

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

**Congo: US mercenaries vs.
Cuban internationalists**

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 76/NO. 3 JANUARY 23, 2012

Obama 2012 stump speech: big gov't and populism

BY JOHN STUDER

On Dec. 6 President Barack Obama delivered what his backers called “the most important economic speech of his presidency” in Osawatimie, Kan.

It was the opening gun in Obama’s 2012 re-election bid after three years at the helm during which the bosses and their government have foisted the burden of the deepening economic crisis on the backs of working people. He put forward populist themes that can be expected to mark his effort to re-enlist youth and others who chanted his mantra for “change” in 2008.

The Republicans, for their part, are searching for an “electable” contender, who will run for “jobs,” against the deepening depression conditions under Obama, and against “big government.”

Obama chose Osawatimie to link his campaign themes with Theodore Roosevelt, Republican president from 1901 to 1908 long identified with populist “progressivism.” Roosevelt gave a speech in

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US bosses target wages in world race for profits

BY SETH GALINSKY

According to the latest U.S. government figures, factory employment increased by 225,000 last year. The modest increase coincides with continued success by the bosses in substantially cutting wages, especially for new hires.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that wages and benefits paid to workers per unit of production has declined 13.6 percent in the U.S. in the last 10 years; it dropped 4 percent from 2009 to 2010.

This confirms what working people already know from our own experience. The capitalist owners of production are seeking to boost their declining rates of profit through two-tier wages, concession contracts, the expansion of temporary work, speed-up and layoffs.

Fuller Money, a website for investors, called the speedup and wage and benefit cuts over the last year in par-

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750 Quebec Steelworkers fight Rio Tinto’s lockout, concessions

BY ANNETTE KOURI

ALMA, Quebec—Rio Tinto Alcan locked out more than 750 workers at its plant here Jan. 1. Members of United Steelworkers Local 9490 voted Dec. 30 by 88 percent to reject the company’s final offer.

“Given that raw materials to produce aluminum are getting more expensive, the company wants to maintain its profits on the backs of the workers and future generations,”

Dominic Lemieux, spokesperson for the union negotiating committee, told the *Militant*. The central issue in the contract rejection is Rio Tinto’s plan to more than double the percentage of work performed by mostly nonunion subcontractors—in essence temporary workers who get half the wages of other employees and no benefits.

Locked-out worker and picket captain Hugues Boivin described the

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Militant/Katy LeRougetel

Jan. 2 picket line by locked-out Steelworkers at Rio Tinto smelter in Alma, Quebec.

Port workers defend their union from bosses, courts

Back ILWU, join Wash. protest of scab ship!



AP/Don Ryan

Action at Kelso, Wash., courthouse Sept. 16 demanding frame-up charges against members and supporters of ILWU Local 21 who protested union busting at Port of Longview be dropped.

BY MARY MARTIN

LONGVIEW, Wash.—In a victory for International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 21 in its ongoing fight against union busting by EGT Development, six more Longshore workers have been cleared of frame-up charges. Three others were cleared last week.

About 200 members and support-

ers of the union were charged with trespass, disorderly conduct and other false allegations for their participation in union protests against EGT at the Port of Longview last summer.

In all except one of these first nine cases, Cowlitz County prosecutors dismissed the charges without prejudice. This unfortunately means they

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US gov't reply to Cuban 5 motion backs frame-up of revolutionaries

BY LOUIS MARTIN AND DOUG NELSON

U.S. government prosecutors petitioned the Southern District Court of Florida Dec. 6 to maintain the frame-up convictions and enhanced sentences

of Fernando González and Ramón Labañino in response to motions the two filed in August to allow hearings for the presentation of new evidence. González and Labañino are two of five Cuban revolutionaries widely known as the Cuban Five.

Before their September 1998 arrests in widely publicized FBI raids, the five—including Gerardo Hernández, René González and Antonio Guerrero—had been living and working in southern Florida monitoring the

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For New Year, expanded pickets greet bosses at American Crystal

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

DRAYTON, N.D.—Some 75 people joined the picket line here Jan. 3, the first workday of the new year, to “show American Crystal we’re still here and ready to go back to work,” said Paul Woinarowicz, one of 1,300 workers locked out by the company since Aug. 1.

The locked-out sugar workers are members of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union. They rejected the company’s contract by a 96

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Sugar workers picket line

Continued from front page
percent margin July 30. A few months later the union rejected a similar offer by a 90 percent margin.

Woinarowicz, who has worked at the plant here for 34 years, said they rallied at all five American Crystal factories that day in the Red River Valley of northern Minnesota and North Dakota.

“It was a good way to start the new year,” Scott Ripplinger, a locked-out worker from East Grand Forks, Minn., said in a phone interview.

The “Return to Work Day” protests were called in response to the naming of American Crystal Sugar President and CEO David Berg as the “person of the year” by *The Forum* newspaper in Fargo.

The distinction bestowed on Berg caused a strong reaction. “To many in the Fargo-Moorhead area, and especially the workers of American Crystal Sugar affected by the lockout, this decision by *The Forum* could be considered to be a

slap in the face,” wrote Kari Knight in a letter printed in the paper.

About 100 locked-out workers live in Drayton, a town of 700. Driving through the streets here many houses have union signs. Workers at both the plant here and in Hillsboro, American Crystal’s other North Dakota factory, have been denied unemployment benefits by the state.

“We come from an area where people watch your back,” said Woinarowicz. “We have lots of support here and that keeps us going.”

Woinarowicz is one of the “ambassadors” for the union. He was part of a trip to the Twin Cities in November where more than \$25,000 was raised from unions there for the sugar workers’ fight. “I’m ready to get on the road again,” he said.

Send solidarity messages and donations to BCTGM Local 167G, 100 N 3rd, Suite 50, Grand Forks, ND 58203. Write checks to BCTGM 167G with “2011 BCTGM lockout” in the memo line.



Scott Ripplinger

Expanded picket line Jan. 3 outside American Crystal plant in East Grand Forks, Minn.

Quebec candy workers end 23-day strike



Militant/Katy LeRougetel

GRANBY, Quebec—Members of Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union at Allan Candy plant here gather Dec. 30 to collect their last strike pay and clean up the picket site. Two hundred forty had been on strike for 23 days. The company backed off from some concession demands, and 80 percent of production workers voted to accept the company’s revised offer and return to work. The employer agreed to leave seniority rules untouched and withdrew demands for forced overtime. The company plans cuts to some shifts, resulting in workers getting reduced pay by several hours a week.

Petya Mateva (with white hat), member of UFCW Local 501 in Montreal, delivered solidarity card signed by dozens of coworkers, along with coffee donation to BCTGM Local President Sylvain Amiraud (left).

—KATY LEROUGETEL

‘Socialism and Man in Cuba’ by Che published in Greece

BY GEORGES MEHRABIAN

ATHENS, Greece—*Socialism and Man in Cuba* was recently published in Greek by the Athens-based publisher Diethnes Vima. The book contains Che Guevara’s 1965 article by that title as well as two other pieces by Guevara, “Planning and Consciousness in the Transition to Socialism” and “Voluntary Work Is a School for Communist Consciousness.” It also contains Fidel Castro’s 1987 speech, “Che’s Ideas Are Absolutely Relevant Today.”

With the capitalist crisis shaking Greece, the new book has fallen on receptive ears.

The book will be launched at a public meeting here Jan. 22, sponsored by Diethnes Vima and the Embassy of Cuba.

A review of the book was published in *Prin*, a “newspaper of the independent left.”

Volunteers in Athens and in northern Greece launched a two-month campaign

to get the book out.

Seventy-eight copies of the book have been ordered so far by 14 bookstores in Athens, Thessaloniki and Patra.

