

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Capitalist rule is source of violence, not of its decline

—BOOK REVIEW/PAGE 6

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 76/NO. 7 FEBRUARY 20, 2012

Athens deepens gov't cuts and targets private industry workers



Louisa Gouliamaki/AFP/Getty Images

Striking steelworkers march to Greek parliament in Athens Feb. 7 during one-day political strike. Action protested latest government moves forcing workers to bear brunt of crisis.

BY JOHN STUDER

The Greek government of Prime Minister Lucas Papademos—installed under pressure from Berlin, the eurozone's dominant power—is assaulting the working class on several fronts to stave off a default on payments to holders of its debt.

The so-called troika—the European Commission, International Monetary Fund and European Central Bank—underwrote previous loans to Greece to put off default, on condition of austerity measures, and is dangling \$171 billion in new loans if Athens will make deeper cuts.

The Greek government has agreed to cut 15,000 additional public sector jobs over the next year and a total of 150,000 jobs by 2015, about 20 percent of all government jobs. The unemployment rate is already 19 percent from previous rounds of austerity-

driven cuts and economic contraction, with more than 45 percent of youth out of a job. The job losses are accompanied by ever deeper cuts in health, education and other services.

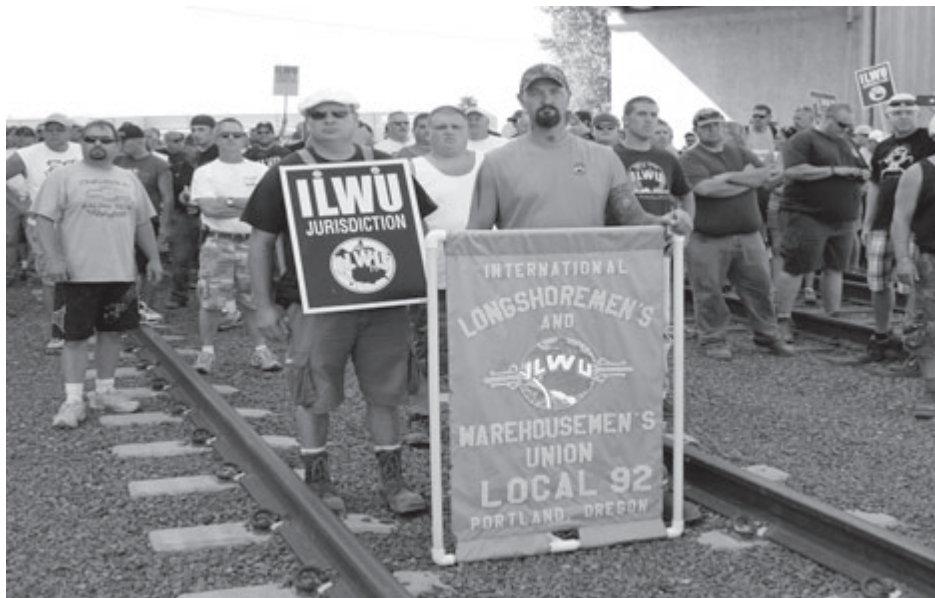
For the first time, European Union leaders and the U.S.-backed IMF are demanding the Greek government lead assaults on workers in private industry as a precondition for further loans.

Among the demands are a 25 percent cut in the minimum wage, which would lower the wage scale across the board; reductions in holiday bonuses, equivalent to eliminating two months'

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Longshore workers win union at EGT terminal

From California to Alaska, West Coast remains ILWU



AP Photo/Don Ryan

ILWU members and supporters protest EGT's union-busting drive in Longview, Wash., Sept. 7.

BY MARY MARTIN

LONGVIEW, Wash.—The International Longshore and Warehouse Union has defeated the EGT bosses' attempt to shut the union out of its terminal here. Port work along the entire West Coast remains ILWU-organized, as it has for eight decades.

On Feb. 1 EGT recognized ILWU Local 21 as the bargaining representative for workers at its grain terminal here both for ship-loading operations on the dock as well as work inside its facility at the port. The union had organized several major protest actions and maintained picket lines in front of

EGT's terminal 24 hours a day since June.

The first grain ship to dock at EGT's terminal arrived Feb. 7 and was tied up by ILWU members.

EGT had refused to hire ILWU workers in violation of an agreement

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Caterpillar shuts Canada plant, workers picket for severance pay

BY JOHN STEELE

MONTREAL—Workers in London, Ontario, have maintained pickets against Caterpillar subsidiary Electro-Motive Diesel since the company announced Feb. 3 they are closing the plant. Members of Canadian Auto Workers Local 27 don't trust the bosses and are making sure they get the full severance pay they're entitled to under Ontario labor law.

The 450 workers, who assemble diesel locomotives, were locked out Jan. 1 after they rejected the company demand for a 50 percent wage cut and massive cuts to their pensions and benefits. They set up 24/7 pick-

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Hundreds protest killing of Black youth by New York cop



Militant/Ruth Robinett

Some 500 people gather in Bronx, N.Y., Feb. 6 to protest killing four days earlier of 18-year-old Ramarley Graham, gunned down by an undercover narcotics cop in his home.

BY RUTH ROBINETT AND NANCY BOYASKO

BRONX, New York—Some 500 people at a Feb. 6 protest condemned the police killing here of Ramarley Graham, marching from the victim's home to the nearby police precinct headquarters. Graham is the fourth

person to be shot by cops in New York City in the last month.

An undercover narcotics cop shot and killed 18-year-old Graham inside Graham's apartment Feb. 2 in Wakefield, a heavily Black and Caribbean neighborhood. Video from surveil-

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Drive kicks off to win long-term subscribers to workers' paper

BY LOUIS MARTIN

"I really like the *Militant*," said Tamera Johnson, a locked-out worker from American Crystal's plant in East Grand Forks, Minn. "What I like best is the global coverage of labor issues. It's probably the best source for that that I know of."

Johnson, one of 1,300 sugar beet workers who have been fighting American Crystal Sugar's union-busting lockout campaign for more than six months, renewed her subscription to the paper in November.

Her comment is a reflection of the

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4 workers killed in 7 months at Vale’s mines in Canada

BY JOHN STEELE

MONTREAL—Nickel miner Stephen Perry, 47, was killed Jan. 29 at the Vale Ltd. Coleman Mine in Levack near Sudbury, Ontario. He was crushed by falling rock at the 4,215-foot level while operating a loader. Perry is the fourth worker to die in seven months at Vale mines in Canada.

Vale, based in Brazil, is the second-biggest mining company in the world.

Last June two miners were buried under a run of muck at its Stobie mine near Sudbury. In October, a miner was killed while operating a scoop tram at the Thompson, Manitoba, operation.

The Coleman, Stobie and Thompson mines are organized by the United Steelworkers.

Vale officials temporarily closed all five of the company’s Sudbury-area mines following Perry’s death. The miners will receive their basic pay during the shutdown. As of Feb. 6 some miners had begun returning to work, although production remained suspended.

Miners who spoke to the *Militant* pointed to Vale’s drive to increase production and profits as the underlying cause of high death and injury rates.

“We are being pushed to do more production,” said smelter worker Paul Theriault. “There used to be eight guys per level and now there are only six and we are doing the same amount of production and more. So we have fewer guys working harder. Since the strike they have been pushing us.”

Steelworkers Local 6500 fought an almost year-long strike in 2009-2010 against concession demands, a number

of which were imposed on the workers at the end of the walkout. At the time of the strike there were 3,300 production and maintenance workers. Now there are 2,600.

