe’

BY FELICITY COGGAN
AUCKLAND, New Zealand—Ezequiel Morales, a representative of the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples, spoke at four public meetings in Auckland, Hamilton, and Wellington in May, following a monthlong tour of Australia. He also met with trade unionists and was interviewed on student and community radio.

Speaking at a meeting at the University of Auckland organized by the Students’ Association and the Cuba Friendship Society, Morales said he was eight years old when the Cuban Revolution triumphed on Jan. 1, 1959. Born into a peasant family in Granma Province in eastern Cuba, the eldest of five boys, he began working at age seven to help support his single mother and brothers. He described working as a shoeshine boy for 45 cents a day and paying 5 cents a day to learn to read and write.

He joined the 1961 literacy campaign organized by the new revolutionary government. More than 100,000 volunteers, most of them young people like Morales, went into the countryside in a yearlong campaign to eradicate illiteracy in Cuba. Morales described how they worked alongside people, convincing them to learn to read and write. Helping one farmer with the harvest, he talked about the new agrarian reform law in Cuba that guaranteed peasant families title to the land they worked. It was then the farmer realized he would need to be able to read and write to participate in the land reform.

Morales also spoke about the economic reforms under way in Cuba today. The guidelines adopted by the recent congress of the Cuban Communist Party don’t mean the country is moving towards capitalism as some claim, Morales said, and are different from those

in China and Vietnam. The goal is to increase productivity, to produce more efficiently, he said.

Addressing the limitations on Internet use in Cuba, he described the new fiber-optic cable between Cuba and Venezuela that will soon be operational, superseding the existing costly access via satellite—the result of Washington’s refusal to allow Cuba access to the undersea cable a few miles off its shores. The limits on Internet access do not mean there is no freedom of speech in Cuba,” Morales said. “In Cuba we don’t tell people to believe, we tell them to read.”

Morales displayed his marked-up copy of the *Draft Guidelines of the Economic and Social Policy of the Party and the Revolution*, a document produced by the Cuban Communist Party last November for discussion leading up to the Sixth Congress of the party in April. He was one of millions who par-



Militant/Baskaran Appu
Ezequiel Morales, representative of the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples, speaking at University of Auckland in New Zealand, May 12.

ticipated in meetings at workplaces and in communities to debate the provisions in the document. More than 180 of the nearly 300 proposals in the draft guidelines were amended coming out of these meetings, Morales said.

Morales also described the advances in health care and education in Cuba as a result of the revolution, and the attitude of doctors trained in Cuba. “In Cuba a sick person is a patient, in other countries that person is a ‘client,’” he said.

Four areas increase ‘Militant’ fund-raising goal!

BY DOUG NELSON
“The response to the *Militant* in working-class neighborhoods and communities here in Canada has been reflected in the higher number of first-time contributors,” said John Steele, who organizes the Militant Fighting Fund there. “One new contributor said she would send in \$50. When the check arrived, it was for \$100.” This week supporters of the paper there increased their fund-raising goal from \$6,400 to \$7,000.

Canada is joined this week by three other areas where supporters of the *Militant* raised their quotas: San Francisco with \$1,000 more; Seattle with \$200, and Houston pledging an extra \$200 for the second week in a row. The

four provide an example for other areas where collections have gone over, or are poised to exceed, the goals.

The four increases bring the combined local quotas to \$119,200—more than \$3,000 over the \$116,000 goal!

Dan Fein, who organizes the fund in New York City, said supporters there initially decided to reach for a goal of 15 new contributors, but later increased it to 25 because the response was better than anticipated. So far they have received first-time donations from 24 readers of the paper. Surely they will exceed their goal again.

One new contributor in New York, Koffi Abbiw, returned Fein’s call to say he was putting \$40 in the mail

when he gets paid on Friday. “I like the *Militant* because it is the most truthful paper I have ever read and I read a lot of papers to keep up with what’s happening in the world,” said Abbiw, a student at Medgar Evers College in Brooklyn who is originally from Ghana and has been reading the paper for a year. “The *Militant* does not back off from telling the facts.”

Another recent contributor in New York, Samuel Alarape, an African American hospital worker, pledged \$100 when he renewed his subscription for a year and picked up a copy of *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning*, one of several books on special with subscriptions. (See ad on page 3.)

‘Militant’ Fighting Fund			
April 2–May 30 (week 6)			
Country	Quota	Paid	%
UNITED STATES			
Miami	\$3,000	\$2,611	87%
San Francisco*	\$15,000	\$12,427	83%
Houston*	\$4,000	\$3,241	81%
Seattle*	\$8,800	\$7,031	80%
Boston	\$4,000	\$2,844	71%
Atlanta	\$7,800	\$5,346	69%
Des Moines	\$3,400	\$2,321	68%
New York	\$21,000	\$13,853	66%
Chicago	\$10,000	\$5,960	60%
Twin Cities	\$7,000	\$4,074	58%
Washington	\$8,500	\$4,437	52%
Los Angeles	\$8,500	\$4,406	52%
Philadelphia	\$4,000	\$1,720	43%
Other		\$600	
Total U.S.	\$105,000	\$70,871	67%
Canada*	\$7,000	\$6,435	92%
New Zealand	\$3,500	\$2,959	85%
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	\$1,600	\$2,375	148%
Manchester	\$300	\$317	106%
UK Total	\$1,900	\$2,692	142%
Australia	\$1,500	\$1,283	86%
France	\$300	\$328	109%
Total	\$119,200	\$84,568	73%
Should be	\$116,000	\$87,000	75%
* Raised goal			

Obama disclosure order is attack on rights

Continued from page 3
Common Cause—a major proponent of Obama’s order today—as well as other liberal groups.

