

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Caribbean's shared legacy of slavery, resistance, revolution
— PAGES 6-7

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 76/NO. 12 MARCH 26, 2012

New Zealand port workers stand up to union busting

Bosses demand 'flexible' work schedule



Militant/Baskaran Appu

March 3 march along Auckland, New Zealand, waterfront to back strike. City-owned port said it will contract out jobs after workers refused to accept bosses' demands for irregular shifts.

BY PATRICK BROWN

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—Three thousand people marched for two hours along the waterfront here March 3 to support striking port workers. A few days later, Ports of Auckland formally announced that it is hiring three contracting companies to take the place of nearly 300 members of the Maritime Union of New Zealand.

The port workers began their strike

Feb. 24 after months of contract negotiations. Union members refused to accept the bosses' demands for "flexible" work schedules instead of eight-hour shifts. Workers say that this would mean their shift could last as little as three hours or as much as 12, and start times could be changed on just five hours' notice.

Chanting, "Contracting out has got
Continued on page 4

Court gives cops green light to further weaken 'Miranda rule'

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The U.S. Supreme Court in late February issued a decision further chipping away at the Miranda rule, which requires police to inform individuals about certain rights before interrogating them.

The ruling gives cops a green light to more openly deny working people the constitutional protection against self-incrimination. At the same time, for working people the Miranda rule itself has increasingly become little more than a procedure cops check as part of the frame-up routine of grueling interrogations, violence, coerced "confessions" and plea bargains under threat of ever harsher sentences.

Under the impact of the advancing civil rights battles, the Miranda rule was established in June 1966. The Supreme Court ordered a new trial for Ernesto Miranda, who was convicted by the state of Arizona on charges of rape and kidnapping on the basis of a coerced "confession" that he later recanted. The court ruling said cops are required to inform those in custody that they have right to remain silent and have an attorney present during

interrogation, and that any statements they make can be used against them in court. Miranda was retried and convicted four months later, despite a lack of physical evidence or victim

Continued on page 9

Public meeting in NY discusses need, openings to build proletarian party

BY JOHN STUDER

NEW YORK—Some 360 people attended a public meeting here March 10 sponsored by the Socialist Workers Party titled, "After Labor Resistance and Solidarity: What's the Revolutionary Political Road Forward for the Working Class?"

The event drew workers, young people, and others from around the United States and elsewhere. A large number of participants, both longtime socialist workers and militants who

Continued on page 3

Rulers in US, Israel debate military strike against Iran

BY LOUIS MARTIN

As the governments of the United States and Israel ratchet up pressure on Iran, a visit by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to Washington in early March has put a spotlight on differences between Washington and Tel Aviv—as well as within the U.S. ruling class and the Democratic Party—on how best to advance their common goal of forcing Tehran to abandon the development of advanced nuclear technology.

Iran has been the target of crippling economic sanctions, assassinations of nuclear scientists, bombings and sabotage of its nuclear program.

Since last fall the Israeli government has openly discussed the possibility of launching deadly airstrikes targeting Iran's nuclear facilities, with or without Washington's consent, while the Obama administration is focusing on garnering support for stiffer international sanctions to harm Iran's economy and impose maximum hardship on its people.

Tel Aviv has not hesitated to act on

Continued on page 9

Joblessness is necessary product of capitalist crisis

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The big-business press has been cautiously applauding the U.S. Labor Department's announcement of an uptick in hiring, which takes place three years into a period of persistently high joblessness—the longest such period since the Great Depression. While there's no way to predict how long this short-term trend may last, it is not based on any reversal of the underlying capitalist crisis at rooted in a worldwide slowdown in production and trade.

Bosses hired an additional 227,000 workers in February, on top of a similar number in January, while the official unemployment rate remained unchanged at 8.3 percent.

But there was no relief for the last hired, first fired. The official joblessness rate for Blacks rose to 14.1 percent, almost twice that for Caucasians. The rate for Hispanics was 10.7 percent. For all workers under the age of 20, it's nearly 24 percent.

Hourly wages for high school graduates able to get work have declined

Continued on page 9

All out for final days in effort to win long-term 'Militant' readers!



Militant/John Naubert

Edwin Fruit, left, showing *Militant* to Longshore worker at Seattle union hiring hall March 5.

BY LEA SHERMAN

All out for the final days of the 2012 *Militant* renewal campaign! With just five days left to go, supporters of the working-class press are mobilizing to meet the international goal of winning 500 renewals and long-term readers. So far we have signed up 448 renewals and long-term subscribers, 90 percent of the goal.

"Keep up the good work for labor," wrote Gary Dworak, secretary treasurer of the International Association of Machinists Local 516, in a note to the *Militant* along with \$35 to renew

Continued on page 3

Also Inside:

- | | |
|---|---|
| Shoe workers in Myanmar win pay raise, union | 2 |
| Rally protests Massachusetts gov't attack on immigrants | 4 |
| Panel connects fights for safety, unions, immigrants | 5 |
| 'Workers must fight as class to defend their interests' | 8 |

Shoe workers in Myanmar win pay raise, union rights

Make use of increased political space to organize

BY NAOMI CRAINE

Some 1,800 workers at the Tai Yi shoe factory in Rangoon, Myanmar, went on strike for three weeks in February. They won a pay increase and announced the formation of a union. The strike is an indication of how workers in that Southeast Asian country are pressing to broaden the space they have to organize and fight for their interests.

Both Washington and London are taking steps toward opening the doors to U.S. and British investment in Myanmar, also known as Burma. They seek to exploit labor and natural resources and counter the influence of China there after years of imposing economic sanctions against the Burmese regime.