An additional 10 copies were ordered by bookstores and a distributor in Cyprus as a result of a sales team’s visit to the island on Dec. 3 and 4. The team also got orders for another 45 titles, 20 of which were for *Che Guevara Talks to Young People*. Twenty-one copies of the new book have been picked up at strike actions and political events.

Launching of Greek edition of ‘Socialism and Man in Cuba’

Speakers: Eliselia Diaz Suarez, Chargé d’affaires, Cuban Embassy; Nikos Karandreas, president, Greek Cuban Friendship Society; Costas Isihos, former vice president, Athens Labor Council; Natasha Terlexis, president, Diethnes Vima publishing house.

Sun. Jan 22, 7 p.m.

ASCLAYE Hall, 47a Falirou St, Koukaki, Athens (Fix metro stop) Greece

THE MILITANT

‘I try to read every article in there’

“The ‘Militant’ prints what we want to say and what we need others to know. The ‘Militant’ is great! I try to read every article in there.”

—Debra Kostrzewski
East Grand Forks, Minn.
Locked out by American Crystal Sugar since Aug. 1.



Militant/Frank Forrestal

Locked-out worker Debra Kostrzewski.

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China strikes follow plant moves to country's interior

BY EMMA JOHNSON

Encouraged by the Chinese government, domestic and foreign companies have moved from the east coast into the country's interior over the past year in search of cheaper and more pliant labor. But bosses are having trouble running from the class struggle, as fights by workers for improved conditions seem to follow them wherever they go.

After a strike wave in the summer of 2010, workers won big wage increases in the coastal areas of Guangdong and Shanghai, the two industrial export centers of China. These struggles forced provincial governments to raise the minimum wage for all workers.

Since then many companies have relocated to the inland provinces. "The cost of labor has risen to such a level that it's no longer cost-effective to be on the eastern coast, so you'd have to be moving west as much as you can," Francois de Yrigoyen from ManpowerGroup China told Reuters.

But two recent strikes by workers in the Sichuan province show that the extension of industrial development is bringing the extension of the proletariat and their struggles against exploitation.

On Jan. 4 workers at Chengdu Steel walked off the job protesting low wages. Some 2,000 participated, according to China Labor Watch. Workers demanded a raise from 1,500

yuan (\$237) a month to 2,000 (\$315). Management has offered a 300 yuan increase, but the workers don't think that's enough.

Chengdu Steel is an important subsidiary of Pangang Group Steel and Vanadium Co., with 14,000 employees and exports to more than 50 countries around the world.

The steelworkers were encouraged by a victory won a few days earlier at the Sichuan Chemical Industry Factory. After a strike bosses agreed to increase the monthly wage by 400 yuan and to pay a year-end bonus of 3,000 yuan.

As of Jan. 1 the government in Sichuan raised the minimum wage by 23 percent, from 800 to 1,050 yuan.



Some 2,000 workers at steel company in Chengdu, China, walked off job Jan. 4 demanding raise. Labor protests have followed companies seeking lower wages in country's interior.

US factory bosses push down wages in profit drive

Continued from front page

ticular "one of the most encouraging items" for the new year, claiming it is a "prerequisite for a reversal of the long decline in manufacturing jobs."

In the 1980s bosses in the U.S. drove down real wages to early 1960s levels. In the late '90s wages were largely stagnant. But with the deepening economic crisis of recent years, bosses have launched an extensive campaign to deepen the rate of exploitation.

The big three auto companies are in the vanguard in imposing two-tier wages. According to the *New York Times*, some 12 percent of Chrysler's 23,000 union workers now earn about \$14 an hour, half what longtime workers make. At the General Motors plant in Orion Township, Mich., 40 percent of workers are on a lower tier.

General Electric, which has 219 factories in the U.S. and 230 plants overseas, pays new hires in the U.S. \$12 to \$19 an hour while longtime workers get \$21 to \$32.

The bosses have also expanded their use of temporary workers, paying them few or no benefits and lower wages. From 1990 to 2008, the number of temporary workers in the U.S. more than doubled, from 1.1 million to 2.3 million.

The drop in wages in the U.S., while wages in China have risen, has somewhat narrowed the U.S.-China wage gap. Enough, according to the *New York Times*, that some companies have moved production from China to the U.S.

Workers at Oshkosh Corp., which makes military trucks, voted down a contract in September and again in October when the company demanded the

right to make as much as 10 percent of the workforce temporary employees without union representation by the United Auto Workers.

"It's all about the money," Don Forster, 58, who works on the wheel-end table, said in a phone interview. "They don't want to pay pensions, they want to go the cheaper route. Having temporary workers goes against the grain of what a union stands for."

While workers forced the withdrawal of the temporary worker proposal, the company succeeded in pushing down workers' income.

"We have a five-year contract with only an 8 percent raise," Forster said. "But our health insurance has more than doubled, we're paying through the nose."

At the same time, the company is pushing for a faster line speed. "They say they're promoting safety," Forster noted, "But in reality it's 'hurry up and get done.'"

Working-class resistance

Across the country capitalist owners in a wide range of industries have locked out workers who refuse to go along with concessions or forced them out on strike. Among the companies: Armstrong World Industries in Marietta, Pa., which locked out 260 workers for five months; American Crystal Sugar in North Dakota and Minnesota, where 1,300 workers have been locked out since Aug. 1; Dayton Beach Park Co-Op apartments in Queens, New York, where building maintenance workers went on strike July 7; C.H. Guenther & Son Pioneer Flour Mill in San Antonio, Texas, where workers walked off the job April 25; Honeywell Corp., in Metropolis, Ill., which locked out 200 workers for 13 months; and many more.

In many cases, bosses have pushed through concessions without much organized resistance. In New York City, St. Luke's Roosevelt Hospital Center pushed through a contract at the end of December forcing nurses to pay health insurance premiums for the first time.

And Service Employees International Union Local 32BJ signed a tentative deal with the Realty Advisory Board there for 22,000 office cleaners in January that includes lengthening a lower tier for new hires from the first 30 months to 42 months and decreases their starting pay from 80 percent to 75 percent of the base rate for long-time employees.

Workers at Roquette America in Keokuk, Iowa, were locked out in September 2010 after voting down a concession contract. The union fought hard, but after 10 months they went back to work. The company's original proposal of starting new hires at \$4 less than long-term employees was reduced to \$2.

Two-tier fosters divisions

The two-tier system is more like "four tiers," noted Buddy Howard, a leader of the fight against the lockout. Not only do new hires start at a lower wage, the company changed the pay level for numerous jobs, he said. Some jobs that were considered level seven, for example, are now level five so that some new hires are paid \$5 to \$6 an hour less.

"They use it as a shell game saying it's all or nothing and claiming 'at least we're creating jobs,'" Drake Custer said in a phone interview. Custer, a syrup refinery operator at Roquette, is vice president of Local 48G of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union, which organized workers at the plant.

Like the two-tier system at the auto factories, Custer said, "the new tiers at Roquette are permanent. The new hires will never earn the same wages we do."

"It's a way the bosses create dissension in the ranks and pit workers against each other. It's a global thing," Custer said. "The guy next to me says 'Why should I work as hard when the guy next to me is making more money.' It's another battle for us to encourage new employees to become union members because they already feel like they've gotten a raw deal."

"I think the two tier is meant to keep us at each other instead of seeing who the real enemy is," he added.

"The unions need to keep fighting for decent benefits and safe working conditions," said Oshkosh worker Forster. "Seeing what the companies do when you have a union, can you imagine how it is for people without one?"

"Since I've been working here for just a year, I get lower pay and no benefits," Aldrich Grandy, a freight elevator operator at a midtown Manhattan office building, told the *Militant*. "I'm just glad to have a job."

"More and more it's just two classes, the rich and the poor," Grandy said. "What I would really like to see is for working people to band together and fight for our rights."