The Socialist Workers Party opposes *all* such disclosure laws or regulations—used against *any* individual or organization—as an assault on the political rights of working people. The party launched a fight against the 1974 disclosure provisions and has won exemptions for its election campaigns since the late 1970s, both from the Federal Election Commission and in federal court.

Since 1990 the SWP has had to fight again every six years to renew the exemption. Each time it has presented substantial evidence that the party and its supporters continue to be targeted for attacks and discrimination by individuals and government authorities.

Other groups, from a variety of political viewpoints, have not been able to win such exemptions and have seen their members and supporters subjected to threats, assaults, and retaliation. One example was in 2008, when contributors to an effort opposing Proposition 8 in California, which would have legalized same-sex marriage, were targeted because of their political views.

In 2009 the Federal Election Commission extended the SWP’s exemp-

tion again, but shortened it to four years this time. Steven Walther, the commission’s chair, argued that socialism is now “more mainstream.” That means “more scrutiny is in order,” he argued.

Hoersting points out that the only Supreme Court judge who argues disclosure is unconstitutional is Clarence Thomas. In a lone dissent from part of a 2010 court decision, Thomas said

disclosure requirements “enable private citizens and elected officials to implement political strategies *specifically calculated* to curtail campaign-related activity and prevent the lawful, peaceful exercise of First Amendment rights.”

“When American capitalists need the protection of *Socialist Workers*,” Hoersting ends his piece, “it’s time the [Supreme] Court revisited its precedents.”

Democratic-led county council in Maryland cuts workers’ benefits

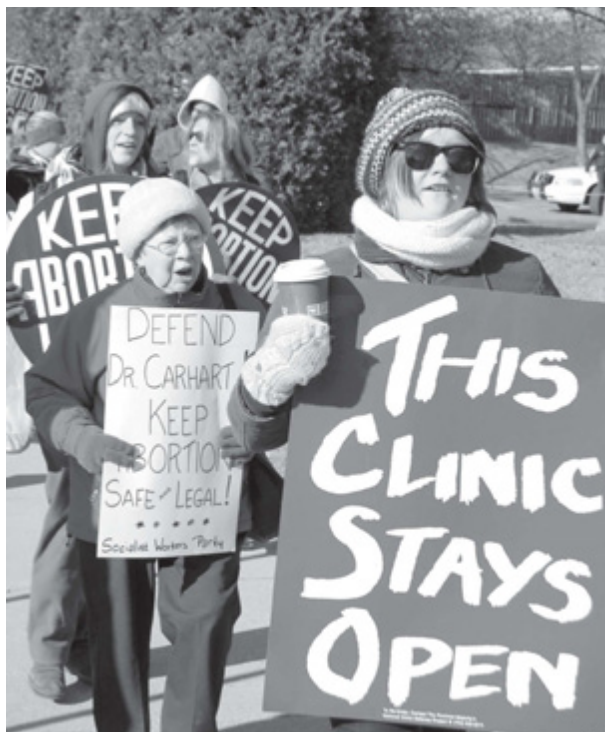
BY GLOVA SCOTT
WASHINGTON—The Montgomery County Council in Maryland unanimously passed a budget May 19 that cuts \$25 million from education and \$33 million in health and retirement benefits for government and school employees. County Council president Valerie Ervin, speaking for the all-Democratic council, said, “It’s time for all of us to live within our means.”

There will also be a 1 percent increase in property taxes and several hundred thousand dollars in cuts to public libraries. Meanwhile, the police department budget is being raised

by nearly \$3 million. Another proposal includes increasing health-care premiums for government workers from 20 percent to 25 percent unless they join HMO plans. The county council also proposed long-term cuts to pension plans by capping future cost-of-living increases.

If it passes a final vote, set for May 26, the budget will go into effect July 1. Public union officials, who had organized an earlier rally to protest budget cut proposals in Rockville, Maryland, are working as part of a county “task force” to hammer out details of cuts to workers’ health-care plans.

Abortion rights in Indiana



Militant/Leah Morrison

Picket outside clinic in Germantown, Maryland, January 23 defends women's right to choose abortion and Dr. LeRoy Carhart, who performs late-term abortions there.

Continued from front page

“that all nonabortion services . . . will remain readily available” across the state through other providers.

The law would affect seven organizations in the state that provide abortions, the largest being Planned Parenthood, according to the governor. In addition to blocking funding for Planned Parenthood, the bill bans abortions in the state after 20 weeks of pregnancy. A similar provision was signed into law in Nebraska in April 2010.

In 1973 the Supreme Court ruled that states cannot restrict abortion services before 24 weeks. In 1976 the Hyde Amendment was passed by Congress, prohibiting use of federal funds for abortions.

The Indiana law also requires that abortion providers discourage women from choosing the procedure by telling them that “life” begins at conception, that abortion causes infertility, and that fetuses can “feel” pain at 20 weeks or earlier.

In February the U.S. House of Representatives voted for a bill to eliminate federal funding for Planned Parenthood and Title X, a program that supports birth control, cancer screenings, and testing for pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. The bill was dropped in a compromise congressional deal in which Democratic opponents of the proposal agreed to ban all government funds for abortion in the District of Columbia.