The workers at Tai Yi began their strike Feb. 6 when the Chinese-owned company refused to pay them for a five-day holiday. They demanded a doubling of hourly pay to 150 kyat (about 20 cents) and an increase in monthly bonuses from 6,000 to 8,000 kyat (\$10).

“For the Chinese New Year holidays, they deducted 7,000 to 10,000 kyat from our wages,” striker Khaing Khaing New, 26, told *The Irrawaddy* newspaper. “Every month they manage to deduct something from our wages” for alleged mistakes or for missing work, she said.

Most of the workers are young women from rural areas, many of whom send money home to their families. Some went back to work Feb. 16, after the company offered a small pay raise and threatened to fire strikers. A majority stayed out until Feb. 28, when a township arbitration court said it would rule

on their demands. Two days later the court decided that the company should pay a minimum hourly wage of 120 kyat and a monthly bonus of 7,000 kyat.

There have been previous strikes at this factory and others nearby, but this was the longest in years. Workers announced March 4 that they have formed the Tai Yi Footwear Workers Union. They will be testing a law passed last October that legalizes trade unions, which had been effectively banned for 50 years.

Myanmar has been under military rule since 1962. The government says it is moving to a civilian government. It organized parliamentary elections in 2010—with a quarter of the seats appointed by the military—and released bourgeois opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi from house arrest. Retired military officer Thein Sein became president in March 2011, in an attempt to give the regime a “civilian” face. Gen. Than Shwe, however, who ruled for the previous 20 years, retains the power to override laws by decree.

In recent years the government has expanded “special economic zones” to attract more industry, especially from the bordering countries of China, Thailand and India. “With a minimum wage much lower than in Thailand, Burma is an attractive location” for capitalist investment, particularly in food processing and garment manufacturing, the Thai newspaper *The Nation* noted recently.

The country has substantial oil, gas and mineral resources. A gas pipeline to



The Irrawaddy

Workers on strike against Tai Yi Slipper Company Feb. 15 in Rangoon, Myanmar.

China is currently under construction.

Both U.S. and European Union officials have said they may ease economic sanctions on Myanmar after April 1 elections for some of the parliamentary seats.

Major capitalists in the United Kingdom, including the construction equipment company J.C. Bamford and

the Royal Dutch Shell oil company, have expressed interest in getting into Myanmar. UK Foreign Secretary William Hague and Development Secretary Andrew Mitchell visited the country in recent months. Last December Hillary Clinton made the first visit to Myanmar by a U.S. secretary of state since 1955.

Use bosses’ bribes to build communist movement

Since the beginning of December workers have contributed more than \$15,000 in “blood money” to the Socialist Workers Party Capital Fund. Blood money is a term communist workers use to refer to bribes from bosses or their government, such as so-called bonuses, gifts and back-wage settlements.

These bribes aim to tie workers to the company and blunt any perspective of struggle to end the wages system. They press us to accept speedup, wage cuts, concession contracts and safety hazards. Communists and other class-conscious workers donate these bribes to the Capital Fund to finance long-range work of the party.

Clay Dennison, a foundry worker in Seattle, sent in a \$583 production bonus, “transforming the bribe into its opposite,” his accompanying note says. “My coworkers talk about using bonuses for ‘luxuries’ like new tires or repairs that don’t come easily out of the weekly paycheck. I explain that this is blood money and far from a freebie. We get into discussions about what they are bribing us to do—and not do,” such as organizing a union. Dennison reports the company recently laid off some workers, cut hours for others and is working to speed up the movement of work through the plant.

Katy LeRougetel works in a unionized coffee factory in Montreal, which introduced new shifts a few years ago to extend the workweek. “They offered an ‘inducement’ to convince workers to accept this: a \$100 gift certificate each Christmas until the contract is renegotiated,” she writes. “Ridiculous, but true.”

Tony Lane in Minneapolis contributed his “service bonus” of \$159. “It’s blood money from the temp agency I worked for last year, 1 percent of my gross based on the fact that I worked over 1,500 hours for them,” he writes. “Their letter thanked me for my efforts. The agency ended my assignment in December and wouldn’t pursue other employment for me.”

To contribute “blood money” to the Socialist Workers Party Capital Fund, contact *Militant* distributors listed on page 8.

—EMMA JOHNSON

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THE MILITANT

Legalize workers without papers!

The fight of immigrant workers against firings and deportations strengthens the entire working class and is a life or death question for the labor movement.

The ‘Militant’ champions the fight to legalize immigrants.



Militant/Fredy Huinil

Feb. 14 rally in Montgomery, Ala., against anti-immigrant law HB 56.

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Meeting in New York

Continued from front page recently met the communist movement, have been involved in working-class resistance to the employers' onslaught.

The featured speakers were Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party; Mary Martin, chairperson of the SWP branch in Seattle; and Mary-Alice Waters, member of the party's National Committee.

The speakers addressed how the propertied rulers are responding to the unfolding world capitalist crisis and the resistance by an expanding vanguard of workers. This resistance, they noted, provides new opportunities for communist workers to work with fellow fighters toward an understanding that the capitalist class has no solution but to brutally intensify the rate of exploitation of our class—and that they need to be part of a workers party that charts a road toward a revolutionary struggle for power.

Waters had just returned from the Havana International Book Fair, where she was part of a panel that launched the book *Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution* by Vilma Espín, Asela de los Santos, and Yolanda Ferrer. Waters is the editor of the book, published by Pathfinder Press.

Speaking at the book presentation, de los Santos, a combatant in eastern Cuba in the revolutionary war that brought down the Batista dictatorship in 1959 and led to a socialist revolution in Cuba, highlighted a quote from the book that described “the interaction between the Rebel Army combatants and the exploited, landless peasants and agricultural workers of the region. We see the ways in which they transform each other and together become a stronger, more conscious revolutionary force.”