“We are angry at the company,” said miner Tim Levesque, who has been working at the Coleman mine for eight years and knew Perry. “When we came back from the strike the company eliminated some safety regulations. Before, we could directly file our ‘079 reports’ on safety concerns. Now we have to do it through the foreman, and it is up to his discretion whether to have the complaint dealt with.”

Levesque also reported that a company change to its “bonus” system, a form of piece work, rewards miners for working faster at the expense of safety.

Vale’s media department in Sudbury has not responded to *Militant* calls.

“Four fatalities in seven months is unacceptable ... this has got to stop,” Local 6500 President Rick Bertrand told the *Sudbury Star*. “We’re not even finished one investigation and we’re into another.”



Gerry Kingsley
United Steelworkers members block road to Clarabelle Mill near Sudbury, Ontario, May 2010 during yearlong strike against Vale. Company imposed concessions on workers after strike. Recent deaths at Vale mines in Canada come amid drive for higher productivity and profits.

In the case of the two deaths at the Stobie mine, Local 6500 and Vale organized separate investigations, a departure from past practice, because union officials refused to accept Vale’s terms for the inquiry.

On Feb. 2 union officials and Vale agreed to a joint investigation of Perry’s death. The two sides have also started a joint plant-gate collection to raise money for Stephen Perry’s daughter.

At the time of his death Perry, an ex-

perienced miner with 16 years at Vale, was working alone.

“Years ago we had a buddy system and nobody worked underground alone,” said Seppo Vataja, who works at the North Mine. “Now you can work alone. We are supposed to call in every two hours. But what if you call in and five minutes later you have a serious accident. You won’t be reported missing until two hours later and that could be too late.”

Women fight discriminatory hiring at Illinois mine

BY ALYSON KENNEDY

CHICAGO—In March 2008 Brooke Petkas from West Frankfort, Ill., contacted the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and filed a complaint against the Mach Mine for sex discrimination. When the Mach Mine opened near Johnston City in 2006 Petkas sent resume after resume but never got a re-

sponse.

Petkas, who has been an underground coal miner since 2003, currently works at the Peabody-owned Wildcat Hills Mine. “I come from a family of coal miners,” she told the *Southern*. “My father works in a mine. My grandfathers and great-grandfather worked in the mines. It’s Southern Illinois—that’s what you do.”

The Chicago District EEOC Office began investigating Petkas’s complaint and determined that discrimination had occurred, Ethan Cohen and Ann Henry, EEOC attorneys involved in the case, told the *Militant*.

“We requested a list of applicants to the Mach Mine,” explained Henry, and then sent letters to see if they had been hired. After hearing about the case, other women also contacted the EEOC.

“At least 30 women have agreed to be part of the suit,” said Cohen. “Qualified applicants weren’t hired. The mine, which was a new mine, didn’t have a women’s bathroom. Many of the women who applied had mining certificates

or were experienced miners, some currently working.”

On Jan. 24 the first hearing with a judge took place by phone conference. The trial is scheduled for July 2013, according to Cohen.

Mach Mine has responded to the EEOC complaint, denying it engaged in any civil rights violations or unlawful employment practices. The mine is being represented by Ogletree Deakins, the antiunion law firm that is representing Peabody Coal in its attempt to keep the democratically elected United Mine Workers of America out of its Willow Lake Mine. An attempt by the *Militant* to get a comment on the lawsuit from Mach Mining was unsuccessful.

The women miners are seeking back pay, compensatory damages, jobs search expenses, and punitive damages, said Henry. “We will want hiring relief to get women jobs at the mine. And we seek injunctive relief barring the company from discrimination in the future.”

THE MILITANT

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‘Militant’ renewal drive

Continued from front page interest supporters of the socialist newspaper have found as they begin a four-week international campaign to sign up 500 readers to renew their subscriptions. The effort to increase the long-term readership of the paper will run from Feb. 11 to March 11. New subscriptions for six months or longer count toward quotas.

As of Feb. 8, local quotas by distributors add up to 477, with 90 renewals or long-term subscriptions sold since Jan. 21—a registration of the effort already under way in many areas.

“The *Militant* makes me aware of a lot of things that interest me, how other people are dealing with situations like what we are dealing with. I share it with a couple of union guys and also show it to my brother,” said Manuel Ramon, another stalwart of the fight against American Crystal in East Grand Forks who renewed his subscription to the paper in December.

“The first worker I approached with the *Militant* at the Verizon workers rally on Feb. 2 told me he had just renewed his subscription to the paper for one year,” writes Seth Galinsky from New York. “He said he often clips articles from the *Militant* and posts them on a bulletin board at the union office.”

Five books are on special for new and renewing readers during the drive, as well as the new book by Pathfinder Press, *Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution*. (See ads below and on page 6.)

“I like reading about actions by people, not just ideas,” said Michael Peterson, a philosophy graduate from the University of Alberta currently working at a music store in Montreal. He bought his first subscription to the

Militant at Occupy Montreal in October and recently renewed.

“I like the coverage on labor struggles and strikes that I don’t find anywhere else,” he added. “I also enjoy the articles on the different books each week,” a reference to the “Books of the Month” column that features excerpts from books by Pathfinder Press offered at reduced prices.

Peterson also purchased a copy of *The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution*.

This column will run for the duration of the drive. Please send notes and brief comments on the renewal effort in your area to the *Militant* by Tuesday, 8:00 a.m. EST. They are irreplaceable.



Militant/Mary Martin
Jerry Webb, longshore worker from Vancouver, Wash., reads *Militant* inside ILWU picket tent in front of EGT Development terminal at Port of Longview in Washington, Jan. 21.

Maine disclosure law undermines workers rights

BY JOHN STUDER

On Jan. 31 the U.S. Court of Appeals for the First Circuit upheld a Maine law that may force an organization, in this case a conservative group that opposes same-sex marriage rights, to disclose the names of its financial contributors. This would open them to harassment and victimization for their views and associations and strike a blow to the political rights of working people.

The organization, National Organization for Marriage, has raised money to challenge gay marriage laws in referendums in a number of states, including California, Washington and Maine. In each case some gay rights supporters and proponents of so-called transparency election laws have fought to force the group to make public the names of its contributors.

KnowThyNeighbor.org has posted the names of hundreds of thousands of signers of such petitions in Massachusetts, Florida and Arkansas. “Uncomfortable but desperately needed conversations continue to take place every day as a result,” the group boasted.

The National Organization for Marriage contributed \$1.8 million to campaign for overturning Maine’s

gay marriage law by referendum. After the vote, which did repeal the state’s gay marriage law, Fred Karger of Californians Against Hate filed a complaint with the Maine Ethics Commission arguing the group had not registered and disclosed contributors’ names, and urged the commission to force them to do so.

The commission launched an “investigation.” National Organization for Marriage filed suit in federal court, arguing that government action forcing to make its contributors public would be an unconstitutional violation of its right to privacy and free speech.

The fight against disclosure has a long history. In Alabama and other southern states, officials seeking to buttress Jim Crow segregation used “transparency” arguments in the 1950s to publicize the names of supporters of the NAACP, opening them to cop and Klan attacks, in order to destroy the organization. Since 1974 the Socialist Workers Party has fought successfully to exempt supporters of their election campaigns from disclosure, citing decades of government and rightist harassment and attacks.

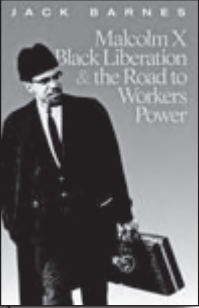
The federal court ruled against the

National Organization for Marriage’s legal challenge, authorizing the Ethics Commission to continue its probe into the group and ruling the commission has the power to compel it to publicly disclose names of contributors.