“Medicaid law is pretty clear: You cannot unplug a provider because they’re providing a constitutionally protected service,” Betty Cockrum, executive director of Planned Par-

enthod Indiana, told the press.

Planned Parenthood filed to suspend enforcement of the new law. On May 11 Federal District Judge Tanya Walton Pratt denied Planned Parenthood’s request for a temporary restraining order.

“The court’s ruling today means that 9,300 Medicaid patients at our 28 locations have lost services from their preferred provider,” Cockrum said. A majority of Planned Parenthood’s clinics are in lower income working-class areas.

Since the beginning of the year Virginia and South Dakota have also enacted new restrictions on abortion. Legislatures in Ohio and other states are considering bills similar to the one passed in Indiana.

Meanwhile, the number of abortion providers continues to decline, especially in rural areas. In 1976, there were only 10 states where 90 percent or more of the counties had no abortion provider. As of 2005 that was the case in 23 states.

A hearing on the request for an injunction against the Indiana legislation is scheduled for June 6.

Iowa legislators seek further limits on abortion

BY HELEN MEYERS

DES MOINES, Iowa—State legislators here are moving to further restrict women’s access to abortion and block plans by Dr. LeRoy Carhart from moving his abortion clinic to Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Carhart, one of only a few doctors in the United States who perform late-term abortions, currently operates a clinic in Omaha, Nebraska, but has faced new restrictions since the state in April 2010 banned abortions after 20 weeks of pregnancy. After the new law was passed, Carhart announced he would open a clinic in Council Bluffs, about five miles east of Omaha.

Spain: workers, youth protest joblessness, cuts



Some 30,000 demonstrate in Madrid’s Puerta del Sol plaza May 21 to protest high unemployment and government austerity measures. Tens of thousands have been protesting daily in cities throughout Spain since May 15, leading up to the country’s May 22 regional and municipal elections. Official unemployment in Spain is more than 21 percent, the highest in the European Union. Unemployment for 18- to 25-year-olds is 45 percent. The demonstrations represent the largest protests yet against policies of socialist prime minister José Zapatero, whose party suffered unprecedented defeats in the elections.

Capitalist rulers in the United States and Europe are concerned about the ability of the Spanish and Italian governments to continue spending cuts and pay down debt, causing a rise in yields on Spanish and Italian bonds. They’re nervously watching Greece, whose economy continues to spiral downward following a \$146 billion bailout by the European Union and International Monetary Fund, steep government spending cuts, layoffs, and tax hikes. Spain is the fourth largest economy in Europe. Government officials there have repeatedly declared that a bailout is out of the question.

—HARRY D’AGOSTINO

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



June 6, 1986

A week of brutal attacks by South African government troops, cops, and government-backed vigilantes has destroyed much of the so-called squatter township of Crossroads, killing at least 30 people and leaving some 30,000 people homeless.

“The vigilantes set fire to homes as they went,” the *New York Times* reported.

The *Times* portrayed the battle as a clash between “conservatives” and “radicals” within the township but the target of the attack was the great majority of the township’s population, who have been living in Crossroads in defiance of the apartheid regime and who have participated in the nationwide anti-apartheid upsurge.



June 5, 1961

The Fair Play for Cuba Committee has issued a call for relaxation of the ban on travel to Cuba to permit 500 student “peace corps” volunteers to spend the summer working in Cuba.

Bert Wainer, of the FPCC Student Council newsletter, said the call was issued in response to several hundred students who had expressed a deep sense of shame for the recent CIA-sponsored invasion of Cuba. The unofficial “peace corps” would repair some of the damage inflicted by U.S. planes and tanks during the ill-fated invasion.

Wainer said many students had expressed a wish to visit families of Cubans murdered by CIA-armed mercenaries and of those killed by explosions and sabotage within Cuba.



June 6, 1936

One million French workers have occupied 500 key plants, shops, mines and factories across the whole of France. Socialist Premier Leon Blum, supported by the French Stalinist party and the General Confederation of Labor, has rushed through a “settlement” of their immediate demands.

The tremendous strike movement hurls the lie into the teeth of the creators of the People’s Front who declare that the French proletariat is not yet ripe for power. It was the great leftward swing of the masses which piled up the great People’s Front majority in the recent elections. It was the same swing, moving way beyond the leaders of the two big parties, which produced the great strikes of the past fortnight.

Abortion Is a Woman's Right!

by Pat Grogan, Evelyn Reed

Why abortion rights are central not only to the fight for the full emancipation of women, but to forging a united and fighting labor movement.—\$6



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Higher taxes or layoffs of teachers? A fake trade-off

Union officials deal blow to solidarity

BY STEVE CLARK

Last week members of the Socialist Workers Party branch in Los Angeles submitted an article to the *Militant* reporting on a May 13 rally there of some 2,000 teachers and their supporters. The demonstrators were protesting threatened teacher layoffs and cuts in funding for public schools.

Sacramento's plans to "balance the budget" on the backs of government employees come on top of \$11.2 billion in earlier cuts, including measures to kick workers off welfare for life after four years (it's currently five years!); to close California's senior day-care centers; and to substantially reduce spending on Medi-Cal, a health-care program depended on by working

people across the state.

Union officials from the California Teachers Association (CTA) called the May 13 protest to rally support for their demand that the state legislature back Democratic governor Edmund Brown's proposal to extend a hike in state income tax for four years and an increase in sales tax and driver's license fees for five years—measures initiated by previous Republican governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.