“This is the heart of the book,” Waters

said, “and of all Pathfinder books about the Cuban Revolution. It is the heart of Marxism—how real human beings are transformed and fight their way to become communists.”

She said the Cuban Revolution shows there is no separate road to emancipation for women from that of the working class. “That is because women’s oppression is rooted in class relations, in private property,” which must be overturned by working people.

Fight to free 5 Cuban revolutionists

Waters and Barnes both spoke about the fight to free Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González, and René González, Cuban revolutionists framed up by the U.S. government.

To advance the defense of these five militants, Waters said, “we start with explaining the Cuban Revolution and why it must be defended,” and the caliber of the five as revolutionary fighters.

Both noted that in the 1990s the five came to the U.S. to gather intelligence for the Cuban government on paramilitary counterrevolutionary groups like Brothers to the Rescue. That outfit, by repeatedly flying planes piloted by U.S. citizens into Cuban airspace, sought to provoke a military confrontation between Washington and Havana. The Cuban government prevented that outcome, defended its sovereignty, and put an end to the provocations with the shutdown of two Brothers to the Rescue planes in 1996. Washington retaliated by framing up and imprisoning the five revolutionaries.

As with other such political battles, Waters said, the defense of our five comrades is part of the class struggle in the United States. She pointed to the earlier battle to free five Puerto Rican Nationalist Party members jailed by Washington in 1954. That worldwide campaign became part of the rising class struggle in the 1960s and 1970s, and, in 1978-79, as revolutionary struggles swept Iran, Grenada, and Nicaragua, President James Carter “saw the light” and freed the five Nationalists.

Mary Martin described the participation by members of the Socialist Workers Party in the battle of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union in Longview, Wash., to defeat union-busting moves by EGT Development.

Martin announced the launching of her campaign as the Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of Washington and asked other SWP candidates to stand up. These election campaigns will be used to deepen the party’s participation in such struggles and get a wider hearing for a revolutionary working-class perspective. (See list of candi-



Militant photos by Arthur Hughes (above), Carole Lesnick (inset) Meeting in New York City organized by Socialist Workers Party discussed central issues facing working people and opportunities to build communist movement today. Inset, displays at March 10 New York meeting highlighted many political themes of the talks.

dates on this page.)

Barnes explained that for the next few years working people can count on a continuation of the bosses’ attacks and working class resistance—and most importantly, of the responsiveness among many workers to the *Militant* and to serious consideration of a revolutionary working-class political outlook.

Historic crisis of capitalism

The world, he noted, has entered the beginning of a historic crisis of the capitalist system—one that no one politically active today has ever seen. The propertied rulers are reacting to this crisis the only way they can: by relentlessly attacking the working class.

Barnes pointed out that the impoverishment of broader layers of working people today, a large permanent layer of unemployed workers and the disproportionately large pauperization and imprisonment of African-American workers, are all tendencies inherent in the lawful workings of capitalism.

Driving down the basic living standards of our class won in combat over decades—what Marx called the “historical and moral elements” of the value of labor power—is the only way for the capitalists to restore their competitive-

ness on world markets and reverse their declining rate of profit, Barnes said.

At the end of the meeting, a special collection to advance the party’s political work raised more than \$26,000. After the program, most participants stayed for dinner, more discussion, and a party.

The next morning, a number of workers and students who are new to working with the Socialist Workers Party participated in a meeting to discuss politics further.

“I got leaps and bounds of information to go back on, to talk about and read, to learn from the history of workers,” Anthony Hall, a young warehouse worker from Washington, D.C., told the *Militant*. “It was really interesting to meet others fighting back and from the Socialist Workers Party all over the country.”

“We need a change in the system,” said Rafael Emilio Soto, a janitorial worker and member of the Service Employees International Union in Boston and a *Militant* reader. “This is a dangerous system that threatens everyone. The rich live off the people, that’s how they accumulate their wealth. We need to stand up and change the system.”

Socialist Workers Party 2012 Candidates

ILLINOIS

John Hawkins, U.S. Congress, 1st C.D.
Laura Anderson, U.S. Congress, 3rd C.D.
Dennis Richter, U.S. Congress, 7th C.D.
Alyson Kennedy, Cook County State’s Attorney

IOWA

David Rosenfeld, U.S. Congress, 3rd C.D.
Margaret Trowe, Iowa State Senate, District 18

WASHINGTON STATE

Mary Martin, Governor

'Militant' Renewal Drive			
Feb. 11 - March 18			
Country	Quota	Sold	%
UNITED STATES			
Miami	20	21	105%
San Francisco*	40	42	105%
Philadelphia	20	19	95%
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Los Angeles	30	27	90%
Twin Cities*	45	40	89%
Chicago*	40	34	85%
Houston*	20	17	85%
New York	55	46	84%
Lincoln	6	5	83%
Atlanta	35	29	83%
Boston	15	10	67%
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Washington, D.C.	15	7	47%
Total U.S.	416	355	85%
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London*	25	25	100%
Manchester	10	4	40%
UK Total	35	29	83%
NEW ZEALAND*	25	24	96%
CANADA*	27	25	93%
AUSTRALIA	15	15	100%
Total	518	448	90%
Should be (Mar 13)	500	430	86%
* Raised goal			

Final days in 'Militant' renewal campaign

Continued from front page his subscription for one year.

“I really like the *Militant*,” Dworak, who works at Manitowoc Co.’s ice-making machine factory in Manitowoc, Wis., told the *Militant* by phone. “I take it to work and pass it around. I’m hoping others will want to subscribe.”

Following a one-month strike, members of Local 516 at Manitowoc’s nearby crane manufacturing plant voted Jan. 19 to accept a contract. The agreement included some “open-shop” stipulations, although workers forced the company to modify the bosses’ initial demands and

strengthened their union through a hard-fought battle.