Announcing that National Organization for Marriage will appeal the ruling to the U.S. Supreme Court, James Bopp Jr., the group’s lawyer, said, “When they disclose who they are they can reasonably expect to be harassed.”


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Atlanta	35
Boston	15
Chicago	35
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Houston	18
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Philadelphia	20
San Francisco	35
Seattle	40
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Contact distributors on page 8
Militant subscription rates on page 2

Pathfinder Press

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CALIFORNIA

San Francisco
Why Are There So Many Prisoners in the United States? Speaker: James Harris, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Feb. 18. Dinner, 6 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 5482 Mission St. Tel.: (415) 584-2135.

IOWA

Des Moines
The Fight for Black Liberation and the Road to Workers Power. Speaker: David Rosenfeld, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Feb. 17, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 3707 Douglas Ave. Tel.: (515) 255-1707.

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis
The Keystone XL Pipeline in Nebraska: What Are the Stakes for Workers, Working Farmers? Speaker: Tom Fiske, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Feb. 17, 8 p.m. 1311 1/2 E. Lake St., 2nd floor. Tel.: (612) 729-1205.

TEXAS

Houston
Greece: Workers Brace for New Attacks on Living Standards. Speaker: Steve Warshell, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Feb. 10, 7:30 p.m. 4800 W 34th St., Suite C-50L. Tel.: (713) 688-4919.

WASHINGTON

Seattle
Labor Fights the Bosses’ Offensive: From the ILWU Battle Against Union Busting to Other Labor Struggles Around the World. Speaker: Mary Martin, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Feb. 18. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5 for dinner and \$5 for program. 5418 Rainier Ave. S Tel.: (206) 323-1755.

UNITED KINGDOM

London
Rebellion in Syria. What’s at Stake for Working People? Speaker: Paul Davies, Communist League. Fri., Feb. 17, 7 p.m. Donation: £3. 120 Bethnal Green Road (first floor, entrance in Brick Lane), E2 6DG. Tel.: (020) 7613-2466.

Locked-out tire workers in Ohio win solidarity

Reach out from Serbian workers to Toledo students

BY ALYSON KENNEDY

FINDLAY, Ohio—Members of United Steelworkers Local 207L locked out of their jobs for more than 10 weeks continue to gain support in their battle against Cooper Tire and Rubber Co.

The lockout began Nov. 28 after the workers voted 606-305 to reject the company's "last, best and final offer" to cut wages, speed up work and establish lower pay and benefits for new hires.

In an interview with the *Militant*, Rob Greer, a locked-out worker and Rapid Response and Political Coordinator of USW Local 207L, described his recent trip to Serbia as part of a USW delegation that included Theresa Brown, another locked-out worker.

"Shortly after we were locked out, Cooper Tire announced they were buying Trayal Tires in Krusevac, Serbia," Greer said. "The workers, members of Nezavisnost, the Trade Union of Chemistry, Nonmetal Energy and Mining, sent us a letter of solidarity and invited us to visit them."

Greer said there are 490 people who work at the plant.

"Cooper bought the plant, let everyone go and then rehired them for a probation period and after 90 days they are to be able to start to organize again," noted Greer.

They also visited a fertilizer plant represented by Nezavisnost and met with local union officials. Greer said that they were told the plant had been bombed in the U.S.-led NATO war in 1999.

Workers in Serbia, like those in much of Europe, are being hit hard by the unfolding capitalist economic crisis rooted in a slowdown of production, trade and employment. Joblessness in Serbia stands officially at 23.7 percent.

"Some workers in Serbia are wait-

ing three months for paychecks," Greer said.

He and local President Rod Nelson got a good response from students at Toledo University, Greer stated, where they were invited to speak to a class by a sociology professor who supports their fight.

"We spoke to a class of 50 and talked about the lockout and what it represents," Greer said. "One student asked, 'How can you be mad at scabs when they need to work?' We explained that the economy and what corporations are doing is putting those workers in that position, pitting worker against worker to get wages as low as possible."

Members of USW Local 752L at Cooper Tire in Texarkana, Ark., approved a four-year contract in a 1,006-141 vote Jan. 26. It does not include the company's original demand for a five-tier wage scale.

On Feb. 6 the company resumed negotiations with the Findlay local and a federal mediator. Talks broke off the next day, Local 207L President Nelson told the press, with no agreement.

Using bankruptcy, American Airlines to lay off 13,000

BY NAOMI CRAINE

American Airlines announced Feb. 1 that it will seek to use bankruptcy protection to lay off at least 13,000 workers, end pension plans, and impose other concessions on ground crews, mechanics, flight attendants and pilots.

American, owned by AMR Corp., is one of the last major U.S. airlines to use the bankruptcy courts in this way. The company complains its labor costs are too high compared with its competitors. This is despite deep concessions taken by union members

in 2003, including wage cuts of up to 30 percent and virtually no raises for the last nine years.

The proposals include shutting the company's maintenance base in Fort Worth, Texas, at the cost of 1,200 jobs, and laying off more than 2,000 mechanics and others at the base in Tulsa, Okla.

Other cuts include 2,300 flight attendants, 400 pilots and unspecified numbers of gate agents. American wants to outsource daytime cabin cleaning, cargo, fueling, and other operations amounting to more than

4,000 jobs.

"It's a race to the bottom," Jamie Horowitz, a spokesman for the Transport Workers Union, told the *Militant*. "They plan to outsource these jobs to companies that pay lower wages, often with no benefits."

The TWU represents 26,000 mechanics, baggage handlers, cleaners, and others at American and American Eagle.

Since 2003 workers at American "have increased productivity by an incredible amount," Horowitz said. "Union members invented ways to overhaul an airplane in half the time." The union worked together with management to market its maintenance bases to other airlines, but now American wants to move the work overseas, he said.

"There's a big degree of shock that the company proposal is so deep," Rick Walker, a ground service worker at Miami International Airport and member of TWU Local 568, told the *Militant*. "Everyone would just be throwing bags. All the jobs where you could rest your body would be contracted out. The brutality of the work would be even greater than it is now."

In addition to the layoffs, American will "seek court approval to terminate our defined benefit pension plans" and "discontinue company-subsidized retiree medical coverage for current employees," according to a letter from Jeff Brundage, senior vice president of human resources. The company is also demanding more "flexible" work rules.

The company's demands are now to be negotiated with the TWU as well as the pilots' and flight attendants' unions. If no agreement is reached, American can ask the bankruptcy judge to impose new conditions. "We're very much still fighting this," said Horowitz.

Wood donation aids sugar workers' pickets



Scott Ripplinger

John Ostendorf, above right, who makes a living as a beef farmer and wood hauler, delivers a semitrailer of wood Feb. 5 to members of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union locked out at American Crystal Sugar Co. in East Grand Forks, Minn. Ostendorf was greeted by 15 locked-out workers ready with their chain saws. The split wood is needed to keep warm on the picket lines.

Some 1,300 workers have been locked out since Aug. 1 at seven facilities in Minnesota, North Dakota and Iowa. The union is receiving solidarity and donations, including food aid and financial contributions.

Steve Share, editor of *Labor Review* in Minneapolis, who visited the picket lines last week, brought a check for \$5,000 from the Minneapolis Regional Federation of Labor to help with a food drive.

Send messages of solidarity and contributions to BCTGM Local 167G, 100 N 3rd St. Suite 50, Grand Forks, ND 58203.

—FRANK FORRESTAL

Canadian Caterpillar unionists demand severance

Continued from front page

ets at the main plant gate and received strong support from workers across the country.

"What is in that plant is our severance pay," locomotive painter Graham Alexander told the *Militant*, referring to inventory and machinery worth hundreds of millions of dollars. "It's time to get back to the picket line. We are continuing the fight. Caterpillar didn't get the wage cut they wanted. In a sense we drove them out of town. We took a hard kick in the ass, but we're still standing."