The article on the protest, drafted by Norton Sandler, quoted extensively from a statement handed out by members and supporters of the Socialist Workers Party in Los Angeles, as they talked to teachers and other rally participants and sold subscriptions to the *Militant*.

The statement opposed the tax hikes and sought to explain why such measures, far from aiding public employees in California, are a blow to the working class. This initiative by socialist workers in Los Angeles to respond to the CTA officialdom's reactionary support of higher taxes and fees—measures that cut deeply into the living standards of workers, farmers, fishermen,



Jobs fair in San Jose, California. Statewide, official unemployment is nearly 12 percent, mirroring conditions workers and farmers face across the United States.

The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning

As volunteers in the Militant Army join with teachers and other workers in actions against layoffs and antilabor assaults, we should remember that these are defensive battles to protect our class from being torn apart by the employers and their government—not steps toward the transformation of education.

Class-conscious workers don't fall into the trap set by the teachers union officialdom of lending political credence or support to the bloated bureaucracy of public "education" under capitalism. We have no stake in defending or demanding the restoration of many school programs that are of no value whatsoever to working people. Nor do we share an iota of common ground with "Waiting for Superman"-style "education reformers" among the well-off professional and middle classes.

It's worthwhile taking a look at *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning: The Fraud of Education Reform Under Capitalism*, a pamphlet by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. It's one of four titles currently being offered by Militant Army volunteers together with an introductory subscription to the *Militant* (see ad on page 3)

"If we start where reformers and liberals throughout the capitalist world begin—with my children, my neighborhood, my schools, my problems—then we get nowhere," Barnes says. "... There is no universal education under capitalism; there is no such thing as education 'for all.' There is only 'educa-

tion' for the working class, and a completely different kind of 'education' for the small propertied minority.

"If we do not explain education under capitalism as a class question (that is, from the standpoint of the bourgeoisie, two totally separate and unrelated questions for two different classes); if we do not present working-class schooling as the social destruction of human solidarity, as the organization of a society based on class differentiation, where human beings late in their teens become units of production in the minds of personnel managers and social planners; if we do not point to the fundamental issue of truly universal, lifetime education—if we cannot explain education this way, then we cannot explain it at all.

"But understood and explained correctly," the SWP leader concludes, "there is no more important question for communists. Education as a lifetime experience—I cannot think of a better reason to make a socialist revolution. What better reason to get rid of the capitalist state, to begin transforming humanity, to begin building human solidarity? ...

"I've been convinced for a long time that explaining the communist approach to education is part of preparing the working class for the greatest of all battles in the years ahead—the battle to throw off the self-image the rulers teach us, and to recognize that we are capable of taking power and organizing society, as we collectively educate ourselves and learn the exploiters in the process."

—Steve Clark



May 13 rally in Los Angeles of teachers and supporters called for extending hike in state income taxes and raising sales tax and driver's license fees, measures that cut deeply into living standards of workers, farmers, fishermen, and hard-pressed middle layers. Class-conscious workers reject fake trade-off between jobs and taxes promoted by bosses and union officials.

and hard-pressed middle layers—was welcome and timely.

As editor of the *Militant*, I rejected the article, however. The arguments in the statement issued by the SWP in Los Angeles lead working-class fighters off politically. I consulted with other national leaders of the SWP in New York, who agreed the article should not be run. Since the political questions at stake are important for workers across the United States and the world, it's useful to explain the reasons for the rejection.

Unrelenting blows

The consequences for working people in California of the unrelenting blows of three years of deepening capitalist crisis—with the official jobless rate there at nearly 12 percent—are a mirror of attacks on workers and farmers across the country, whether by Democratic or Republican administrations.

Government employees are among those in the gun sights of the employing class and their governments at the local, state, and federal levels. This week the Tennessee legislature voted to end collective bargaining with teachers. New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg has announced plans to lay off 4,100 teachers. The *Militant* this year has reported assaults on government workers in Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana,

Florida, Texas, and elsewhere.

The flyer handed out by socialists at the May 13 rally in Los Angeles, however, didn't come close to the central questions class-conscious workers can and must discuss with other working people about the source of these attacks and what we must do to fight them.

Taxes and layoffs

The problem started with the headline: "Higher taxes or layoffs and cuts—pick your poison."

But for workers it's not a matter of "pick your poison." So long as the ruling capitalist families hold power—so long as working people live under the increasingly crisis-ridden dictatorship of capital—we will continue to face higher taxes and layoffs and cuts.

Both. Not one or the other. Communists need to explain that workers won't be doing any "picking." We reject the capitalists' fake trade-off between workers' jobs and higher taxes.

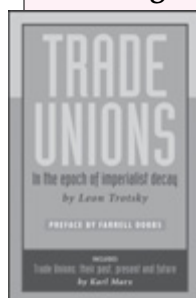
The statement correctly exposed phony talk about "shared sacrifice" by Democratic and Republican politicians. This is echoed by union officials who ingratiatingly try to show that workers are ready to carry "our share"—just make it a bit less intolerable.