The union contract at Manitowoc Ice expires April 1. “The company has proposed a one-year extension with no pay raises,” said Dworak.

In the Bay Area four workers at American Licorice Co. renewed their subscriptions at plant gate sales. “One worker who was a leader of picketing and subscribed during the strike had her \$10 ready for a 12-week renewal when she drove out,” Joel Britton told the *Militant*. “Another worker renewed and got *The Cuban Five* booklet. A week

later, two more workers renewed their subscriptions, three signed up for introductory subs, and six got single copies.” Workers went on strike for five weeks last December against the company’s attack on their health plan.

“The *Militant* reports the reality for workers and acts as their voice,” said Abdul Daw, a student in London who renewed his subscription for three months.

The final result will be printed in the next issue. All renewals and long-term subs will be counted until the end of Tuesday, March 20.

Rally protests Massachusetts gov't attack on immigrants

BY LAURA GARZA

BOSTON—"No one is illegal! Illegal is this bill!" chanted some 100 people on the steps of the Massachusetts Statehouse here Feb. 28. They were protesting a proposed law that targets the rights of undocumented workers.

Senate Bill 2061 would substantially increase fines and add possible jail sentences for driving without a license, deny in-state tuition and vehicle registrations to anyone who cannot prove legal residence, and require companies with public contracts to check workers' immigration status. It would expand the use of the federal Secure Communities program in Massachusetts, under which immigration police check the fingerprints of anyone arrested by local cops.

The bill, entitled "An Act to Enhance Community Safety," was initiated by legislators from the Milford area under the pretext of responding to the death of a motorcyclist who was fatally struck by an allegedly drunk driver who was undocumented.

"It is wrong to use these tragic incidents to scapegoat all of us, as if we are criminals who do not belong here," Natalia Tracy, executive director of the Brazilian Immigrant Center, told demonstrators. "We belong here as much as anyone else who has family here, who has friends, who pays taxes, who works."

Daniela Bravo, 24, an activist in the Student Immigration Movement, also addressed the rally. "I want to go to col-

lege," said Bravo, who was born in Chile but grew up in the U.S. "This is where I belong and I want to fight against these laws."

Following the rally most of the participants went to a Judiciary Committee hearing in the Statehouse that heard public comment on this bill and other pending legislation. Many could not get into the packed meeting room.

Most of those recognized to speak supported the anti-immigrant legislation, including relatives of two individuals who died in traffic accidents with alleged undocumented drivers, as well as the Milford police chief.

Several opponents of the bill also spoke. Most said the proposed law will lead police to increase racial profiling and will discourage immigrants from reporting crimes.

"All working people should oppose this bill," William Leonard from the Socialist Workers Party said at the hear-



Militant/Ted Leonard

Rally outside Massachusetts Statehouse in Boston Feb. 28 against proposed law targeting rights of undocumented workers. Bill "scapegoats us, as if we are criminals," said Natalia Tracy.

ing. "In today's world we face high unemployment, foreclosures, and speedup and worsening safety conditions on the job. In the face of these attacks we need solidarity and unity in struggle. This

bill offers scapegoating that benefits the capitalist class. Our problem is not fellow workers—we need them to fight together. Our problem is the bosses and the capitalist system."

Volunteers expand places that carry Pathfinder books

BY NICK CASTLE

This spring, volunteers in 17 cities in the U.S. and Canada have projected winning 110 orders for books on working-class revolutionary politics from bookstores and libraries. This is the highest goal ever taken by dozens of volunteers who visit and talk with store owners, buyers and librarians about stocking books by Pathfinder Press. The spring

campaign follows a successful fall drive that netted 85 orders with a record 41 of those sales at bookstores.

The 12-week effort runs from Feb. 1 to June 18. Among the titles volunteers will be promoting is *Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution* by Vilma Espín, Asela de los Santos and Yolanda Ferrer. Just released in both Spanish and English, the book

is a firsthand account by women who were part of making the Cuban Revolution and, as editor Mary-Alice Waters states in her introduction, "how their actions transformed them as they fought to transform their world."

March is Women's History Month, an opportunity to expand the placement of this and other titles that provide a working-class point of view on the question of women's liberation.

"It may be -30 degrees here in Calgary, but Pathfinder books are hot!" writes Steve Penner from Vancouver, British Columbia. While Penner was visiting Calgary to ensure the printing and shipping of *The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution* went smoothly, he met with two university librarians as well as two independent bookstores and a campus bookstore. "The new book very much helped to whet their interest in the rest of the books I had with me," he said.

In Los Angeles, a mass emailing throughout Southern California and Arizona that included a promotional leaflet netted nine orders. "I'm passing on an order for *Women in Cuba* to our acquisitions department today," wrote one librarian at a major university. "I also forwarded a copy of the Women's History flyer to the librarian who orders Ethnic and Women's Studies books for her to look over."

NZ workers stand up to union busting at port

Continued from front page

to go!" demonstrators were joined by representatives of the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions and delegations from the International Longshore and Warehouse Union in the United States and the Maritime Union of Australia.

Ports of Auckland, which is owned by the city council, is campaigning to win support for its union-busting moves. Because of the "global financial crisis," shipping companies are "increasing use of vessel sharing arrangements" meaning "larger ships, less often," the company says on its website.

"On a busy day we may need a full complement of staff, but fewer than 15 people when no ships are in port," Richard Pearson, chairman of Ports of Auckland, said in a statement. He complained that the port workers' wages "are some of the best in the country."

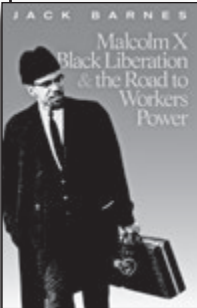
Since the union would not agree to the bosses' demands, the port decided March 7 to "introduce competitive stevedoring," he said.