"The way CAT [Caterpillar] has treated us they won't be forthcoming in relation to severance pay," said Rick Walter, another locomotive painter. "We have to make them pay us what is ours. That is why we are going to make sure nothing is moved from that plant."

"Why couldn't they be honest and tell us that they are going to close when they locked us out?" commented locomotive tester Brian Mott. The workers were disqualified from getting government unemployment compensation during the five-week lockout.

"I'm concerned about the guys with 20 to 30 years in the plant," Mott contin-

ued. "We need to show that they are not alone in the battle." Mott, who has low seniority, said he expects little severance for himself.

"The cost structure of the operation was not sustainable and efforts to negotiate a new, competitive collective agreement were not successful," said a Caterpillar media release.

"Caterpillar had no intention of keeping this plant open," said CAW President Ken Lewenza in a union statement. "From day one we believed that Caterpillar was trying to provoke a crisis, by forcing deep cuts that were not possible."

The company said without being specific that it is moving the work to other operations in North and South America.

Workers and union officials said they assume this means shifting work to Caterpillar's locomotive plant in Muncie, Ind. The plant is nonunion. Wages there are \$12 to \$18 an hour compared to \$34 an hour for the London workers.

Thirty-six hours before the announced closure, Indiana Gov. Mitchell Daniels signed anti-union so-called "right-to-work" legislation. On Feb. 4,

a Caterpillar-organized jobs fair closed down three hours early after 4,000 people turned up to apply for 250 jobs at the Muncie plant.

"I will be going back to the picket line," David Giesbrecht, who works as a fabricator, told the *Militant*. "We have to stick together. We can't let these corporations dictate to us."

Messages and financial contributions can be sent to: CAW Local 27, 606 First St., London, Ontario N5V 2A2 (attention Electro-Motive workers). Fax: (519) 455-3960. E-mail messages can be sent to: tcarrie@golden.net.

Joe Young contributed to this article.

The Eastern Airlines Strike Accomplishments of the rank-and-file Machinists

by Ernie Mailhot, Judy Stranahan and Jack Barnes

The story of the 686-day strike in which a rank-and-file resistance by Machinists prevented Eastern's union-busting onslaught from becoming the road to a profitable non-union airline.



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ON THE PICKET LINE

Aluminum workers strike against concession contract

DAVENPORT, Iowa—Bundled up against a cold rain, members of Teamsters Local 371 maintained 24-hour picket lines at Nichols Aluminum casting and rolling plants here Feb. 4. Nichols is a subsidiary of Quanex Building Products Corp. The strike began Jan. 20. Some 220 workers out of 254 in the plants are members of Local 371.

Mechanic James Gaul said the union agreed to wage concessions in previous contracts. “We signed some contracts in the past that we shouldn’t have, to keep our health insurance the way it was. Now they want us to pay 20 percent of the premiums, with a \$6,000 annual deductible.” The company also wants a two-tier wage scale and a wage freeze during a four-year contract.

Dan Barry, a union steward, said he was inspired by a solidarity rally in front of both plants Jan. 28. “There were at least 200 people from different unions in the area. They were steelworkers, autoworkers, communications workers, and teachers from the National Education Association.” The rally was initiated by United Steelworkers Local 105, which organizes Alcoa Aluminum workers here.

“I’ve been changed by going out on strike and getting this kind of support,” Barry told the *Militant*. “I was ignorant about what was going on with labor. But now, if someone else is on strike, I plan to help them.”

Nichols Aluminum did not return phone calls from the *Militant* seeking comment.

Negotiations between Nichols Aluminum and the Teamsters resumed two weeks after the strike began.

The company is attempting to maintain some production with management personnel and by hiring replacement workers.

—David Rosenfeld

Locked out for over 14 months, NY building workers win ruling

NEW YORK—“They’re trying to break the unions,” locked-out worker Lucien Clarke told the *Militant* Jan. 28 at the picket line in front of the Flatbush Gardens apartment complex in Brooklyn. “All of us have to make a stand. We have to stand strong.”

Some 70 porters and maintenance workers were locked out of their jobs at the complex by the owners, Renaissance Equity Holdings, Nov. 29, 2010, after refusing to accept a more than 30 percent cut in wages and benefits.

In 2011 Service Employees International Union Local 32BJ filed unfair labor practice charges against Renaissance with the National Labor Relations Board.

On Jan. 25, the NLRB filed an injunction against Renaissance to end the lockout and reinstate the workers at their prior wages and benefits. The filing will next go before a federal judge.

“We’re still waiting to see what the judge is going to say,” said Clarke. “We’re still waiting, still picketing, still fighting.”

The locked-out workers picket seven days a week and have received strong support from the community, including Flatbush Gardens residents.

“On Christmas Day one guy from a church close by brought donations,” said Clarke. “And Verizon and UPS workers are honoring our picket line.” The pickets and UPS workers allow the delivery of medicines. Con Edison workers don’t cross the line unless there’s a gas leak or another emergency, he said.

—Deborah Liatos

NY cable workers walk out, push back bosses’ cuts

Some 100 cable installation workers walked off the job Feb. 2 in Yonkers, N.Y., seeking union backing and higher wages.

They work for CorBell, a contractor that does installation work for Cablevision in the Bronx and Westchester County.

One week earlier, 282 workers in Brooklyn became the first Cablevision employees to join a union when they



Rich Gonzalez

Cable installation workers at Cablevision subcontractor in Yonkers, N.Y., walk out Feb. 2 and seek union backing after company demanded cuts in pay and new work rules.

voted to be represented by the Communications Workers of America.

When CorBell workers showed up for work the morning of Feb. 2, bosses informed them of new work rules and a variable wage scale. The workers responded by striking. They met in the parking lot and called the CWA for assistance.

Ken Spatta, chief steward for CWA Local 1101, which represents Verizon workers, went to Yonkers to meet the strikers. Spatta said when he met with company representatives he was told, “They are in the streets. They can stay there.” They did stay there, where they were warmly supported by passersby and neighborhood residents.

By 2 p.m. the company agreed to negotiate, giving a \$2 raise per truck stop

and returning a \$5 wage deduction it had taken that morning for TV and Internet installation. Although other demands were not addressed, the workers agreed to return to work.

“We are still underpaid and we are working to get the other contracting company employees involved with us,” Winston Wright, one of the strikers told the *Militant*.

—Dan Fein

‘We’re not giving up seniority,’ say striking NY building workers

FAR ROCKAWAY, Queens, N.Y.—Workers and their supporters have kept the picket line up in front of Dayton Beach Park Co-Op apartments every day here since they went on strike July 7, 2011.

More than a dozen workers were on the picket line Jan. 28. Many people driving by or entering the complex waved and honked in support.

The 27 workers, members of SEIU Local 32BJ, went on strike in response to management’s contract demands that include higher health insurance, a four-year wage freeze, and layoffs.

“We are down to 25 workers, union steward Ray Ceballos told the *Militant* while picketing. “The board wants to reduce the staff by six. Then they’ll write us up if we don’t get all the work done. The union agreed to a reduction of three people but board president Jennifer Grady had a list of senior men she wanted to get rid of. We said no. We told the board we’re not giving up seniority.”

—Deborah Liatos



Militant/Maggie Trowe

Members of Teamsters Local 371 picket Nichols Aluminum in Davenport, Iowa, Feb. 4.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



February 20, 1987

When the owner of the Cuirs Hawton leathersgoods factory in Haiti fired six workers in December 1986, all the workers went on strike to demand that the six be rehired. Their strike is an example of the efforts by Haitian workers in the face of stiff opposition from U.S. and Haitian bosses.