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

IOWA

Des Moines

Safety is a Union Question. Speaker: Maura DeLuca, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Jan. 20, 7:30 p.m. 3707 Douglas Ave. Tel.: (515) 255-1707.

TEXAS

Houston

How a Woman's Right to Choose Abortion Was Won and How It Will Be Defended. Speaker: Cindy Jaquith, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Jan. 20, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 4800 W. 34th St., Suite C-50L. Tel.: (713) 688-4919.

WASHINGTON

Seattle

Working Class Legacy of the Civil Rights Movement. Fri., Jan. 20, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 5418 Rainier Ave. S. Tel.: (206) 323-1755.

Recommended reading

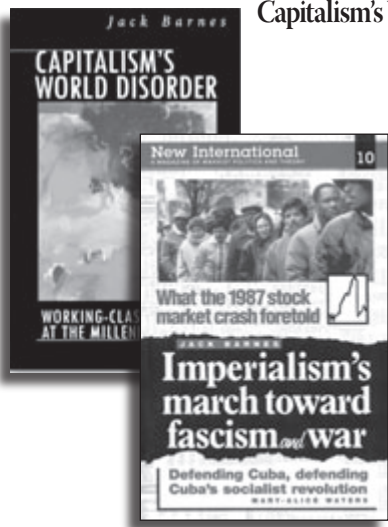
Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium
by Jack Barnes \$25

Social devastation and financial panic, the coarsening of politics, cop brutality, and imperialist aggression—all are products of the lawful workings of capitalism. The future can be changed by workers and farmers conscious of their capacity to wage revolutionary struggles for state power and to transform the world.

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Minn. Somalis protest gov't, banks blocking remittances

BY TOM FISKE

ST. PAUL, Minn.—Two hundred Somali-Americans and their supporters rallied in front of the Minnesota state capitol here Jan. 6. They protested the refusal by banks in the area to accept the business of Somali money transfer companies. Somali immigrants use these companies to send remittances to their relatives.

Signs at the action, the second in two weeks, included: “Banks block me from sending money to my family” and “U.S. Government should respect the agony of East African women and children and allow money to be sent to them.”

The banks refuse to work with Somali money transfer firms because the U.S. government has been prosecuting people under the Patriot Act for allegedly sending money to al-Shabab, an armed Islamist group in Somalia. The group is at war with the U.S.-backed Transitional Federal Government, which controls Mogadishu, the country’s capital.

The 2001 Patriot Act, recently renewed for four years under the Obama administration, prohibits “material support” to “designated foreign terrorist organizations.”

Following a massive FBI frame-up operation last fall two Somali women from Rochester, Minn., were convicted of conspiracy to funnel money through the money transfer firms, known as hawalas, to al-Shabab. One was convicted of transferring \$8,600 to al-Shabab. The two could face a maximum of 30 years in prison. Government evidence was based on wiretapping and unconstitutional searches of their computers, homes and trash.

Families dependent on remittances

Somalis at the demonstration said that in many cases family members are dependent on the remittances for food, rent, medical care and other basic necessities of life. Somalia has not had a functioning central government for more than two decades. Living standards of most of the population have been ravaged by a continuing civil war. In recent years a combination of drought and high food prices has brought famine to many in the country.

“This is a moral issue,” Omar Omar, a young worker and student in Minneapolis, told the *Militant*. “Somalia has had the worst drought in 60 years. We support our families. Many of us send one-third of our income.”

Without bank accounts, the money transfer firms have no legal standing and cannot function. As of Dec. 30, the one bank in Minnesota that has conducted business with the hawalas discontinued its relationship and all 15 Somali hawalas in Minnesota ceased to operate.

One hawala announced Jan. 6 it would

continue to operate through banks in other states, but only for emergencies and for sums less than \$500.

Somalis at the demonstration explained that without the hawalas there is no practical way to send money to their relatives in Somalia, since there is no functioning banking system in the country.

“There are no other ways,” Ali Ibrahim, a teacher in Minneapolis, stated. “People in this country from any national origin should be able to send money to relatives in other parts of the world. This is not a Somali or East African question but a question of values.”

“Hawalas are the lifeline of Somalia, since in Somalia there are no banks,” said Saddiq Warfa, who chaired the rally.

“We are Americans” was one of the loudest chants at the protest. “Guilt by association is not a right policy” was one of the most prevalent signs.

“Collective punishment”

“This is a matter of collective punishment,” said Abdirahman Abdi, 25, an interpreter. “We can’t do anything else. There is no government and no banks.”

The protest was sponsored by the Somali American Money Services Association, which represents the money-wiring businesses. Participants came from a broad spectrum of occupations, social classes and organizations.

Sunrise Community bank has been



Militant/Frank Forrestal

Somalis rally at Minnesota state capitol in St. Paul Jan. 6 to protest banks’ refusal to accept business of money transfer firms that send much-needed funds to relatives in Somalia.

meeting with community leaders and government officials to seek a waiver from the U.S. Department of the Treasury and from the U.S. Department of Justice.

B. Todd Jones, U.S. District Attorney for Minnesota said a waiver isn’t possible. “The Department of Justice doesn’t give anyone a free pass right up front for possible future criminal activity. Federal prosecutors don’t give waivers.”

Most speakers at the rally pointed to the banks as the source of the problem. U.S. Rep. Keith Ellison, as well as Democratic state representatives Karen Clark and Jeff Hayden, who promised to continue to seek waivers from the federal government, echoed this view.

Ellison is co-chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus.

Aman Obsiye, a leader of United Somali Movement, was more direct. “The banks are not the problem. The banks are just businesses,” he said. “The problem is the U.S. government, whose rules don’t allow the banks to operate. The problem is the U.S. Department of the Treasury and the U.S. Department of Justice. We have to tell the FBI to get off our backs. Let’s direct our protest to the FBI and to the Treasury.” His comments drew applause from many of the demonstrators.

Another protest is scheduled for Friday, Jan. 13 in front of the Wells Fargo bank in downtown Minneapolis.

UK racist murder conviction used to curb rights

BY TONY HUNT

LONDON—Gary Dobson and Davis Norris, two men accused of involvement in a well known racist killing nearly 19 years ago, were found guilty Jan. 3.

Stephen Lawrence, 18, who was Black, was stabbed twice and killed in April 1993 in Eltham in southeast London. Together with his friend Duwayne Brooks, also Black, he was attacked by a gang of thugs, one shouting racist epithets.

The murder prompted widespread outrage among working people. So did the response of the Metropolitan Police, who refused to pursue the killers and instead treated Lawrence and Brooks as criminals.

In the years that followed, however, bourgeois politicians and newspapers used the racist murder and the reaction among working people to take aim at hard-won workers’ rights, such as the presumption of innocence and the right to protection from double jeopardy.

The Lawrence family, fighting to keep the murder in the news, brought private criminal charges against Dobson and Norris, who were arrested in 1993. They were acquitted after the judge

ruled crucial identification evidence was inadmissible.

In 1997 the right-wing *Daily Mail*, which had barely covered the killing before, launched a campaign around the case. It ran a front-page banner headline “Murderers,” above the picture of five alleged suspects, including the two just convicted.

Five days later the *Mail* ran an editorial commenting on the debate triggered by its coverage. It suggested the law against double jeopardy, trying the same person twice for the same offense, be repealed.

Some newspapers and political figures supported the *Mail*. Writing for the

Socialist Worker, Paul Foot said, “It’s probably the first time that I’ve felt unequivocal support for the *Daily Mail*.”

Others disagreed. *The Voice*, a Black weekly, said a repeal would lead to “a breakdown in the justice system,” and make it easier for Blacks to be framed up even if they had been acquitted in court.

A 1999 public inquiry into the Lawrence case, headed by former judge William MacPherson, which detailed the racist character of the police investigation, also called for ending double jeopardy. The law was gutted in 2005.

This led to the new trial and conviction.