"We're hopeful that some of the existing workers will join in the new businesses," Mike Huddlestone of AWF Group, one of the contractors, told the

press.

Among the demonstrators March 3 were busloads of workers from meat-packing plants at Rangiora and Horotiu, where the AFFCO company has locked out hundreds of workers in a contract dispute. Melissa Wharakura, a worker in the offal room at Horotiu, told the *Militant* that she "came because we have companies getting rid of our unions."

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by Jack Barnes ~~\$3~~ \$2 with subscription

Contact distributors on page 8
Militant subscription rates on page 2



Pathfinder Press

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

IOWA

Des Moines

The Keystone XL Pipeline in Nebraska: What Are the Stakes for Workers, Farmers? Speaker: Helen Meyers, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., March 23, 7:30 p.m. 3707 Douglas Ave. Tel.: (515) 255-1707.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Oppose Rulers' Assault on Rights of Working People. Speaker: Dan Fein, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., March 16, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 307 W. 36th St. 10th floor (use north elevators). Tel.: (212) 629-6649.

Alma, Quebec
Demonstrate in support of locked-out workers at Rio Tinto Alcan
Sat., March 31, 1:30 p.m.
March leaves Galeries Lac St-Jean shopping center (1055 ave du Pont sud). Rally at Parc du FestiAlma
For info on buses leaving Montreal: (514) 387-3666

ON THE PICKET LINE

Workers fight meat company's selective lockout in New Zealand

HOROTIU, New Zealand—A union contract battle between workers and the AFFCO New Zealand Ltd. meat processing company has heated up after the company selectively locked out more than 700 workers at five plants Feb. 29.

Attacking the New Zealand Meat Workers Union while continuing production, the company locked out some union workers at each plant, but not others. Over the last several months the company has also convinced some workers to opt out of the union and sign individual employment agreements.

On March 2, some 1,700 AFFCO workers held a one-day strike to protest the lockout. The company retaliated by locking out more than 200 union members at a sixth plant. The union has organized other short strikes in response.

"They want us to work harder and longer for less money," said Charlie Scott, a worker and union shop steward at the Horotiu beef processing plant, as he and 200 other workers picketed here March 2. "The company wants a blank check to do what they want."

Roughly 1,000 workers are now locked out at the six plants. At the same time some 800 union members are

still working alongside workers who "jumped ship," opting out of the union contract, as well as with new hires. Pickets said the company was using the slow season to advance divide-and-rule tactics, but were confident they could win over many new hires who had signed the individual agreements under pressure.

The contract dispute has gone on for 18 months. AFFCO is New Zealand's fourth-largest meat company. Horotiu union president Don Arnold told the *Militant* AFFCO is demanding "flexibility" over chain speed and staffing levels, previously set in the contract. "They say they will consult with the union," he said, "but they want the final say."

The company has also targeted seniority lists, which ensure that meat workers, who face annual seasonal layoffs, do not suffer discrimination in re-hiring. The company tried to eliminate the lists in 2011, Arnold said, but lost a court case filed by the union.

AFFCO's director of operations, Rowan Ogg, told the *Daily Post* March 7 that the "dispute is not about pay, it's about management having the right to manage the plants."

AFFCO has not responded to requests by the *Militant* for comment.

—Patrick Brown



Militant/Patrick Brown

Meat processing workers protest at AFFCO beef plant in Horotiu, New Zealand, during one-day strike March 2 in response to company's selective lockout at a half-dozen plants.

Packaging workers in UK protest lockout, seek solidarity

LIVERPOOL, England—"People are coming together through this," said Deb Collinson, referring to the third week of protests over the lockout of 150 workers at Mayr-Melnhof Packaging here.

Workers organized by the Unite union were locked out Feb. 18 after they organized a series of short strikes protesting the way the company plans to lay off 49

workers and the amount of redundancy (severance) payments.

"They're manipulating the selection procedure," Collinson told the *Militant*, saying that the company was targeting the union. Workers say layoffs should begin with workers who volunteer.

The lead Unite union shop steward, Phil Potter, is one of those the company is laying off. He was part of a recent union delegation to Germany, where Mayr-Melnhof has other plants. "We were well received," Potter told the *Militant*. "We spoke at the conference of the German trade union Ver.di, and gave out leaflets at the Mayr-Melnhof factory."

"The company at first told workers in other MMP plants that the Liverpool workers were damaging the plant and claimed it was closed for 'health and safety reasons,'" Potter said. "Now they're saying we are on paid holiday."

Although the workers are now being paid, "It's still a lockout," he said. Workers are picketing 24 hours a day. "We're concerned the company will move packaging and equipment," said Potter. "We just want the gates reopened, us back in work and a negotiated settlement."

Mayr-Melnhof did not return calls from the *Militant* requesting comment.

Messages of support can be sent to phil.morgan@unitetheunion.org, and contributions to Unite, Attention: Phil Morgan, 2 Chantry Court, Forge Street, Crewe, CW1 2DL, England.

—Pete Clifford

Panel connects fight for safety, union, immigrants

BY NORTON SANDLER

LOS ANGELES—Three workers involved in interrelated struggles of job safety, union organizing and immigrants' rights spoke March 3 at the Militant Labor Forum here.

Jason Madera, a member of International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 13, talked about the death of fellow ILWU member Steve Saggiani, who was killed Jan. 19 while working on a ship's deck at the Long Beach port. "The crane operator tried to communicate [with Saggiani] but the equipment didn't work," he said. "We deal with overcrowding in the yards, speed-ups, productivity pushes from supervisors. The pressure from on top creates situations for disasters to happen."