For 29 years Haiti was ruled by the U.S.-backed Duvalier dictatorship. More than half of all workers were unemployed and wages averaged less than \$3 a day. This meant big profits for Haitian bosses and for the many foreign capitalists, most from the United States.

When a massive popular rebellion forced Duvalier to flee the country in February 1986, Haitian workers began to raise demands for higher wages and started to form unions. Factory bosses, both Haitian and U.S., responded with intimidation and arbitrary firings.



February 19, 1962

President Kennedy’s decision to plunge this country deeper into the South Vietnamese civil war can mean a blood-bath even worse than Truman’s “police action” in Korea.

Kennedy’s decision to put a four-star general in charge of operations there and to accelerate the flow of troops and equipment deliberately flouts the Constitution which says only Congress can commit the country to war.

The claim that “aggression” by North Vietnam is responsible for the civil war now in its eighth year and that the U.S. has intervened to stave off a possible victory of “totalitarianism” is the cruelest kind of lie. The civil war is a popular uprising of the peasantry against the oppression of the Ngo Dinh Diem dictatorship—a dictatorship that survives only by the grace of U.S. guns and dollars.



February 20, 1937

General Motors has signed its first national agreement with an industrial union. This fact represents a real victory for the auto workers and for the forces of the Committee for Industrial Organization. The first major breach in the iron front of the open shop mass production industries has been made.

Definite gains involved in the settlement were: first, establishment of the principal of national bargaining between national officers of the company and of the United Auto Workers of America. Second, recognition of the union as the sole bargaining agent in seventeen strike bound plants for a period of six months.

The sit-down strike is by inference recognized as a legitimate weapon since it is mentioned in the terms of settlement and the corporation agrees to withdraw all court action based on plant occupation and now pending against the union.

Read about the battles that forged the industrial unions



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Capitalist rule is source of violence, not of its decline

Book serves as apology for imperialism's brutal nature

The Better Angels of Our Nature. Why Violence Has Declined by Steven Pinker, 802 pages. Penguin Group. \$40.

BY NAOMI CRAINE

The capitalist system—with its state “monopoly on the use of force,” “gentle commerce” and “cosmopolitanism”—has ushered in the least violent epoch in human history. So says Harvard professor Steven Pinker in *The Better Angels of Our Nature. Why Violence Has Declined*.

IN REVIEW

Pinker's 800-page tome professes to trace through human history a general trend of declining violence—which for him includes everything from wars to eating meat—in order to present the current system of capitalist rule as the highest possible social system giving rise to an increasingly peaceful and progressive world. Among the fundamental problems with the author's historical analysis is that he conspicuously disregards the struggle between exploited and exploiting classes, which Karl Marx explained is the motor force of history.

Pinker's opening chapters describe past stages of human society that have been overcome, including cannibalism, human sacrifice, chattel slavery, medieval torture devices, and so on. He continues in this vain as he describes inroads in recent decades against racism, discrimination against women, and other forms of oppression.

These undeniable advances are above all victories of toiling humanity: our social labor, which has made possible the increase in productivity and development of culture, as well as the struggles of the laboring classes against oppression over millennia of class society.

Pinker manages to write a dozen pages under the heading “Civil Rights and the Decline of Lynching and Racial Pogroms” with only a passing mention of the massive, proletarian-led movement that defeated Jim Crow segregation, let alone the battles that preceded and followed it. It's no wonder: the struggle for Black rights was a fight *against* the state power of the capitalist class, their laws, cops, courts and politicians. A necessary component of it was armed self-defense against state-organized and state-sanctioned violence. And that struggle permanently strengthened the working class and its capacity to effectively fight the bosses and their government.

Pinker credits the rise of the state, particularly modern democratic capitalist states in Western Europe and North

America, and the ideas of the Enlightenment—the scientific and philosophical ideas that developed as part of the rise of capitalism in the 17th and 18th centuries—for social progress. He praises the “institutions of the Civilizing Process, namely a competent government and police force and a dependable infrastructure for trade and commerce.”

The general trend has been a remarkable reduction in violence, he says, spreading “not only downward along the socioeconomic scale but outward across the geographic scale, from a Western European epicenter”—a phrase that captures his anti-working-class and pro-imperialist outlook.

The early development of the “institutions of the civilizing process” is explained well in *Capital*, where Marx describes how capitalism came into being “dripping from head to foot, from every pore, with blood and dirt.” Men, women and children were driven off the land. The “civilizing” anti-vagrancy laws helped drive the dispossessed rural toilers into factories and mines under hours and conditions of labor that exceeded the bounds of human endurance—enforced by the police, judges, jails and workhouses of the state apparatus.

Credit belongs to working class

The massive expansion of the hereditary working class on a world scale over the last century, drawing in men and women on every continent, *has* increased the proletarian habits of mutual trust, tolerance, and class solidarity that working people learn in the course of common struggles. As a result of the accelerated development and struggles by the workers, there *is* less acceptance today of torture, for instance, and of racist and anti-woman violence. The credit for this however belongs to the revolutionary class in society, the proletariat, not to the capitalist rulers, the source of violence and oppression whose system creates contradictions that invariably explode into war.

Pinker goes through some intellectual gymnastics to explain the horrors of the two mass imperialist slaughters of the 20th Century, which would seem to contradict his thesis. He argues that 15 million deaths in World War I and an unprecedented 55 million in World War II are actually not so much—if considered as a percentage of the world's population in contrast to the Mongol Conquests over seven decades in the 13th Century and the fall of the Roman Empire in the 3rd to 5th centuries. He presents numerous charts and graphs to support this quantitative comparison to large-scale



Struggle for Black rights was fight against state power of capitalist class, their laws, cops, courts and politicians. Above, members of NAACP in Monroe, N.C., armed themselves in 1950s and successfully beat back Ku Klux Klan terror. Book by Steven Pinker peddles lie that decline of racism and violence is natural result of “civilizing process” of modern capitalist society.

massacre and genocide, which many working people will instinctively find morally repugnant.

Pinker conveniently dismisses these world conflagrations as flukes of history, rejecting the likelihood of another war among imperialist powers. He views the increased membership in “intergovernmental organizations” such as the United Nations and European Union, and the increase in so-called peacekeeping missions around the world to be factors limiting the risk of war.

‘Peacekeepers’ tool of imperialism

These are in fact some of the main tools used by Washington and other imperialist powers today to maintain their domination of the rest of the world, its resources and labor. It certainly hasn't been a “long peace” for working people in Korea, Vietnam, Congo, Iraq, Afghanistan, Yugoslavia, Haiti and innumerable other countries subjected to imperialist military intervention—often in the name of “peacekeeping” or under the U.N. flag. And as the current world

capitalist crisis unfolds, the pressures toward greater conflict—both trade wars and shooting wars—will mount.

As Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin explained in 1916, “Peaceful alliances [between imperialist powers] prepare the ground for wars, and in their turn grow out of wars.” The “peaceful ... alliance of *all* the powers for the ‘pacification’ of China” one day shifts to “the non-peaceful conflict of tomorrow, which will prepare the ground for another ‘peaceful’ general alliance for the partition, say, of Turkey, on the day after tomorrow, *etc. etc.*” The imperialist “civilized hyenas,” as Lenin once called them, haven't changed their spots over the last century.

Pinker's bourgeois class bias and contempt for working people is equally on display when he turns his attention to the United States. Under the heading “Recivilization in the 1990s,” he discusses a drop in homicide statistics over the last two decades. Among the factors he credits are that “the Leviathan [the

Continued on page 9

NY cops step up targeting of Black youth with drug laws, stop and frisk

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

NEW YORK—Police in New York City have increasingly targeted Black and Latino youth for arrest on minor marijuana possession charges.