Cooper Tire Co. bosses in Ohio ‘picked fight with wrong union’

BY BETSY FARLEY

Workers at Cooper Tire and Rubber Company in Findlay, Ohio, continue to stand strong against the company’s drive to speed up work, cut wages and establish lower pay and benefits for new hires.

On the picket line for seven weeks now, 1,050 members of United Steelworkers Local 207L were locked out on Nov. 28 after voting down the company’s “last, best and final” offer.

“They picked a fight with the wrong union at the wrong time,” Rodney Nelson, Local 207L president, said in a phone interview. “We’re not going to let them push this through.”

Tire workers maintain 24-hour pickets at all gates of the huge Cooper Tire facility. “The company so far has refused our offers to negotiate,” Nelson said. He

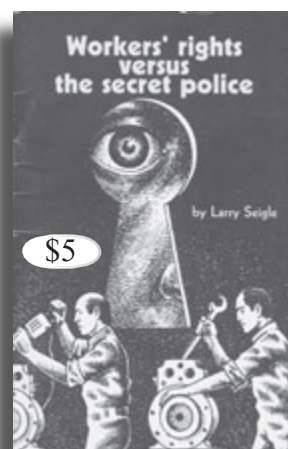
explained that the union scheduled a negotiating session with a federal mediator for Jan. 12, but the company has refused to participate.

The company has been bringing in replacement workers across the picket lines, some who were formerly employed at its now closed tire plant in Albany, Ga.

Contract negotiations are under way at the Cooper Tire plant in Texarkana, Ark. In October, members of USW Local 752L there voted to authorize a strike. The current contract expires Jan. 17.

Union members in Findlay began receiving unemployment benefits between the Christmas and New Year holidays.

Messages of support and donations can be sent to USW Local 207L, 1130 Summit St., Findlay, OH 45840. Phone: (419) 422-4224.



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N. Chicago workers demand justice against killer police

BY JOHN HAWKINS

NORTH CHICAGO, Ill.—Gloria Carr has refused to let her son's death at the hands of North Chicago police go by without protest. This has lifted the lid off pent-up anger against police brutality in this predominantly African-American working-class town of 32,000 about 35 miles north of Chicago.

Carr's son, Darrin Hanna, died Nov. 13, a week after North Chicago cops beat him and shocked him repeatedly with a Taser for 20 minutes during his arrest.

At a Dec. 8 meeting of the town's City Council, members voted 4-3 to suspend City Police Chief Mike Newsome. But five votes are needed and North Chicago Mayor Leon Rockingham Jr. decided to take no action. Six cops involved in Hanna's and another killing have been placed on desk duty.

Hanna's family filed suit in federal court Dec. 13 against North Chicago and the six cops involved in Hanna's killing. "They beat him, Tasered him to the point where his mother couldn't recognize his face and had to check his feet," family attorney Kevin O'Connor told the *Chicago Sun-Times* after filing the suit.

Under mounting public pressure, with other police victims coming forward with complaints of cop brutality, Rockingham placed Newsome on leave Jan. 4, while the Illinois State Police Public Integrity Task Force investigates Hanna's killing.

An increasing number of people have joined Hanna's family, speaking out about their own encounters with North Chicago cop violence. One of them is 61-year-old Stretha Alston, who was beaten and Tasered during a 2009 traffic stop. At a recent City Council meeting a video was played that showed cops without provocation brutalizing an unidentified man in jail.

"Since 2005, the city of North Chicago has known that the violence has escalated, that the complaints have escalated against their officers . . . and it's now continued and escalated to the point that

somebody's died," O'Connor said. "The family has made it very clear that they want justice."

Following the beatings of two Black teenagers in 2007, the Justice Department brokered an agreement related to police conduct in order to placate public anti-cop resentment under the rubric of "improving relations."

According to the *Sun-Times*, the Lake County branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People says the city has largely ignored that agreement.



Ralph Peterson Jr., speaking during video showing at North Chicago City Council meeting Dec. 8 on killing of Darrin Hanna, Peterson's cousin, from cop beating and taser.

Forced confessions underpin frame-ups by cops

BY JOHN HAWKINS

CHICAGO—The decision Nov. 16 by Chief Judge Paul Biebel of Cook County Circuit Court overturning the 1994 convictions of the Englewood Four and the Illinois Appellate Court's December exoneration of Juan Rivera, who was convicted in 1993, both shed light on the methods cops use to force false confessions from working people—a key element of the rulers' frame-up system.

As teenagers these five men were convicted of rapes and murders based solely on "confessions" cops browbeat out of them.

In an interview with the *Columbia Chronicle*, the student newspaper at Columbia College here, Terrill Swift, one of the Englewood Four, recounted how he was worn down.



Terrill Swift, right, and Vincent Thames shake hands Nov. 16 inside Cook County courthouse after judge threw out their frame-up convictions 17 years later.

After hours of interrogation, the cops promised that if he signed a confession he would be able to go home. "I requested an attorney and to speak with my family," Swift told the *Chronicle*. "It didn't stop. Finally after so much, I just said, 'OK you're going to let me go home. I'll sign,' and that's how it went."

"They came with the stenographer, or the court reporter, and like I said, they fed me everything that I needed to know, basically," Swift continued. "She asked me, 'Was I promised anything?' I told her 'no' because I didn't want to break the deal that I had going with the police and the state's attorney."

"There is no physical evidence that links the defendant to the case. There is no other testimony that links him to the case," Judge Thomas Sumner said at Swift's trial, according to court records. "We have a 22-page confession, and that is enough for me. There will be a finding of guilty." Juan Rivera was also convicted in on a confession cops forced out of him.

"Over the course of four days, there were no fewer than 10 law enforcement personnel discussing the crime with defendant or interrogating him," noted the Appellate Court of Illinois decision freeing Rivera.

In the course of the interro-

gation Rivera signed two confessions. When cops and prosecutors reviewed the first and thought it insufficient to hold together their frame-up, they went after a second.

"Some people confess from fatigue, stress, and being worn down through relentless questioning and sleep deprivation," the appeals court wrote, "some people confess out of fear; some people confess with the expectation of future exoneration; some people confess due to coercive or suggestive methods of interrogation."

The appellate court noted that other than the confession no credible evidence linked Rivera to the crime. He was released from prison Jan. 6.

Swift's confession, and others like it, is not the result of police torture, Joshua Tepfer, Swift's attorney from the Northwestern University Center on Wrongful Convictions of Youth, told the *Militant*. "But it shows that the techniques systematically employed across the country to interrogate children and teenagers, most of it entirely legal, is leading to false confessions at an astounding rate. This needs to change."

"As of today's filing date, there have been 272 post-conviction DNA exoneration—almost all of which were rape or murder convictions. *False confessions were involved in 25% of those cases*," Tepfer and other attorneys for the Englewood Four said in a July brief that led to overturning their convictions. "That is a truly astronomical number. Equally frightening is the fact that exonerees who were accused *as teenagers* were almost twice as likely to falsely confess as accused adults."

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



January 23, 1987

CUDAHY, Wis.—Patrick Cudahy Inc. has announced that it has begun hiring scabs to try to break a strike by 850 meat-packers at its plant here.

Members of United Food and Commercial Workers union Local P40 were forced on strike January 3 after overwhelmingly rejecting a Cudahy contract proposal that would have cut wages from \$1 to \$3 an hour and weakened union rights on the job.

The scabs were not only brought into the plant through the back gate but were also guided through P40 picket lines by local cops. Several strikers were arrested.

Union members responded by beefing up the picket lines and calling on other unions in the area for help. The following day, auto workers, steelworkers, machinists, garment workers, and other UFCW members joined the lines.



January 22, 1962

ALBANY, Georgia—Forty Albany State College students were recently given indefinite suspensions for their participation in anti-segregation demonstrations here last month.