Also speaking were Christian Torres, 25, a cook and one of 17 cafeteria workers fired by Pomona College after they began to organize a union, and Remberto Martínez, a port truck driver active in the fight to organize the Teamsters union at the Toll Group shipping company in San Pedro. The program was chaired by Arlene Rubinstein, from the Los Angeles branch of the Socialist Workers Party.

Torres and the other workers were fired in December 2011 after Pomona College conducted its own "audit" of workers' immigration status. The workers had been trying for two years to organize a union in response to speedup and increasingly dangerous conditions.

"As an immigrant worker I am not going to stand and take this quietly," said Torres.

After the firings the workers began reaching out for support. They have had rallies attracting students, faculty, trade unions and religious groups. Torres urged participants to join a March 30 "Banquet in the Streets" in Pomona.

Martínez has been driving a truck for 25 years, three years for Toll Group. "For any little thing that might happen to the truck, a scratch, anything, we would get sent to the doctor to be drug tested," he said. "But when I fell from a

truck on my back, the company safety boss scolded and insulted me. I had to get myself to the doctor."

"We started to talk about organizing ourselves into a union," said Martínez. "I was scared. We all have families. But I decided to fight. That's why I am here to speak to you about the capitalist bosses. They say they give us benefits. But we are the ones who create them."

The first speaker in the discussion was David Herrera, a leader of the fight by some 200 workers fired in recent months at Pacific Steel Casting Co. in Berkeley, California. The workers were fired following a government-ordered audit of their I-9 immigration forms, often referred to as a silent raid. On Feb. 17, more than 400 workers and their supporters held a protest march. Last year the workers went on strike and pushed back the company's effort to cut their

health care and other benefits.

"We are here to meet and support other workers in struggle," said Herrera.

Other participants included a packinghouse worker, a worker from a local car wash, and a warehouse worker.

"Everyone here is no stranger to what we working people face," said chairperson Rubinstein, a production worker in a United Auto Workers-organized factory. "The bosses are trying to shore up their profits by exploiting us more. They call it increasing productivity, which means making us work harder for less."

"Spreading impoverishment, widespread unemployment, broken trade unions, large-scale imprisonment of working people, especially African-Americans—this is what is in store for us. A revolutionary, political solution is at the heart of what is needed. That road lies ahead, and it is up to us to make."

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



March 27, 1987

SIoux CITY, Iowa—A thousand meat-packers marched through downtown Sioux City March 17 chanting "we want a contract." The meat-packers were mostly members of United Food and Commercial Workers union Local 222 from the Iowa Beef Processors plant in Dakota City, Nebraska.

Members of Local 222 held a meeting March 15. In a stand-up vote that was almost unanimous, they decided to strike. The meat-packers had been locked out since mid-December after they rejected a concession contract.

IBP announced before the latest vote that it planned to end the lockout and force the opening of the plant March 16.

Wages have been frozen here since 1983. The company's latest contract demands included pay and benefit cuts for both slaughter and production workers.



March 26, 1962

The Kennedy administration's persecution of the Communist Party was given an added dimension with the six-month prison sentence meted out to James E. Jackson, editor of the *Worker*.

Jackson was framed up on a contempt-of-court charge after he very properly refused to answer loaded questions put to him before a Washington grand jury.

He was asked such a ridiculous question as whether or not the *Worker* reflected the viewpoint of the Communist Party, something the paper has never in any way sought to conceal.

In a further vindictive move against the Communist Party, Attorney General Robert Kennedy has renewed efforts to compel it to pay huge income taxes on the sinister grounds that it is not a political party, but an "agency of a foreign power."



March 27, 1937

Every edition of the press carries smoking articles against the "lawlessness and violence" of sitdown strikes (without once mentioning that in every instance violence has been initiated by police, deputy sheriffs, and thugs.)

Because the sitdown strike has proved highly effective against employers who have spent untold sums for efficient methods of fighting conventional methods of striking, the sitdown has been suddenly discovered to be a menace to liberty, to the constitution, to law, and to the entire future of the labor movement! The furious polemics launched against the sitdown strike completely overlook its disadvantage to the employers!

Effective strike tactics can no more be eliminated by decree than can the approaching destruction of the entire capitalist system.

Caribbean’s shared legacy of slavery, resistance

Pathfinder book presentation in Havana discusses lessons: from Grenada Revolution

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN
AND BETSY FARLEY

HAVANA—The countries and peoples of the Caribbean, including the U.S. Gulf Coast region, are bound by a shared history of “slavery, its legacy, the dashed expectations of the emancipated slaves”—and the resulting struggles, said Graciela Chailloux. She was speaking at a Feb. 15 presentation during this year’s Havana International Book Fair of four Pathfinder Press titles related to the history of the Caribbean. Chailloux teaches at the University of Havana’s Fernando Ortiz Advanced Studies Program.

The featured books were *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by Jack Barnes; a new Spanish-language edition of *The Second Assassination of Maurice Bishop* by Steve Clark, published in English as an article in issue 6 of the Marxist magazine *New International*; *La revolución granadina, 1979-83* (The Grenada Revolution, 1979-83), with speeches by Maurice Bishop and Fidel Castro; and *Puerto Rico: Independence Is a Necessity* by Rafael Cancel Miranda.

Forty people attended the lively event, one of dozens connected to the theme of this year’s book fair: “The cultures of the peoples of the Greater Caribbean.” Among the youthful audience were half a dozen students from Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Ore., and from Princeton, N.J., who are currently studying in Cuba. Like many others in the audience, they attended the presentation after stopping at the Pathfinder stand at the fair and learning something about the class struggle in the Americas of which they had known little before.