But the flyer added the misleading statement, "From Washington to Sac-

Continued on page 8

Trade Unions in the Epoch of Imperialist Decay

Featuring "Trade Unions: Their Past, Present, and Future" by Karl Marx



by Leon Trotsky

"Too exclusively bent upon the local and immediate struggles with capital, the trades' unions have not yet fully understood their power of acting against the system of wages slavery itself. They therefore kept too much aloof from general social and political movements." —Karl Marx —\$16

Cuba and the Coming American Revolution

by Jack Barnes

The Cuban Revolution of 1959 had a worldwide political impact, including on workers and youth in the imperialist heartland. As the proletarian-based struggle for Black rights was advancing in the U.S., the social transformation fought for and won by Cuban toilers set an example that socialist revolution is not only necessary—it can be made and defended. —\$10



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Disasters hit classes in starkly different ways

Militant Army teams visit hard-hit areas, discuss capitalist crisis and road to workers power



Militant/Jacob Perasso

Tornado damage on outskirts of Birmingham, Alabama, May 22. Immediate and long-term impact on working people is greatly magnified by social relations of capitalism, which act to minimize costs to government and prioritize profits of landlords and insurance companies.

BY CINDY JAQUITH

Teams of Militant Army volunteers have been traveling to working-class communities struck by tornadoes or floods in recent weeks. They are talking with workers and farmers about why the impact on their lives of these calamities is greatly magnified by capitalism's profit-driven class relations—and what needs to be done to replace the crisis-racked dictatorship of capital with rule by the toiling majority.

This is explained well in “The Stewardship of Nature Also Falls to the Working Class: In Defense of Land and Labor,” a statement drafted by Jack Barnes, Steve Clark, and Mary-Alice Waters, published in issue 14 of *New International*, a magazine of Marxist politics.

“Human hardship from natural occurrences, including calamitous ‘acts of god,’ falls in starkly different ways on different social classes under capitalism,” the statement explains.

Capitalist property relations dictate that those forced to live in the areas most vulnerable to disasters are working people, the statement says. “So long as the extraction of surplus value in war-like competition for profits dictates the production and distribution of wealth,” it says, “land will remain private property and rental housing for the toiling majority will be built where the propertied classes don’t want to live. It will be constructed where workers can ‘afford’ the rent, including often on flood plains.”

This is “part of the price toilers continue to pay for the inevitably increasing world disorder of imperialism, marked by social breakdowns, financial crises, unrelenting inflation, contractions in the employment of land and labor, reduction of the social wage, spreading wars, constriction of democratic rights, and the growth of Bonapartist rightist

and fascist forces.”

“Only the leadership of a workers and farmers government, conquered in revolutionary struggle, can lead working people to even face confronting the vast worldwide pathologies of capitalism, let alone bring to bear their creativity, energies, discipline, and solidarity to cure them.”

Below are accounts from recent Militant Army teams to Alabama and Louisiana.



Alabama: ‘Gov’t doesn’t care about working man’

BY JACOB PERASSO

HUEYTOWN, Alabama—“The government doesn’t care about the working man. They line their pockets with our money,” said Larry Eskins, who makes a living here building motor homes.

An April 27 tornado ripped through this largely working-class community. Eskins pointed out that those whose property was destroyed and who lack insurance are largely on their own.

When President Barack Obama visited Alabama in the aftermath of the tornadoes, he went to Tuscaloosa, Eskins noted. “Obama didn’t come to our side. We are country folks. He went to where the big university is.”

“Until working people take political power, these kinds of disasters are inevitable,” said Alyson Kennedy, a Militant Army volunteer. “The government’s indifference to what we face is inherent in the capitalist system. They put profits first.” Kennedy said that what is needed to address immediate needs of working people is an emergency, federally funded public works program to build housing, provide aid, and create tens of thousands of jobs in the stricken areas.

The government only listens to people if they make more than a couple hundred thousand dollars a year, Eskins said. He bought a *Militant* subscription and said he wanted to help spread the word about the paper. “The world needs this,” he said. Eskins had several suggestions of other people Militant Army volunteers could talk to and took an extra subscription form to show others who might be



Militant/Alex Huinil; Inset, Militant/ Rachele Fruit
Above: Militant volunteers Alyson Kennedy and Jacob Perasso talk with Larry Eskins of Hueytown, Alabama, (right) about government failure to aid workers hit by tornadoes. Inset: roofer Mel Jackson of Pratt City, Alabama, reads *Malcolm X*, *Black Liberation*, and *the Road to Workers Power* after meeting socialists on earlier visit to storm-torn state.

interested.

More than 70,000 Alabama residents have registered for help from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The most a tornado victim can receive is \$30,200, which includes any temporary housing FEMA provides. Those grants will not be enough for many people to repair or rebuild their homes. FEMA urged residents to apply for loans from the Small Business Administration—a cynical suggestion to many who will not qualify for such loans based on credit scores and ability to pay.

Christopher Jones, a steelworker at the nearby U.S. Steel mill, said that 80 coworkers had been hit by the tornado, adding, “The union hall served as a drop-off place for donations.”

Jones said the Republicans are the problem and that the Democrats have been supportive of the unions. He listened carefully as Militant Army volunteer Sam Manuel said the attacks on the working class, not just on the unions, have been carried out by both Democrats and Republicans.

“The course of the trade union officials of turning the unions into vote-catching machines for the Democrats turns off many workers and weakens the unions,” Manuel said. He showed Jones *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions*, which is being offered at a special discount along with a subscription. Jones purchased the book and subscription and also picked up a copy of *Malcolm X*, *Black Liberation*, and *the Road to Workers Power*.



Louisiana: ‘They help shippers, not fishermen’

BY MIKE FITZSIMMONS
AND JACQUIE HENDERSON

CATAHOULA, Louisiana, May 21—Thousands of workers and farmers in and around the Atchafalaya Basin in

southern Louisiana face the possibility of devastating floods since the Army Corps of Engineers opened up the Morganza floodway May 14.