The suspended students and hundreds of other Albany Negroes had been arrested for taking part in mass civil-rights demonstrations following the Dec. 10 arrest of eleven Freedom Riders outside the Albany railroad terminal. Two additional students, SNCC [Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee] volunteer workers, had also been suspended after they were arrested for trying to use interstate facilities at the Albany Trailways bus station on Nov. 22.

Ten of the suspended students attempted on Jan. 9 to take out cards at the city's Carnegie Library. They were refused and told to go to the Negro library which, they said, did not have the books they wanted.



January 23, 1937

SAN DIEGO—The Independent Agricultural Unions (Mexican, American and Filipino) of San Diego County are taking a strike vote this week in answer to the Growers' refusal to negotiate further for an agreement for the harvest of the celery crop and other vegetables grown in the county. The Celery Growers, fearful of the recent organizational drive initiated by the unions, have announced that they intend to initiate the bonus system in the fields, attempting to disguise it by calling it a 5-cent raise.

The bonus system has proven one of the most vicious of the California Growers' weapons. Like all bonus systems it is used to hold a club over the workers' head in order to keep him in line and to prevent him from going out on strike. It was against this vicious system that the Citrus Workers in Orange County struck last year.

Recommended reading

Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?

A necessary debate

By Mary-Alice Waters

"To think that a socialist revolution in the U.S. is not possible you would have to believe not only that the ruling families of the imperialist countries and their economic wizards have found a

way to 'manage' capitalism. You would also have to close your eyes to the spreading imperialist wars, civil wars, and economic, financial, and social crises we are in the midst of." —\$7

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Jan. 21 solidarity rally called for fight against Caterpillar

BY JOHN STEELE

MONTREAL—The Ontario Federation of Labour has called a Jan. 21 Day of Action to support about 650 members of Canadian Auto Workers Local 27 locked out Jan. 1 by Caterpillar-owned Electro-Motive Canada in London, Ontario. A mass rally in front of the plant will begin at 11 a.m.

Electro-Motive, a mainstay of the London-area economy, is Canada's only railroad locomotive factory and is the second-largest maker of locomotives in North America.

The bosses shut the doors at midnight Dec. 31 after the workers rejected by a 98 percent vote a contract that would cut wages by 50 percent from around \$34 an hour to \$16.50 and impose massive cuts to benefits and pensions. According to Electro-Motive's website, the company must be "cost-competitive." To do so it must eliminate "antiquated work rules" that make the plant "inefficient." It also said that workers at its plant in La-Grange, Ill., make less than half what workers get at its Canadian plant.

"We are not the villain here," said CAW Local 27 President Tim Carrie in a phone interview with the *Militant* Jan. 4. "This isn't bargaining, just ultimatums. It's a clear example of the rich getting richer at the expense of middle class jobs."

So far the company has not hired new workers to keep the plant operating. "If they try to use scabs that

would be a declaration of war," said Carrie.

"We see this fight as being central to the entire labor movement and we are going to dig in our heels and fight Caterpillar with everything we've got," said Ontario Federation of Labour president Syd Ryan in a press release. The federation reports it is bus-ing public and private workers from across Ontario to the rally.

Solidarity messages can be sent to: CAW Local 27, 606 First St., London, ON N5V 2A2. Phone: (519) 455-3430. Fax: (519) 455-3960. E-mail: tcarrie@golden.net.

Quebec Steelworkers fight Rio Tinto lockout

Continued from front page

operation the company carried out to evict 160 workers from the plant on his shift at 1 a.m. Dec 31. "The security guards were big guys who spoke only English," he said, although most workers' first language is French. "They gave us each a garbage bag for our clean clothes, consulted lists naming each employee in each department and made us get out right away."

Even workers who are usually required to shower and change to eliminate toxic materials were forced to leave immediately in their work clothes.

This move came at the end of months of rising tensions in the plant, fed by arbitrary company disciplinary actions and a media campaign by Rio Tinto to



AP Photo/The Canadian Press, Dave Chidley

Locked-out members of Canadian Auto Workers and supporters picket Caterpillar's Electro-Motive plant in London, Ontario, Jan. 2. Company is pressing to slash wages in half.

paint union members as saboteurs, say workers.

Union members immediately gathered at the four plant gates and stayed there in force for the next two days, stopping vehicles and materials from going in or out.

The Jan. 1 picket line visited by *Militant* reporters was bolstered by spouses of union members and other supporters dropping off food or wood. Fires kept picketers warm in subzero weather.

"It's magic when you're here with people who are fighting back because you can feel the energy," said Marie-Christine Guay, a nurse there in support of her spouse.

Rio Tinto plans to maintain one-third of production for the duration of the

lockout with more than 200 management personnel.

Aluminum prices have dropped by 16 percent over the last year, as demand decreases in response to the worldwide slowdown in industrial production. Rio Tinto has announced plans to sell off 13 of its less profitable plants outside Canada.

On Jan. 3 the company obtained an injunction limiting workers to 20 pickets, 500 feet from the main entrance, allowing free access to the plant. Union members are respecting the injunctions.

The next day 500 workers and their supporters rallied at 6 a.m. and marched to Rio Tinto's hydroelectric plant. They were protesting the possible sale of surplus electricity freed up by the drop in production to Hydro-Quebec, the government's electrical company. Unions representing workers at Rio Tinto's electrical plant and Hydro-Quebec, the Canadian Auto Workers, and local, provincial, and federal politicians joined the march.

The town of Alma is in the Saguenay/Lac-Saint-Jean region, two hours' drive north of Quebec City, where the pulp and paper industry is in steep decline.

Many workers on the picket line told the *Militant* they expect a long fight.

"The government-appointed conciliator hasn't given any sign of life," Boivin said by phone Jan. 6. "The main thing happening now is lots of support. Small businesses, people bringing food, hot meals. And not just during the day, in the night, too."

Messages of support can be sent to: Métallos local 9490, 830 rue des Pins ouest, Alma, Quebec G8B 7R3. Tel.: (418) 662-7055. Fax: (418) 662-7354. Email: syndicat@staalma.org.

Katy LeRougetel contributed to this article.

Connecticut nursing home locks out workers

BY DAN FEIN

MILFORD, Conn.—"Why are we locked out? Because we want the same contract as before, but the company wants us to pay \$506 per month for medical insurance for one person and \$1,300 per month for a family," Barbara McFadden told the *Militant* here on the picket line at West River Health Care Center Jan. 7. McFadden is a member of Service Employees International Union Local 1199.

"The company wants to eliminate the pension for new hires and freeze it for those currently working," she added. "The company wants to cut back vacation time, sick and personal days, and hire new employees at a lower rate. And they don't want to pay us for our half-hour lunch. We refuse to accept this."

One hundred workers were locked out of the nursing home Dec. 13 and have been picketing ever since. Union members were working under a contract that expired in March. Three days after the lockout began, HealthBridge Management, which owns West River, cut off the workers' health-care benefits.

"The Center is prepared to operate indefinitely without employees represented by the Union if District 1199 fails to accept its contract proposal," the company said in a statement. HealthBridge has threatened to lock out 800 union members at the other five nursing homes it owns in Connecticut—in Newington, Wethersfield, Danbury, Westport and Stamford.

The company has hired scabs and pays for their hotel and transportation. "They even pay for their meals and laundry," said Jennifer Musante, a nurses assistant with 18 years seniority. "Their proposal does not guarantee us hours and they can change our shift at any time."

Union workers at West River include housekeepers, cooks, laundry workers and nursing assistants. Nurses and office workers are not covered under the contract and are working.

One of the popular chants of the 50 pickets was "One, two, three, four, put the scabs out the door. Five, six, seven, eight, do it now, it's not too late." Another was "Up with the union. Up with the families. Up with the patients. Down with the boss. That dirty boss. That lynch boss. That greedy boss."