Cops here made more than 50,680 arrests on the lowest-level marijuana charges in 2011, an increase for the seventh straight year and the largest category of arrests overall. According to figures compiled by Queens College professor Harry Levine and the Drug Policy Alliance, the number of these misdemeanor arrests in the last five years surpasses the total for the 23-year period from 1978 to 2001.

Over the last decade, more than half of those arrested for possession of marijuana were Black, although in 2010 they comprised 23 percent of the city's population. One-third of those arrested were Latino. Just 11 percent were Caucasian, despite representing about 44 percent of the city's population and surveys showing no significant difference in their use of marijuana compared to Blacks and Latinos.

The skyrocketing arrests are closely connected to the NYPD's aggres-

sive “stop-and-frisk” policy. A record 600,601 people, 87 percent of whom were Black or Latino, were subjected to arbitrary police stops and searches in 2010. Under state law, police are only supposed to arrest a person for possessing a small amount of marijuana if it is lit or in public view. But the cops routinely order those they stop and frisk to empty their pockets, allowing police to frame up some for having the drug “in public view.”

These arrests create a public record that can affect every aspect of a person's life—from employment and education to housing.

In September 2011, under public pressure over the racist enforcement of drug laws, New York City Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly issued a memo “reminding” cops to stop falsely charging people for possessing small amounts of marijuana removed from their pockets by order of a police officer.

Levine has compiled statistics showing a similar pattern of arrests for marijuana possession targeting African-Americans in California and elsewhere.



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NZ gov't presses frame-up of activists for Maori rights

BY MIKE TUCKER

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—The government's frame-up trial opens here Feb. 13 against four Maori rights advocates: Emily Bailey, Rangi Kemara, Urs Signer and Tame Iti, a prominent Maori rights campaigner and a leader of the Tuhoe *iwi* (tribe).

They have been awaiting trial for more than four years on charges of "unlawful possession of firearms" and "participating in an organized criminal group."

Government prosecutors added a new indictment last September, alleging the group's intention was murder, arson, kidnapping and other crimes.

"The police accusations against us are ridiculous," said Iti in a phone interview with the *Militant* following the announcement.

The new indictment was filed after the government was forced to withdraw trumped-up firearms charges made against 13 others following a massive police operation on Oct. 15, 2007, dubbed "Operation 8."

At that time more than 300 cops

raided some 60 homes across the country and arrested 18 people. The small township of Ruatoki—hometown of the Tuhoe people—was placed under a lockdown as heavily armed police set up roadblocks and rampaged through homes.

Police claimed the raids were a response to an imminent "terrorist" threat and that those arrested had taken part in training camps nearby. Using warrants under the 2002 Terrorism Suppression Act, police had secretly shot videos, bugged houses and cars, and tapped phone calls and text messages over the preceding year. Most of those arrested were held in jail for nearly a month.

The raids sparked protests throughout New Zealand. In face of this, Solicitor General David Collins announced in November 2007 that he would not authorize laying charges under the Terrorism Act. The defendants were released from jail, but police continued to press the frame-up under the Arms Act.

Support for the demand to drop the



Militant/Mike Tucker

Rally against frame-up of Maori rights advocates at High Court in Auckland, Sept. 12.

charges has grown as the case enters its fifth year. A documentary movie, *Operation 8: Deep in the Forest*, exposing the police frame-up, has been screened at cinemas throughout the country since its release last April.

Government prosecutors had been planning a major show trial to open in Auckland last September. But on the eve of the trial, Sept. 2, the Supreme Court ruled that illegally obtained cop surveillance was impermissible in court. Charges against 13 of the defen-

dants were then withdrawn at the High Court in Auckland Sept. 12. One of the remaining defendants, Tuhoe Lambert, had died in July.

However, in a 3-2 decision, the Supreme Court ruled that the same illegally obtained evidence could be used to prosecute the remaining four defendants on more serious charges of "participating in an organized criminal group." This opened the way to the new indictment Sept. 15, alleging the group was "conspiring" to commit violent crimes.

A statement released by Valerie Morse Sept. 16 on behalf of the October 15th Solidarity committee denounced the new indictment against the remaining four defendants as "utterly unsubstantiated by any credible evidence. ... The charges are rubbish. The case is rubbish, and has been since October 15th 2007. The charges should be dropped now."

Sixty people attended a public meeting in Wellington Feb. 3 to condemn the frame-up trial. Meetings and protests are planned in Auckland to coincide with the start of the trial. Information can be found at the website <http://october15thsolidarity.info>.

Hundreds protest killing of youth by NY cop

Continued from front page

lance cameras at the home shows Graham walking up the sidewalk and entering the house. Seconds later two police officers run up and after finding the door locked attempt to kick it in. After several minutes the cops gained access into the building through the back door and then broke down the door to the second floor apartment.

The cops claim they saw a gun on Graham, but New York Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly admitted to the press that there is no evidence he was armed. Kelly claimed that cops found a bag of marijuana in the apartment's toilet near where Graham was killed. Since the shooting two cops—Richard Haste, who pulled the trigger, and his supervisor, Sgt. Scott Morris—have been stripped of their guns and badges and put on desk duty.

Graham's six-year-old brother and his grandmother, Patricia Hartley, witnessed the shooting. Hartley was immediately taken into custody and held for seven hours at the precinct house. She was released only after Bronx State Assemblyman Eric Stevenson went to the precinct house and asked if Hartley was being held against her will.

"They dragged his name through the mud," his father, Frank Graham, told the crowd, referring to reports in the media from unnamed police sources that Ramarley had eight prior arrests.

"I want you to know Ramarley was a wonderful, quiet kid. He always carried a small Jamaican flag in his back pocket, not a gun," Lisa Johnson told the *Militant*. "Maybe he did smoke weed, lots of high school students do. But that shouldn't matter. This could have been anyone's family member in this neighborhood."

"They are murderers. Get it in your head," Bronx resident Yolanda Matthews shouted at a TV news crew. "We are tired."

"When they kill young people, the cops claim drugs or guns. The cops

frame them," Molly Gordon, whose two children grew up and went to school with Graham, said in a Feb. 5 interview. "The cops had no warrant to enter the apartment. We are not animals. This happens mostly to Black people. They need to take the cops off the force."

"I saw the video on TV where the cops were running to the apartment following Ramarley," said Winston Blake, a construction worker. "This is a total injustice. There was no threat to the cops to justify this murder."

Australia: death in police custody sparks protest

BY JOANNE KUNIAISKY

SYDNEY, Australia—Holding placards demanding "Independent inquiry now," "Release all evidence to the family," and "Stop Black deaths in custody," 35 people protested here Jan. 19 outside the Northern Territory tourism office.

Terrance Briscoe, a 28-year-old Aboriginal man, was arrested in Alice Springs, central Australia, by the Northern Territory Police for public drunkenness at 9:30 p.m. on Jan. 4. Five hours later he was found dead in his cell.

Ray Jackson from the Indigenous Social Justice Association told the rally that, as always, there is the "so-called official version" and the "family version" of what happened.

According to the association, since 1980 more than 400 Blacks have died in police custody.

Police reportedly told the family that Briscoe hurt his head when he fell over before being locked away. But two men who were arrested with him said he was beaten by up to five officers, one of them a woman.

His aunt, Patricia Morton-Thomas, told the *Northern Territory News* that the conflicting stories made the family suspicious. Her nephew, she pointed out, received no medical care for the injury.