“Sugarcane, rice, crawfish, and other farmers risk losing a whole season’s harvest,” said Leopold Calais, 22, who works at a gas station. “People are already stressed by the high gas prices.” He took a couple of copies of the *Militant* to show coworkers and friends.

“They keep the water level up so high all year to help the million dollar shipping and oil companies. They don’t want to let it out here for the fishermen when they need it,” said Alvin Laviolette, who is disabled from a rig accident.

“They should have been opening the Morganza gates a little bit all through the year, so those people up north wouldn’t be flooded,” said Cynthia Clawson, who lives less than a mile from the levee that protects Catahoula from the rising Atchafalaya River.

Floyd Robicheaux, 73, and his daughter Christine Vicnair, 49, also of Catahoula, took time out after a day of hauling crawfish traps to talk as they got a subscription to the *Militant*. “I can tell you this is the time of year that we should be making money,” Robicheaux said. “But I make little more than expenses now. Either you don’t have enough water, or like now, they wash us out with the bad water.”

When we raised that the Democratic and Republican parties in Washington and Baton Rouge only act on behalf of the capitalist class, Christine jumped in: “Yes, you can see that here.”

In Cuba, workers are in power and organize to defend the interests of all working people, we pointed out. “I’d like to know more about that,” Christine responded. She said one of the first articles she would like to read in the *Militant* was one headlined “We build a movement in the U.S. to emulate Cuba’s example,” by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party.

Further reading from *New International*

Issue 14 includes: ‘The Stewardship of Nature Also Falls to the Working Class’ by Jack Barnes, Steve Clark, and Mary-Alice Waters

“The capitalist system will inevitably continue to ravage humanity and the planet we inhabit. It cannot be stopped without uprooting capitalism itself.”

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Higher taxes or layoffs of teachers: A fake trade-off

Continued from page 6

ramento, the capitalist government can find the funds for their priorities—from expanding wars to guaranteed payments to the wealthy bondholders or bailing out the banks. It is only when it comes to working people that money cannot be found.”

But this assertion—like the well-worn slogan of middle-class radicals, “Money for jobs, not for war!”—implies another false trade-off peddled by the propertied rulers. It simply isn’t true that reductions in war spending or interest payments to bondholders will stem assaults on the living and job conditions of working people. In the imperialist United States, it’s a bourgeois fable that there is one big pie that can only be cut into so many slices.

A dubious achievement

The CTA officials function within the working-class movement as part of one of the two main political instruments of the employing class, the Democratic Party. The officialdom’s political course is a dagger in the heart of working-class solidarity. It is an obstacle to forging a fighting alliance with others among the oppressed and exploited targets of the bosses.

In recent decades, teachers union bureaucrats have to their credit the dubious achievement of bringing about something almost unheard of in U.S. history: their petty-bourgeois small-mindedness has made teachers *unpopular* among many working people! The respect, admiration, and gratitude toward dedicated teachers, long held by workers and farmers, is more and more a thing of the past.

In 1866 the International Working Men’s Association (IWMA), the first labor organization encompassing workers from across Europe and North America (often known as the First International), adopted a resolution on “Trade Unions: Their Past, Present, and Future.” The International in those years championed the war in the United States to defeat the slaveholders of the Confederacy, rallied support for Irish independence from British colonial oppression, and organized meetings and demonstrations in solidarity with Poland’s struggle for national unification and independence.

“Apart from their original purposes, [the trade unions] must now learn to act deliberately as organizing centers of the working class in the broad interest of its complete emancipation,” said the IWMA resolution, drafted by Karl Marx. “They must convince the world at large that their efforts, far from being narrow and selfish, aim at the emancipation of the downtrodden millions.”

The labor officialdom as a whole has for decades made a mockery of any such militant internationalist course for the unions. Teachers union officials have made themselves cartoon stick figures in this regard.

Need a road forward

As the Los Angeles statement correctly says, working people need to “chart a road to taking political power out of the hands of the capitalist ruling class and reorganizing society and all economic relations from top to bottom in the interests of the working



Militant/Eric Simpson

Ironworker Local 378 members and other unionists stand with Wisconsin workers at April 4 rally in San Francisco. In fight against government assaults, public employees and their unions need to turn to—and have a right to expect solidarity from—industrial unions that organize workers employed by capitalist owners.

class, the vast majority.”

What follows in the leaflet, however, presents no road forward to advance along such a revolutionary working-class course.

The flyer, for example, calls for “the rehiring of all laid-off public workers with back pay” and “return of all furlough days that state and municipal workers have been subjected to.”

But when have communists or other class-conscious workers ever issued a call on General Motors or other bosses, large or small, to rehire all laid-off workers? Never. That utopian demand offers nothing to advance a working-class fight in face of mass layoffs and high and persistent unemployment.

Instead, we explain the need for federal legislation to cut the work-week with no cut in pay in order to spread the available work to all who need jobs—be they teachers and other government employees, or steelworkers, coal miners, and others laid off from privately owned companies. We call for a massive program of govern-

ment-funded public works to provide jobs building quality housing, hospitals, public transportation, schools, child-care facilities, and to meet other needs of working people.

In the fight against government assaults on their jobs, wages, and health and retirement benefits, public employees and their unions need to turn to—and have a right to expect solidarity from—the industrial unions that organize workers employed by capitalist owners.