"We go to supermarkets and churches to flyer to inform people of our fight," Phillip Bradeen, a dietary chef for 20 years, said. "They locked us out while we were negotiating." Union members from the five other homes joined a vigil of 200 people soon after the lockout began, he said.

"There have been no raises in three

years," said Sharon Jalbert, who works in the nursing home's laundry. "There have been a lot of givebacks. You have to feed, walk, bathe and dress the residents. It's a lot of work."

While this reporter was at the picket line a number of patients and their family members came outside to speak to the pickets and encourage them in the fight for a contract.

"We are trying to get a fair contract. We want back in," said Michelle Baricko, a nurses assistant. "HealthBridge does not care about the residents or the workers. They want us to spend two-and-a-half-weeks pay per month for health care for a family. Their offer on the pensions is outrageous."

Fifteen workers at the picket line bought subscriptions to the *Militant* during the Jan. 7 visit.

Deborah Liatos contributed to this article.

Day of Action for workers locked out by Caterpillar in London, Ontario

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Art work from the Cuban Five

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1701 Broadway, Seattle, WA

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For more info call: 206-934-4379

Gerardo Hernández: Humor From My Pen

Boneshaker Books

2002 23rd Ave. S Minneapolis, MN

Jan. 16 - Feb. 11 For more info call: 612-367-6134



Congo: U.S. mercenaries vs. Cuban internationalists

BY DEAN HAZLEWOOD

MIAMI—The *Miami Herald* recently ran an article advertising a December reunion for a group of counterrevolutionary Cuban mercenary pilots who flew secret combat missions in the Congo in the mid-1960s. The article painted the brigade—the self-styled Makasi—as veterans in the fight for liberation in Africa. But nothing could be further from the truth.

The brigade consisted of more than 100 counterrevolutionaries who left Cuba after the victory of workers and farmers there over the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista in 1959. Many of them had taken part in the unsuccessful US-organized invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs in 1961. They then were recruited by the CIA to fight a dirty war in the service of U.S. imperialism against another liberation struggle, this time in Africa.

The Congo was a Belgian colony that won independence in 1960. Patrice Lumumba, a popular leader of the independence movement, became prime minister and began to take steps to increase Congolese control of the country.

The imperialist rulers had big stakes in exploiting the people and mineral-rich resources of the Congo, including giant U.S.-British-Belgium-controlled mines that produced 60 percent of the uranium and 73 percent of the cobalt available to the European and American powers. Fearing the rise of a workers' and peasants' movement, the U.S. and Belgium governments organized under the flag of the United Nations a coup against Lumumba, who was assassinated in January 1961.

The Congolese masses launched a popular liberation movement in response. The European and U.S. governments recruited racist mercenaries from across Europe and apartheid-South Africa, and from among the rightist Cuban refugees, to fight alongside Belgian troops.

Supplied with U.S. planes, the Makasi pilots bombed and strafed villages of poorly armed or unarmed Congolese.

In 1965 Ernesto Che Guevara, an Argentine who was a central leader of the Cuban Revolution, led a team of Cuban volunteers to train liberation

fighters in the Congo. For some eight months, Guevara and the Cuban forces fought side by side with Congolese fighters while the counterrevolutionary exiles bombed the country.

The imperialist forces overpowered the Congolese freedom fighters and installed the dictatorship of Mobutu Sese Seko, who upheld imperialist interests in the region from 1965-97.

Efforts by the Cuban Revolution to aid liberation struggles across Africa continued. From late 1975 to May 1991, 375,000 Cuban internationalist volunteer troops went to Angola in order to help the newly independent government repel repeated attempts by the South African regime to invade the country. Among them were three of the Cuban Five: Gerardo Hernández, Fernando González and René



Ernesto Che Guevara, right, led Cuban volunteers who fought alongside liberation forces in Congo in 1965. In 1970s and '80s, Cuban internationalist combatants helped repel South African apartheid regime's invasion of Angola. Three of Cuban Five participated in mission.

González. (See article on this page.) Some 2,000 Cubans gave their lives.

The Cuban forces played a decisive role in the final battle to defeat the apartheid army at Cuito Cuanavale in

1988. Nelson Mandela later said, "The Cuban internationalists have made a contribution to African independence, freedom and justice, unparalleled for its principled and selfless character."

U.S. gov't defends its frame-up of Cuban Five

Continued from front page

activities of counterrevolutionary groups with a long history of violent and deadly assaults against Cuba and supporters of the Cuban Revolution.

The revolutionaries were convicted in June 2001 of trumped-up charges, including "conspiracy to commit espionage" and, in the case of Hernández, of "conspiracy to commit murder." Their sentences ranged from 15 years in jail for René González to double life plus 15 years for Hernández.

Labañino is serving 30 years in prison followed by five years of supervised release; Fernando González is serving 17 years and nine months followed by three years of supervised release.

Hernández and Guerrero filed their own motions, generally known as habeas corpus motions, in June 2010 and March 2011, respectively. Both motions were also challenged by the government.

René González, whose prison term ended Oct. 7, is now serving three years supervised release in Florida.

Habeas corpus motions can be made by defendants after regular appeals have been exhausted. Culminating three rounds of appeals court decisions in 2005, 2006 and 2008, the Supreme Court refused in June 2009 to hear all appeals by the five.

Gov't paid journalists

Fernando González's and Labañino's motions argue that their right not to be "deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law" as guaranteed by the Fifth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution was denied by the fact, unknown to them at the time, that 10 journalists who were writing inflammatory articles about the five in Miami newspapers during their trial were simultaneously being paid by the U.S. government for work with Radio and TV Martí, Washington's counterrevolutionary propaganda stations that broadcast to Cuba, with transmissions reaching throughout southern Florida.

Lawyers for the five filed seven motions with the court for the 2001 trial to be moved somewhere outside Miami-Dade County because of the particularly hostile atmosphere whipped up against

the five by the media and opponents of the Cuban Revolution there. Washington strongly opposed any change in venue, which was repeatedly denied by the court.

In 2005 a three-judge panel of the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals in Atlanta threw out the 2001 convictions and ordered a new trial for all five on grounds that the "pretrial publicity surrounding this case" denied them due process. This ruling was reversed the following year by the full 12-judge panel of the same court.

"A new trial was mandated by the perfect storm created when the surge of pervasive community sentiment, and extensive publicity both before and during the trial, merged with the prosecutor's improper prosecutorial references and position regarding the change of venue," wrote Stanley Birch, one of two dissenting judges in the 2006 decision. "Moreover, the evidence at trial strongly suggested not only adverse economic consequences for jurors voting for acquittal, but the prospect of violence for an already impassioned and emotional community possessed of firearms and bombs."

The main argument of the Barack Obama administration against the habeas motions by González and Labañino is that the 2006 appeals court decision settled that due process had not been abridged during the Miami trial and that the two defendants fail to prove the jury was exposed to or influenced by the cited articles. In any case, they say, it is procedurally too late to raise these arguments.

The articles, prosecutors contend, were known to the defendants and their attorneys at the time of the trial and therefore cannot be introduced as new evidence in a habeas motion. Even if knowledge that journalists disseminating the propaganda hostile to the Cuban Revolution were being paid by the government was not publicly available until González's and Labañino's appeals were exhausted, it is irrelevant, they argue. At most that information might have "supported or strengthened" arguments that either were or could have been made on direct appeal, they claim.

The government did not challenge

defense arguments that Radio and TV Martí receive millions of dollars in government funds each year "to effect regime change" in Cuba, broadcast to southern Florida, and don't meet basic journalistic standards. Instead they said these facts are irrelevant in the habeas motions because the articles cited were published in private newspapers and only happen to be written by journalists who also worked for the U.S. government's Office of Cuba Broadcasting, which produces Radio and TV Martí. They insist that all government payments to these journalists were only for "defined and discrete services to Radio and TV Martí," dismissing the fact that the government refuses to disclose the names of all the journalists on its payrolls and the amounts paid.