Grenada Revolution

Joining Chailloux on the panel were Jorge Luna, the Caribbean correspondent for Prensa Latina at the time of the Grenada Revolution and author of *Granada: La nueva joya del Caribe* (Grenada: New jewel of the Caribbean), and Martín Koppel of Pathfinder Press. The panel was chaired by Jonathan Silberman, director of Pathfinder Books in London.

Luna described the popular revolution that opened in Grenada in March 1979 with the overthrow of the Eric Gairy dictatorship and the establishment of a workers and farmers government whose central leader was Maurice Bishop. Grenada, a former British colony, is a Caribbean island nation north of Trinidad and Tobago.

The Grenada Revolution, “little known today,” Luna said, was “very deep-going.” He pointed to the “nearly weekly, sometimes daily” mobilizations of thousands of people—in a country of 110,000 inhabitants—and the establishment of popular militias, as workers and farmers pressed their interests against the local capitalist magnates and their imperialist backers. “There was a new spirit of dignity among the Grenadian people,” he said.

The revolution had an international impact well beyond the country’s size, Luna said, the more so in the United States and the United Kingdom as Grenada is an English-speaking country with an overwhelmingly Black population. He paraphrased Cuban leader Fidel Castro’s remark that—together with Cuba and Nicaragua where a popular insurrection triumphed in July 1979—Grenada was one of “three giants” in the Caribbean rising “on the very doorstep of imperialism.” Revolutionary Cuba lent its internationalist solidarity, sending dozens of volunteers to serve in Grenada as teachers, doctors, and construction workers helping to build a new international airport.

The Grenada Revolution was overthrown when Maurice Bishop and other central leaders of the New Jewel Movement were murdered in a counterrevolutionary coup led by another of the NJM leaders, Bernard Coard. Coard’s faction, which looked to Moscow, handed Washington the opportunity to invade “on a silver platter,” Luna said. When 5,000 U.S. troops landed on Grenadian soil in October 1983, Fidel Castro said they had “invaded a corpse,” he noted.

“I had the good fortune to get to know Bishop well,” Luna said. Encouraging the audience to read *The Second*



Feb. 15 presentation of four Pathfinder titles related to “Greater Caribbean” theme of Havana book fair. From left: Jorge Luna, moderator Jonathan Silberman, Graciela Chailloux, and Martín Koppel. Chailloux (speaking) focused on *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, which she said helps to understand “the continuity of struggle” by Blacks in the U.S. going back to the Civil War and Radical Reconstruction.

Assassination of Maurice Bishop, he explained how, after the overthrow of the revolution, Coard’s supporters in the Caribbean and elsewhere had organized a self-serving campaign of lies and slanders against Bishop—his “second assassination.”

In her remarks, Chailloux said she appreciated the explanation in *The Second Assassination of Maurice Bishop* that “the betrayal that occurred among Grenadian revolutionaries was not unique.” There are “similarities with what happened in Cuba in 1962 and 1968 with the microfaction, a grouping within the leadership of the revolution that tried to make it follow a different road [that] could have aborted it.”*

Record of class struggle in U.S.

Chailloux focused her remarks on *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, which she encouraged everyone to read. She said the book helps readers understand “the connection that exists between the social processes in the world.” She pointed to what she had learned about the “continuity of struggle” by Blacks in the United States going back to the Civil War, Radical Reconstruction,

and resistance to Jim Crow segregation. She noted that the author explains the place of Malcolm X’s political trajectory within this history, and “what it takes to make a revolution.”

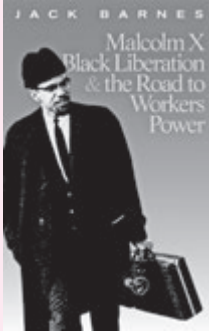
This question was taken up by Koppel, both at the Pathfinder presentation and at a Caribbean Forum, at which he was a panelist. “It took a revolutionary war and decade of Radical Reconstruction to eradicate slavery in the United States,” Koppel said. “But by 1877, popular governments in Louisiana and elsewhere, some majority Black, had been drowned in blood” by armed counterrevolutionary vigilantes unleashed by a rising industrial bourgeoisie that feared the nascent alliance of emancipated Blacks, free farmers and a developing proletariat.

Workers who are Black have played and will continue to play a vanguard



Book sales after the presentation were brisk.

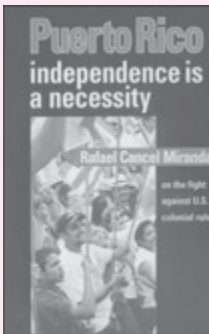
Recommended reading



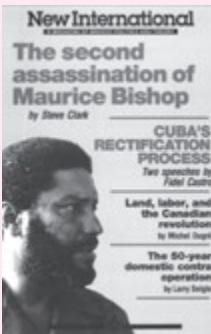
This book explains why the revolutionary conquest of power by the working class will make possible the final battle for Black freedom—and open the way to a world based not on exploitation, violence and racism, but human solidarity. \$20



Invaluable lessons from the triumph of the 1979 revolution in Grenada and the workers and farmers government it brought to power, in the words of its central leader, Maurice Bishop. \$25



Puerto Rican independence leader Rafael Cancel Miranda speaks out on the brutal reality of U.S. colonial domination, the campaign to free Puerto Rican political prisoners, the example of Cuba’s socialist revolution. \$6



Explains the roots of the 1983 coup that led to the murder of revolutionary leader Maurice Bishop, and to the destruction of the workers and farmers government by a Stalinist political faction within the governing New Jewel Movement. \$16

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e, revolution to U.S. class struggle

role in struggles by working people in the U.S., Koppel said. This 150-year-long record “is one of the things that give us confidence in the capacity of working people to make a socialist revolution in the United States.”