In a media statement, Jackson said that for an Aborigine or Torres Strait Islander "arrest becomes a death sentence

Duane Browne, 26, was shot and killed by cops Jan. 12 while in his pajamas when cops responded to an attempted burglary 911 call. On Jan. 26 Christopher Kissane was killed while allegedly stealing a car. He was shot from a distance of 78 feet, "which is remarkable shooting," said police spokesperson Paul Browne. On Jan. 29 an off-duty cop shot and killed 17-year-old Antwain White.

Dan Fein contributed to this article.



Relatives and community members protest Jan. 4 death of Terrance Briscoe (inset) while in police custody in Alice Springs, Australia.

followed by the obligatory whitewash and cover-up."

Paddy Gibson from Stop The Intervention Collective Sydney told the protest that they would be "pushing hard for justice and for the police to be prosecuted." He said that even if Briscoe was not assaulted, the negligence of the police puts "this death at their feet." STICS was formed to campaign against the 2007 federal takeover of Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory.

Briscoe's uncle Daniel Taylor, a representative of Amnesty International,

and Robert Dow, who resigned from the Northern Territory Police over such instances of cop brutality, also spoke at the protest.

Today, about one in four prisoners are indigenous, even though Aboriginal Australians make up just 2.5 percent of the total population. Thirty-two percent of people living in the Northern Territory are indigenous. There, the imprisonment rate for Aboriginal people has risen 46 percent in the last decade from 523 prisoners per 100,000 adults in 2001 to 762 prisoners per 100,000 in 2011.

Malcolm X: ‘stop and frisk’ an ‘anti-Negro law’

Below is an excerpt from By Any Means Necessary, a book of speeches and interviews by Malcolm X from the last year of his life. The excerpt is from a speech Malcolm gave at the second rally of the Organization of Afro-American Unity, at the Audubon Ballroom in Harlem, N.Y., July 5, 1964, shortly after the U.S. Congress adopted the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Copyright © 1970 by Betty Shabazz and Pathfinder Press.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY MALCOLM X

On Thursday of this week, or I think it was Friday, there was a great hullabaloo made over the recent passage of the civil rights bill. On the front pages of all the newspapers the day after it was supposedly signed so that it was in effect, they had pictures of little black boys sitting in barbershop chairs letting white barbers cut their hair. And this was hailed as a great victory. Pick up on that.

In 1964, when oppressed people all over this earth are fighting for their place in the sun, the Negro in America is supposed to stand up and cheer because he can sit down and let a white man mess up his head.

At the same time that so much hullabaloo was being made over the passage of the civil rights bill, if you read closely between the lines, a little black boy in



Robert Parent

Malcolm X speaking at founding meeting of Organization of Afro-American Unity at Audubon Ballroom in Harlem, N.Y., June 28, 1964. Malcolm said Blacks today should follow example of those in their history who fought back by any means necessary.

Georgia was found hung on a tree. A 1964 June lynching. Nothing was said in the paper, no hullabaloo was made over that. But here’s a little fourteen-year-old black boy in Georgia lynched, and to keep you and me from knowing what was taking place, they showed another picture of a little black boy letting a white man cut his hair.

This is the trickery that you and I are faced with every day in this society. They on the one hand try and show us how much progress we’re making. But if we look through all of that propaganda we find that our people are still being hung, they’re still disappearing, and no one is finding them, or no one is finding their murderers.

And at the same time also that so much hullabaloo was being made over this new civil rights legislation, a bill went into effect known as the no-knock law or stop-and-frisk law, which was an anti-Negro law. They make one law that’s outright against Negroes and make it appear that it is for our people, while at the same time they pass another bill that’s supposedly designed to give us some kind of equal rights. You know, sooner or later you and I are going to wake up and be fed up, and there’s going to be trouble. There’s got to be trouble.

While they were making so much hullabaloo again over the passage of these new civil rights bills or legislation, they could not deny the fact that all

these new laws are aimed at the South. None of them are aimed at the North. Nothing in this legislation is designed to straighten out the situation that you and I are confronted with here in New York City. There’s nothing in the bill that will stop job discrimination in New York, that will stop housing discrimination in New York, that will stop educational discrimination in New York. There’s nothing in the bill that will stop the police from exercising police state tactics in New York. There’s nothing in the bill that touches on your and my problem here in New York City. Everything in the bill deals with our people in the South.

We are interested in our people in the South. But we have to question whether or not this bill, these laws, will help our people in the South when ten years ago the Supreme Court came up with a law called the desegregated school law, or something to that effect, which hasn’t been enforced yet. And you and I would be children, we would be boys, we would be mental midgets, if we let the white man even make us *think* that some new laws were going to be enforced in Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, and Texas while the Supreme Court law has not yet been enforced in New York City. You’d be out of your mind to even look happy. And you’d be way out of your mind to make them think that you’re happy.

No, when you and I know that these

political tricks are being pulled, if you and I don’t let it be known that we know it, why, they’ll keep on with their skullduggery and their trickery, and they will think that the problem is being solved when actually they’re only compounding it and making it worse. If they can’t enforce laws that are laid down by the Supreme Court, which is the land’s highest court, do you think that they can enforce some new laws in Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia? And if they can’t enforce these new laws, then why do they pretend? Why come up with the bill? What is all this hullabaloo for? It’s nothing but twentieth-century trickery, some more of the same old legislative trickery that you and I and our mothers and fathers have been handed for the past fifty, sixty, or one hundred years.

Prior to one hundred years ago, they didn’t need tricks. They had chains. And they needed the chains because you and I hadn’t yet been brainwashed thoroughly enough to submit to their brutal acts of violence submissively. Prior to a hundred years ago, you had men like Nat Turner, that Brother Benjamin was talking about, and others, Toussaint L’Ouverture. None of them would submit to slavery. They’d fight back by any means necessary. And it was only after the spirit of the black man was completely broken and his desire to be a man was completely destroyed, then they had to use different tricks. They just took the physical chains from his ankles and put them on his mind.

And from then on, the type of slavery that you and I have been experiencing, we’ve been kept in it, year in and year out, by a change of tricks. Never do they change our condition or the slavery. They only change the tricks. This is done from the White House right on down to the plantation boss in Alabama and Mississippi. Right on down from the White House you are tricked, right on down to the plantation boss in Mississippi and Alabama. There is no difference between the plantation boss in Mississippi and the plantation boss in Washington, D.C. Both of them are plantation bosses. What you experience in this country is one huge plantation system, the only difference now being that the President is the plantation boss.

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Prosecute cops who killed Graham!

“When they kill young people, the cops claim drugs or guns. The cops frame them,” Molly Gordon told the *Militant* in the wake of the police killing of 18-year-old Ramarley Graham in the Bronx.

Frame-ups and state-organized violence are tools of the capitalist rulers, as many articles in this week’s issue illustrate—from the streets of New York to the longshore workers in Washington who stood up to union busting, from the frame-up case against Māori rights activists in New Zealand to the death in cop custody of Terrance Briscoe in Australia.

The use of the capitalist state against working people at home is paralleled by their actions abroad. They want us to accept hunter-killer drones, special forces assassinations and full-out military slaughters when needed to defend imperialist interests—all in the name of “peacekeeping,” “stability” and “prosperity.”

The imperialist rulers, along with their petty-bourgeois apologists such as Harvard professor Steven Pinker, present themselves as the bearers of

order and enlightenment, making the world a better place for all. (See review on page 6.) Working people need to learn to see through their claims, and develop a healthy contempt for their hypocrisy.

The government of the bosses—with its cops, courts and armed forces—is an instrument of class rule for keeping the toiling majority in line.

This state is wielded by the bosses in their drive for more production and profits. A drive that comes at the cost of life and limb for workers, as in the recent death at a Vale mine in Canada. It serves the capitalists in driving down wages—from the 25 percent cut in the minimum wage in Greece to the 50 percent cut at Caterpillar.