That the *Miami Herald* fired two of the journalists after a 2006 article in that paper exposed their paid government propaganda work is also not relevant, the government asserts, because they were later rehired.

'Wrongfully enhanced' sentences

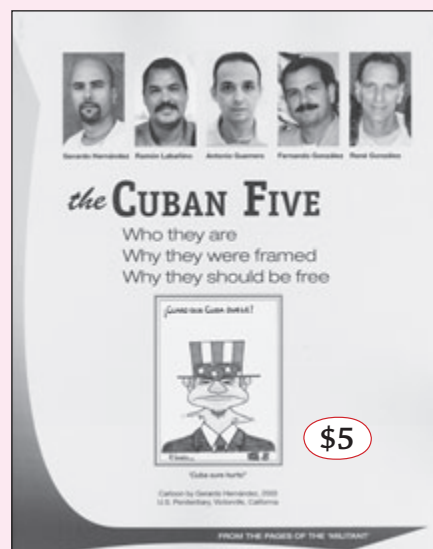
Washington's response also opposes González's and Labañino's motions that their sentences be revised because they were "wrongfully enhanced" with charges of obstructing justice for supposedly providing false names at their first pretrial hearing in 1998.

In providing the names they had used in the U.S. and were charged under, they did not deny they were the defendants sought by the FBI and therefore there was no obstruction or intent to obstruct justice, Richard Klugh, who is part of the Cuban Five's legal defense team, told the *Militant*. "No one in their position," he said, "has ever been given an enhanced sentence for such conduct."

Based on their convictions for the false charge of obstruction of justice, according to Klugh, Labañino received four additional years, and González, two.

The two revolutionaries are each expected to file a reply to the government's response Feb. 15. Hernández and Guerrero filed their replies in August. A final ruling is in the hands of Judge Joan Leonard, who presided over the 2001 frame-up trial.

New booklet on the Cuban Five



See page 8 for distributors or go to pathfinderpress.com

Malcolm X: ‘US is criminal in Congo and Vietnam’

Below is an excerpt from Malcolm X Talks to Young People, a collection of speeches and interviews by and with Malcolm X. The title is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for January. The excerpt is from a January 1965 interview for the March-April 1965 issue of the Young Socialist magazine. The interview was conducted by Jack Barnes, then national chairman of the Young Socialist Alliance, and Barry Sheppard, a staff writer for the Militant newspaper. Copyright © 1965 by Betty Shabazz and Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

YOUNG SOCIALIST: How do you define Black nationalism, with which you have been identified?

MALCOLM X: I used to define Black nationalism as the idea that the Black man should control the economy of his community, the politics of his community, and so forth.

But when I was in Africa in May, in Ghana, I was speaking with the Algerian ambassador, who is extremely militant and is a revolutionary in the true sense of the word (and has his credentials as such for having carried on a successful revolution against oppression in his country). When I told him that my political, social, and economic philosophy was Black nationalism, he asked me very frankly: Well, where did that leave him? Because



Militant/Flax Hermes

April 15, 1967, San Francisco march against U.S. war in Vietnam. Vietnamese National Liberation Front led independence fight against U.S. forces. U.S. “defeat in South Vietnam is only a matter of time,” Malcolm X told *Young Socialist* magazine in 1965.

he was white. He was an African, but he was Algerian, and to all appearances, he was a white man. And he said if I define my objective as the victory of Black nationalism, where does that leave him? Where does that leave revolutionaries in Morocco, Egypt, Iraq, Mauritania? So he showed me where I was alienating people who were true revolutionaries dedicated to overturning the system of exploitation that exists on this earth by any means necessary.

So I had to do a lot of thinking and reappraising of my definition of Black nationalism. Can we sum up the solution to the problems confronting our people as Black nationalism? And if you notice, I haven't been using the expression for several months. But I still would be hard pressed to give a specific definition of the overall philosophy which I think is necessary for the liberation of the Black people in this country.

YOUNG SOCIALIST: Is it true, as is often said, that you favor violence?

MALCOLM X: I don't favor violence. If we could bring about recognition and respect of our people by peaceful means, well and good. Everybody would like to reach his objectives peacefully. But I'm also a realist. The only people in this country who are asked to be nonviolent are Black people. I've never heard anybody go to the Ku Klux Klan and teach them nonviolence, or to the [John] Birch Society and other right-wing elements.

Nonviolence is only preached to Black Americans, and I don't go along with anyone who wants to teach our people nonviolence until someone at the same time is teaching our enemy to be non-violent. I believe we should protect ourselves by any means necessary when we are attacked by racists. . . .

YOUNG SOCIALIST: How do you view the role of the U.S. in the Congo?

MALCOLM X: As criminal. Probably there is no better example of criminal ac-

tivity against an oppressed people than the role the U.S. has been playing in the Congo, through her ties with Tshombe and the mercenaries. You can't overlook the fact that Tshombe gets his money from the U.S. The money he uses to hire these mercenaries—these paid killers imported from South Africa—comes from the United States.

The pilots that fly these planes have been trained by the U.S. The bombs themselves that are blowing apart the bodies of women and children come from the U.S. So I can only view the role of the United States in the Congo as a criminal role. And I think the seeds she is sowing in the Congo she will have to harvest. The chickens that she has turned loose over there have got to come home to roost.

YOUNG SOCIALIST: What about the U.S. role in South Vietnam?

MALCOLM X: The same thing. It shows the real ignorance of those who control the American power structure. If France, with all types of heavy arms, as deeply entrenched as she was in what then was called Indochina, couldn't stay there,³ I don't see how anybody in their right mind can think the U.S. can get in there—it's impossible. So it shows her ignorance, her blindness, her lack of foresight and hindsight; and her complete defeat in South Vietnam is only a matter of time.

January

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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Capitalism is a criminal system

The Cuban Five are exemplary working-class revolutionary fighters. In the eyes of the U.S. ruling class they are “criminals.” As happens to working people caught up in the capitalist so-called justice system on a daily basis, the rights of the five were trampled upon and they were framed up from beginning to end.

The crime of the five was defending their homeland and its living popular proletarian revolution. Cuban working people committed the ultimate “crime” under capitalism: they overthrew their U.S.-backed dictator, wrested political power from the capitalists, reorganized society based on the needs of the toiling masses, and opened the road to socialist revolution in the Americas. Cuban workers and farmers have successfully defended their revolutionary gains for more than five decades and extended the hand of solidarity to toilers from the Congo to Angola.

Longshore workers in Longview, Wash., members of ILWU Local 21, are also “criminals” in the eyes of the bosses and their police, courts and government on the local and federal level. For defending their union, ILWU demonstrators were attacked by cops and some 200 were slapped with criminal charges. The union has been cited and fined thousands of dollars. The capitalist media has smeared them as criminals and thugs. The Barack Obama administration’s National Labor Relations Board imposed an injunction on behalf of EGT against the union and tried to ban peaceful picketing to further tie these fighters up in red tape. EGT’s first shipment expected in January will be escorted by vessels and helicopters from the U.S. Coast Guard.

In the words of ILWU International President Robert McEllrath, they are “being methodically and maliciously prosecuted for exercising our free speech rights.”

Obama: big government, populism

Continued from front page

Osawatomie in 1910, which became the platform for his unsuccessful run for the Republican nomination in 1912 and breakaway Progressive Party presidential bid that year.

In addition to the Osawatomie speech, Obama withdrew the bulk of U.S. combat forces from Iraq, fulfilling a 2008 campaign promise as part of recapturing the image with which he won the presidency.

In his speech Obama presented himself as an advocate for the “common man,” saying the U.S. should be a “country where working people can earn enough to raise a family, build a modest savings, own a home, secure their retirement.”