Teachers and other public employees confront the capitalists only *indirectly*. Their employers—be it a board of education, the state of Wisconsin, or some federal agency—are not capitalists, but government bodies *that represent the class interests* of the bosses.

Privately employed workers, on the other hand, directly confront a boss and can use their collective power on the shop floor and on the picket line to win protections against employer assaults, including going on strike and

denying profits to the wealthy owners.

But the strength of industrial unions has been bled over many decades by the class-collaborationist course of the officialdom—subordinating labor to the bosses’ Democratic party; negotiating “fringe” benefits for a declining number of union workers instead of organizing a labor-led social and political movement to demand health care and pensions for all; rationalizing and helping the employers impose giveback after giveback, and much, much more. With less than 7 percent of workers for private bosses organized in unions, the labor movement today is weaker than at any time in the past century.

The stakes in reversing that are large not only for industrial workers and others directly employed by capitalist owners. They are also decisive for government workers, whose unions cannot mobilize the same kind of power in the face of capital.

No ‘communist tax program’

The statement handed out at the Los Angeles teachers protest called for “a steeply graduated income tax on the wealthy and corporations.” But that makes communist workers sound like we’re staking out a “socialist” position in the debate among Democratic Party liberals over whether income taxes should be raised on those making more than \$250,000 a year or on those making more than a million.

This problem is not helped by tagging on the phrase, “with no taxes for workers or exploited farmers,” as the flyer does.

Yes, communists oppose all taxation of working people. Workers are weighed down by regressive payroll taxes, sales taxes, gasoline taxes, cigarette and liquor taxes, homeowners’ taxes, as well as fees for driver’s licenses, schools, marriages, birth and death certificates, and myriad things too dizzying to list.

That’s why it’s useful to point to the fact that workers in the United States paid no income tax until 1943. That’s when the Democratic administration of Franklin Roosevelt first imposed one on workers, because the U.S. rul-

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Defend women’s right to abortion!

Indiana has become the first state to outlaw the use of Medicaid for medical services at any clinic that performs abortions, in what is the latest move to push back the 1973 Supreme Court ruling legalizing women’s right to abortion. The attack is part of the grinding offensive against working people that also includes assaults on health care, the right to a job, growing wars, and constriction of democratic rights.

Abortion has always been a working-class issue. When it was illegal hundreds of working-class women, 80 percent of them Blacks or Latinas, died from back-alley or self-induced abortions each year. Hundreds of thousands were maimed.

That number plunged dramatically once legal abortion became available. The Supreme Court decision opened the door to millions of women—especially those from the working class—to begin to control their own reproductive functions. It went a significant way toward establishing the fundamental right of women to decide when and whether to have a child.

Freedom from enforced motherhood is a precondition to women’s liberation. Only with the right to control their own bodies can women begin to assert their full human identity as productive, not just reproductive, beings, to exercise full control over their lives, and join as equals in social and political life.

Ever since the 1973 decision, Democrats and Republicans have been chipping away at it. The very first body blow was in 1976, when Congress banned federal funds for abortion except in case of endangerment of the mother’s life, rape, or incest. Today, only 17 states allow Medicaid funds to cover abortions. It’s in this context that President Barack Obama has called for “common ground” with opponents of women’s rights to “reduce the number of women seeking abortions.”

Eighty-seven percent of U.S. counties—where 35 percent of the country’s women live—have no abortion providers at all. Twenty-four states require waiting periods before an abortion can actually be performed. Thirty-six states demand parental involvement before a minor can get an abortion. Eighteen states force women to undergo “counseling”—humiliating, antiscientific badgering sessions—prior to having an abortion.

The fight for women’s right to abortion is not only an essential part of the struggle for women’s emancipation, but is needed to strengthen the unity and fighting capacity of the working class as a whole—putting us on firmer ground to resist the capitalist exploiters’ drive to foist their crisis onto our backs.

Fight for a democratic secular Palestine

Continued from front page
at odds with each other.”

Irrespective of these pointed exchanges, Obama’s bow to the views of his left-liberal base (and his own roots) among university personnel and other middle-class professionals marks no shift in Washington’s and Tel Aviv’s relations of mutual dependence to advance their interests in Palestine and the region.

“Israel must be able to defend itself,” Obama emphasized at the American Israel Public Affairs Committee convention a few days after the controversy broke out. “The ultimate goal is two states for two peoples. Israel as a Jewish state and the homeland for the Jewish people, and the state of Palestine as the homeland for the Palestinian people.”

When Israel was created in 1948, and during the war that followed, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were expelled from their homes and farms or fled. In the 1967 war, the Israeli army occupied Syria’s Golan Heights, Egypt’s Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Strip, and the West Bank of Jordan. In 1979, after Cairo and Tel Aviv signed a peace treaty, the Sinai was returned to Egyptian rule.

The Israeli rulers’ dreams of a greater Israel, however, foundered. Beginning in late 1987, the Palestinian *intifada* (uprising) spread throughout the West Bank and Gaza. Tens of thousands of Israelis, no longer seeing Israel as the “promised land,” left the country, often heading to the United States.

Today more than 4 million Palestinians live in the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza, denied the right to freely travel inside Israel. Another 1.6 million Palestinians, some 20 percent of Israel’s population, are Israeli citizens. They face discrimination in housing, jobs, land, language, education, health care, and other public services.