The *Militant* stands with those confronting the rulers’ frame-ups and violence. We join the longshore workers in demanding all charges and fines against union members and supporters be dropped. And we stand with those demanding that the cops responsible for Ramarley Graham’s death be prosecuted.

Capitalist rule is source of violence

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state] got bigger, smarter, and more effective.” Specifically, the incarceration rate multiplied fivefold and the number of cops mushroomed.

How “smart” this seems depends on your class perspective. It’s working-class neighborhoods, especially Black and Latino communities, that the police target for stop-and-frisk harassment, frame-ups, arbitrary arrests and draconian prison sentences.

This is a form of violence that Pinker and his colleagues support, but are embarrassed to acknowledge and never experience for themselves. The Harvard professor is part of a middle class layer that has grown to be millions over the last 20 years—well-placed university professors and administrators, heads of charities and foundations, lawyers and lobbyists—who are largely unconnected to the production, reproduction or circulation of social wealth.

This layer, sometimes described as a “meritocracy,” serves as well-paid cheerleaders for the capitalist rulers. They view themselves as smarter and more enlightened, and they fear the working people throughout the world as a “dangerous class.” So they accept, often with mild criticism or feigned regret, that the U.S. must have by far the highest incarceration rate in the world—more than 1 percent of the adult population—as the price of “civilization.”

Pinker professes that greater capacity for abstract

reasoning, as measured by IQ scores, leads to less violence. Smarter people are more liberal, he argues, more educated, more moral. This smartness has been trickling down to the rest of us unwashed masses—although not as much to the less enlightened “red states” of the South. It’s the epitome of a self-serving justification, packaged as scholarly work.

The development of capitalism has created the productive capacity for the first time ever to meet the material needs of all humanity. The contradiction is that these means are monopolized by a small minority, whose domination is maintained through violence and whose competition and drive for profits lead to the most violent explosions. This contradiction can only be resolved by the working class wresting political power.

To get a glimpse of the social forces that actually can put an end to the violent contradictions of capitalism, I recommend reading the newly published book *Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution*. It describes how working people, men and women, built a revolutionary army whose aim was not to kill the enemy, but rather to take power with as little bloodshed as possible. It describes how in the course of the revolutionary war and after its victory the peasants and workers of Cuba increasingly transformed themselves and their society, without preconceived schemes, showing a way forward for humanity.

Athens targets private industry workers

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pay; and steep cuts in pensions.

On Feb. 7 the two largest Greek unions conducted a one-day political strike and tens of thousands demonstrated, closing ports, factories and public transportation.

“The goal of any pay cuts would be to help make Greek workers, who are generally less productive than workers elsewhere in Europe, able to compete more effectively inside the euro zone,” the *New York Times* said Feb. 3, “where countries share a common currency that does not allow devaluations to help even out differences in labor costs.”

Reuters reported that productivity in Greece is just 65 percent of the European Union average.

This line of attack on industrial workers is becoming increasingly popular with European rulers, in the name of fueling growth. Those pushing this course argue that reliance on austerity alone only further contracts the economy, driving Greece and other “peripheral” countries deeper into debt.

In other words, the propertied rulers’ “alternative” to continually raising taxes and slashing government expenditures—including state workers’ wages, pensions and jobs—is to combine it with an all-out assault on wages and working conditions of broader layers of the working class.

This approach is being carried out by Italy’s

Prime Minister Mario Monti, also installed at the behest of the stronger imperialist powers led by Berlin. “Monti and Labor Minister Elsa Fornaro have pledged to make labor reforms,” the *Wall Street Journal* reported Feb. 7, “in an effort to put an indebted and economically stagnant Italy on a path to sustainable growth.”

Europe’s rulers are incapable of solving the deepening crisis of capitalist production and trade. They grasp for short-term measures to kick the can down the road. With all their competing interests and views, the one thing they agree on is continued attacks on workers in an effort to increase sagging profit rates.

Working people are feeling the impact across the continent. At the end of 2011, eurozone unemployment reached its highest level since the euro was inaugurated more than 10 years earlier.

Over the last two weeks, more than 420 people have died across Europe as frigid temperatures descended. The vast majority are workers who have become homeless as a result of the crisis. Day after day, from Poland to Italy, dozens have been found frozen to the ground, unable to find shelter.

Meanwhile, one area in which Greece’s rulers are expanding their budget is the construction of a six-mile-long, 13-foot-high fence along the Turkish border topped with razor wire and remote cameras to keep immigrant workers out.

ILWU victory

Continued from front page

between the union and the Port of Longview, which is run by the city government. The company had instead hired members of Operating Engineers Union Local 701 at inferior wages without a contract through the General Construction company. On Jan. 23 EGT laid off the General Construction employees, according to *Longshore and Shipping News*.

As part of the initial agreement, EGT got a change in its lease agreement with the Port of Longview, removing the stipulation that said the company had to hire ILWU labor.

Despite the lease clause, EGT organized a frontal assault against the union. But under the existing relationship of forces as determined in the class struggle, the bosses were compelled to back down. In that context, the lease change is a minor concession the bosses will try to use to their advantage in the future. But the future of the union there will be decided the same way that it won its current status.

The union has reserved the right to resume picketing at EGT if contract talks on outstanding issues break down.

The ILWU also agreed to request that all outside groups, including other labor unions and forces from the Occupy movement, refrain from picketing at EGT.

Some West Coast Occupy forces, who had been planning to caravan to Longview to block the loading of EGT’s first grain ship, have said they will wait and see if the agreement is “satisfactory to the Local 21 rank and file” to decide their next move. The union had opposed such actions, pointing out they could lead to unnecessary victimizations. No protest was held Feb. 7 when the grain ship docked.

Women protesters ‘not guilty’

Meanwhile, in another victory for the union, four supporters of the ILWU were found “not guilty” Feb. 1 of blocking a train at a Sept. 21 protest against EGT at the Port of Longview. The four were part of a group of nine women who were relatives of ILWU Local 21 members and included some members of the ILWU Ladies Auxiliary no. 14.

The group was carrying out a peaceful protest by sitting down on the railroad tracks leading into the EGT terminal. The women were then assaulted by private cops of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad, Cowlitz County Sheriff’s deputies and Longview Police. Three members of Local 21—Secretary-Treasurer Byron Jacobs, Kelly Muller and President Dan Coffman—were also arrested. Jacobs and Muller were assaulted by the police when they ran to assist the women.

The four women acquitted were Erica Farland, Cara Lindemann, Kahne Witham and Jennifer Wood. The other five women will face a jury trial in March. The cases of Coffman, Jacobs and Muller have not yet gone to trial.

More than 200 union members and supporters were arrested on trumped-up charges as a result of union protests against EGT in the course of the eight-month fight. Although at least 23 of these have been cleared of frame-up charges in recent weeks, including in three jury trials, scores more still face hearings or trials.

“It’s time for the prosecuting attorney to ... drop the remaining charges against longshore workers and their supporters for exercising their constitutional rights during their free speech demonstrations last summer,” Leal Sundet of the ILWU Coast Committee said at the union’s international headquarters in San Francisco.

“I don’t just dismiss a whole raft of cases because a jury came back with a not guilty for certain people,” Cowlitz County Prosecutor Sue Baur responded in a statement to the press.

Meanwhile, the union is appealing more than \$300,000 in fines levied by a federal judge for alleged damages incurred during union protests at the port.

Correction

The photo of members of the ILWU Local 21 on page 5 of the Feb. 6 issue should have been credited to “Jenn Davenport,” not “John Davenport.”