Early in the talk he pointed to the widening gap between the incomes of working people and “those at the very top [who] grew wealthier from their incomes and their investments—wealthier than ever before” while “everybody else struggled with costs that were growing and paychecks that weren’t. . . . The average income of the top 1 percent has gone up by more than 250 percent to \$1.2 million per year.”

He reached out to the “people who’ve been occupying the streets of New York and other cities,” and their protests against the banks and the greedy “1 percent.” The classless populist themes that characterize the Occupy groups, the fact they turn their fire on “the rich” and the banks, not the capitalist class and its government, offers fertile soil for Obama’s election strategy.

Obama calls for bigger government

The moral of this story, according to Obama, is the need for the guiding hand of ever bigger government by the wise and “enlightened,” regulating out-of-control speculators and bank executives, and expanding programs that force you to help yourself. He calls for higher taxes on the 1 percent to finance his plans.

Obama pointed out that Roosevelt “believed then what we know is true today, that the free market is the greatest force for economic progress in human history,” quoting Roosevelt’s speech in Osawatomie 101 years earlier calling for an “economic system under which each man shall be guaranteed the opportunity to show the best that there is in him.”

Obama notes that for the 1910 speech Roosevelt “was called a socialist.” The White House transcript

While those who resist the capitalist exploiters become special targets, the propertied rulers’ police, courts and government are aimed at the entire working class and designed to keep us “in our place.” The job of their cops is to serve as an anti-working-class armed force of repression. The purpose of their courts is to railroad hundreds of thousands of working people to prison and probation as well as slap injunctions, fines and restrictions on workers’ struggles. Their methods include the frame-up, coerced confession, plea bargain and increasingly severe sentencing guidelines. If you’re working class, particularly if you are Black, you are in fact guilty until proven innocent.

When working people stubbornly fight against this routine injustice, as some are doing in Chicago (see page 5), we can expose the class morality of the capitalist system and push them back.

The capitalists’ state is *always* used against us. And the ruling class constantly seeks opportunities to strengthen the hand of their state power by seizing on abhorrent and violent acts. They used the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks as a pretext to pass the USA Patriot Act and eviscerate basic constitutional protections. Somali immigrants today are standing up to the government’s use of the Act to stop them from supporting their families in Somalia. In the United Kingdom, a 1993 racist murder was recently used to erode the presumption of innocence and double jeopardy protections.

From the point of view of the working class, which values human solidarity and life, the capitalist system itself is criminal on a worldwide scale. Our answer is to count on our own collective power to resist it and to fight for our political rights and the space to do so.

says that the crowd laughed, knowing that Obama has been called a European-style Social Democrat.

Roosevelt is painted in history books as a great progressive, a “trust buster,” and friend of the little man.

Roosevelt touted “progressive” pronouncements while championing the advance of U.S. imperialism, which included the seizure of the Philippines, Cuba, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico and deeper intervention in China. He spoke against “bad trusts,” while defending and aiding the U.S. Steel Trust of J.P. Morgan, with which he was aligned.

His populism, including support for the right of women to vote and promulgation of regulations against child labor, served as cover for his advancement of a strong, federal regime, and powerful military, using its weight to defend and advance imperialist interests against its competitors and against the working class.

In his 1910 speech in Kansas, Roosevelt used the occasion to attack the *Appeal to Reason*, the socialist paper with the widest circulation in the country at the time, noting that it “habitually denounces me as the tool of Wall Street.”

In fact, even before Roosevelt launched his 1912 Progressive Party run, U.S. Steel officials and other “Wall Street men” donated \$2.5 million to his campaign.

Obama’s speech was long on populist rhetoric devoid of concrete proposals that could improve conditions for “the working people.” He calls for increased government investment in education, so people can learn skills to replace “disappearing” manufacturing jobs. He urges more “diversity,” drawing Blacks, women and others into the meritocratic federal bureaucracy. And he calls for unleashing “daring entrepreneurs” to advance U.S. capitalism.

Obama’s pro-“working man” rhetoric conflicts with the record of his administration. He has presided over a deepening bipartisan assault against Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security. He has greatly expanded the use of drones, special forces and targeted assassinations to defend U.S. imperialist interests. He has blocked any significant public works program to provide jobs for those thrown on the street by capitalism’s crisis.

And he continues to press for more government, to regulate, spy, police and imprison those who challenge his “enlightened” vision of capitalist rule.

Longshore workers

Continued from front page

can be refiled at a later date.

EGT refuses to hire ILWU workers here, in violation of an agreement with the Port of Longview. Instead, it has hired members of Operating Engineers Union Local 701 through a subcontractor, without a contract under inferior working conditions and wages. If EGT prevails it will be the first grain terminal on the West Coast run without ILWU labor in more than 80 years.

Local 21’s union hall here is a lively organizing center as ILWU members, retirees, Ladies Auxiliary members and supporters step up their six-month fight against EGT Development and prepare a large protest for the arrival of the company’s first scab ship, expected here before the end of January.

On a visit to the union hall Jan. 7, worker correspondents for the *Militant* found active and retired members taking inventory of picket signs for the coming protest. Dozens of unions and organizations have pledged to participate. Their hand-written cards and messages of support along with press clippings line the union hall’s walls.

Local 21’s Community Action Committee is planning a “Community Action Movie Night” Jan. 10, where they will show “Bloody Thursday,” a documentary about the 1934 battles that led to the formation of the ILWU on the West Coast. “The purpose is to provide education and answer questions in the community,” Shelly Porter, vice president of the committee and member of Local 21, told the *Militant*.

“When I started out as a casual I didn’t understand the meaning of ‘an injury to one is an injury to all,’” said Porter. “It didn’t have real meaning for me until this fight with EGT. Until the day I watched my union brothers get beaten, pepper sprayed, handcuffed and arrested. They were coming to the aid of members of the union’s Ladies Auxiliary carrying out a peaceful protest and were themselves assaulted by the cops. We must educate people in the community about this fight.”

Meanwhile, Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Counties Central Labor Council issued a Jan. 1 resolution calling on the Washington State Labor Council, Oregon Federation of Labor, California Labor Federation, the AFL-CIO “and all other relevant organizations” to take part in the ship protest “when called upon to do so.”

According to Lt. Lucas Elder, a spokesman for the Coast Guard’s Portland-based marine safety unit, the Guard will deploy one or two vessels to escort the grain ship up the Columbia River, with more on call if needed. “The Coast Guard is definitely going to be involved in making sure the port is safe,” he told the *Daily News*.

ILWU International President Robert McEllrath issued a statement Jan. 3 to all Longshore locals to “prepare Longshore Division locals for the action that we will take when that vessel calls at EGT’s facility.”

Some forces, including anarchists, have indicated they intend to come to the protest with their own agenda and disregard the need for a disciplined union-led action to advance ILWU’s labor battle.

“We fully understand that the ILWU’s labor dispute with EGT is symbolic of what is wrong in the United States today,” McEllrath continued. “Corporations, no matter how harmful the conduct to society, enjoy full state and federal protection while workers and the middle class get treated as criminals for trying to protect their jobs and communities. However, please take extreme caution when dealing with supporters of non-ILWU sanctioned calls to action relative to EGT. Everything is at stake for the community of Longview and our members—including personal freedom. We welcome outside support for our efforts against EGT but must make effective use of collective power.”

Send messages of support and donations to the union hall: ILWU Local 21, 617 14th Ave. Longview, WA 98632. Make checks out to “EGT Fighting Fund.

Correction

The article “US Rulers Target Iran’s Oil Trade, Central Bank” in the Jan. 16 issue incorrectly stated that the value of Iran’s rial dropped almost 60 percent in just a few months. According to Associated Press, the country’s currency dropped 12 percent relative to the dollar in one day, Jan. 2, and about 40 percent over the last year.