Palestinians fight discrimination

The Palestinian citizens of Israel refuse to accept second-class status. Over the last two years, Palestinians forced Israel Railways Company to halt the firing of 130 Arab railway workers; Arab egg farmers won subsidies for producing 6 million eggs a year (subsidies that previously had been awarded to Jewish farmers only); and Palestinian rights groups forced the Israeli government to allow Palestinian political prisoners to embrace their children during jail visits.

As part of the working class in Israel, Palestinians have joined struggles with Jewish and immigrant co-workers for higher wages, better work conditions, and against plant closings.

In the West Bank Palestinian workers and farmers have fought against land confiscations, the denial of water rights, and the building of a wall blocking them

off from large parts of the territory. In both the West Bank and Gaza, they have opposed arbitrary border closings by the Israeli regime.

In the West Bank the number of Israeli citizens living in settlements scattered throughout the territory has doubled from 142,000 in 1996 to more than 300,000 today, usurping Palestinian land rights and acting as provocation against the Palestinian majority.

Those in the ruling classes in Tel Aviv and Washington who put forward a “swap” of Jewish enclaves in the West Bank with predominantly Arab areas of Israel hope to hold on to a Jewish majority in Israel. They also worry that the rebellions in Egypt, Tunisia, Syria, and other parts of the Middle East will deepen the isolation of Israel and could leave Washington and Tel Aviv with few allies in the region.

In face of the political difficulties for imperialism, the bourgeois nationalist leaderships of the Palestinian groups Hamas and Fatah offer no way forward to mobilize Palestinians in their national interests, or to advance the fight of toilers in the occupied territories and those within Israel’s borders.

A democratic secular Palestine

“What the Israeli rulers are seeking to impose in order to consolidate Israel within borders of their own choosing is not a ‘peace process,’” Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, pointed out in a June 2006 report to the party’s convention. “It’s the consolidation of an Israel still based on the forcible expulsion of the Palestinian majority, together with the ‘right of return’ of those of Jewish parentage.”

“Tel Aviv intends to hold onto East Jerusalem and selected large suburban Jewish settlements in the West Bank, as well as strategic military locations along the Jordanian border,” he added.

The Palestinian people need to forge a revolutionary leadership that will fight for a democratic secular Palestine, Barnes said. Inside Israel, this will include a substantial Jewish component. It will come out of working people and youth fighting “for land; for water rights; for freedom of movement, freedom to travel; for jobs, decent wages, and union protection; for the release of political prisoners; for women’s equality; against the brutal operations of Tel Aviv’s cops, troops, and commandos.”

While saying no timetables are possible, Barnes emphasized, “A communist leadership of Jewish and Arab workers and farmers—dedicated to the fight for a democratic secular Palestine, and for socialist revolution—can and will be built. . . . as growing numbers of toilers come to understand that if this task is not achieved in time, there will be little left of that part of the world.”

A fake trade-off

Continued from page 8

ers needed to pay for their drive to dominate the world capitalist order during the slaughter of World War II.

But we have no “communist tax program.” And we don’t tell workers that taxing the rich will solve our problems.

No ‘tax road’ to workers power

There is no way for workers to tax our way to the expropriation of the capitalist exploiters. That can only be done as the product of a victorious revolutionary struggle to end the dictatorship of capital and establish a workers and farmers government—a government that helps advance struggles by working people against exploitation, racism, the second-class status of women, imperialist war, devastation of the earth’s air, soil, and waters, and every form of oppression and brutality produced and reproduced by capitalist social relations.

The same holds true for the final demand in the Los Angeles flyer: “An immediate end to interest and principal payments to the wealthy bondholders.”

It’s good to explain that talking about the enormously wealthy bondholders is just another way of describing the capitalist ruling class. But a thinking worker will ask: “If the state halts all interest and principal payments, bonds will be worthless, won’t they? So no one will make loans to the government, and there will be even more massive layoffs and cuts.”

That’s a fact under capitalist rule. The only way to respond to such a question is to point to the need to build a revolutionary movement of working people to fight for workers power.

A workers and farmers government will neither float bonds nor levy taxes on working people. A government of the toilers will provide universal lifetime education, health care, and disability and pension benefits by drawing on society’s enormous surplus wealth—wealth that is produced in one and only one way, by the transformation of nature *by social labor*.

The flyer distributed at the Los Angeles rally says, “It is our labor, not the largesse of the capitalists, that creates the wealth that provides for education, health care, and other vital necessities.” That’s a true statement, but it misses the most important point from the standpoint of the vast toiling majority.

It is the labor of working people that creates the massive surplus value that capitalists appropriate and from which they derive their profits and power. Nothing workers get in terms of schooling, medical care, or pensions is charity—it’s all produced by us.

At the same time, everything we have—above and beyond what bosses must pay in wages to maintain and reproduce the labor power they need to keep production up and profits rolling in—is the product over decades of what working people have fought for, won, and defended *in struggle*. That, too, comes from nowhere else.

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Today, as a result of the grinding impact of the capitalist crisis on tens of millions of working people, communists are finding growing receptivity among workers to discussing a revolutionary perspective along the road to power. An expanding Militant Army is going door to door in working-class neighborhoods with a newspaper “published in the interests of working people” that reports each week on imperialism’s crises and wars and how workers and farmers are organizing and fighting.

The *Militant* is our most powerful political tool right now, supplemented by books and pamphlets by revolutionary leaders recording the lessons of working-class struggles worldwide for more than 150 years.

Publishing schedule

The *Militant* will be taking a two-week break after the next issue, which will be mailed out June 2. We will resume publication with issue number 24, which will be mailed out Thursday, June 23.