Speaking about *Puerto Rico: Independence Is a Necessity*, Koppel, who interviewed Rafael Cancel Miranda for the booklet, underscored the fact that the fight for Puerto Rican independence is central to a revolutionary working-class perspective in the United States. Cancel Miranda, who spent 27 years in U.S. prisons for his pro-independence actions, carried out political work from behind prison bars in much the same way as the five imprisoned Cuban revolutionaries are doing today.

Cancel Miranda’s identification with the Cuban Revolution is an expression of his proletarian internationalism, placing the independence struggle “as part of a world struggle,” Koppel concluded.

Following the presentations, spirited discussion continued informally. Participants snapped up 40 copies of the four books on offer, including 15 on Grenada and 18 copies of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* in Spanish, English or French. Hundreds of copies of this title have circulated in Cuba since the English-language edition was first made available here at the 2010 book fair. Again this year, it was one of the top-selling Pathfinder titles, with 34 purchased from the Pathfinder stand in hard currency.

Blacks in Cuba’s history of struggle

The book fair organizers tied commemorations of two events in Cuban history into the Greater Caribbean theme. One was a seminar on “200 years since the Aponte plot: black Cubans in the fight for emancipation.” It discussed the 1812 pro-independence and antislavery rebellion by enslaved Africans and free Blacks in Cuba led by José Antonio Aponte, a free mestizo carpenter who sought to link up with revolutionaries in the newly independent republic of Haiti. Spanish colonial authorities crushed the revolt

Also from Pathfinder



See p. 8 for distributors



Maurice Bishop, central leader of Grenada Revolution, in capital city of St. George’s in 1981. Given Grenada’s overwhelmingly Black, English-speaking population, said panelist Jorge Luna, the Cuban news agency’s reporter in the Caribbean at that time, the 1979-83 popular revolution had an international impact well beyond Grenada’s size, especially in the United States and United Kingdom.

and hanged Aponte.

The other commemoration was of the 100th anniversary of the 1912 armed protest by the Independent Party of Color, a political party founded by veterans of Cuba’s independence wars who were black and mestizo. The party opposed racist discrimination and championed broader social demands. The neocolonial government in Havana suppressed the 1912 protest, unleashing a massacre of more than 3,000 Cubans who were black.

The history of the Independent Party of Color and the massacre of its members remains little known in Cuba. “It has taken 100 years since the great slaughter [of 1912] to rescue it from oblivion,” commented historian Fernando Martínez Heredia at the commemoration. A film on the party by Cuban director Gloria Rolando was also part of the fair program, and several thousand copies of a special 32-page tabloid bulletin with articles on the 1912 revolt were distributed at the fair and at public newsstands around the country.

In addition, Cuban publishers printed 15 titles on these and other topics related to the role of men and women of African descent in the history of Cuba, the Americas, and beyond. Among them were *Por la identidad del negro cubano* (For the identity of black Cubans) and *Afrocubanas: Historia, pensamiento y prácticas* (Afro-Cuban women: History, thought, and practice), two collections of essays by several authors; and *Durban, diez años después: La batalla cubana por la plena equidad racial* (Durban: 10 years later: The Cuban battle for full racial equality), by Pedro de la Hoz. They also included new Spanish-language editions of *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* by Guyanese anti-imperialist fighter Walter Rodney and *Capitalism and Slavery* by Eric Williams of Trinidad, as well as a raft of fiction and poetry titles.

Panels included writers from across the English-, Spanish-, French-, and Dutch-speaking Caribbean, such as Norman Girvan from Jamaica and Chiqui Vicioso from the Dominican Republic. Well-known salsa musician and pro-independence figure Danny Rivera was among dozens from Puerto Rico who took part in fair events. Casa de las Américas, one of the leading cultural institutions in Cuba, or-

ganized a three-day Caribbean Forum in which many of these writers participated.

Addressing challenges today

An article in the Jan. 7-13 edition of *La Jiribilla*, an online publication promoted by the Ministry of Culture, noted that these events were intended to encourage a fresh look “at the contributions—in terms of ideas, willingness to struggle, and political action—by the black population of Cuba, subjected to conditions of exploitation and lacking equal rights” in prerevolutionary Cuba.

The article featured an interview with Zuleica Romay, president of the Cuban Book Institute. She noted that this broad effort, which began in 2011 with events organized around the International Year of Afro-Descendants, will continue throughout the coming year. Events include a conference in March to discuss the history of the Independent Party of Color, “a very relevant process in our history that until recently had been silenced,” Romay said.

In April the Nicolás Guillén Foundation in Havana is sponsoring a conference here entitled “I Came on a Slave Ship.” In addition to music and poetry, it will take up questions such as the Aponte rebellion, the Independent Party of Color, Martin Luther King and Malcolm X, and “the struggle against discrimination and exclusion in different societies and periods,” the conference call states.

These discussions indicate the growing recognition here of the need to address what is often referred to as the “racial question.” The legacy of dis-

crimination and prejudice against Cubans who are black, and its class roots, has from the early years of the Cuban Revolution’s triumph in 1959 been treated by many government and party functionaries as a taboo subject. Discussion was largely silenced with the argument that raising this issue was “divisive,” a threat to the unity needed by Cuba’s working people to stand up to imperialist threats to the revolution.

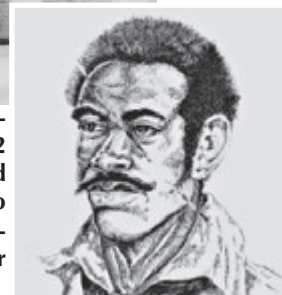
Cubans who are black and mestizo have from the start been one of the strongest bastions of active support for the revolution. Following the 1959 victory, workers and farmers in Cuba used their new state power to advance their class interests, uprooting capitalist economic and social relations. Among the very first acts of the revolutionary government was the outlawing of racial discrimination in employment, housing, education, and all public services and activities. “Your consistent commitment to the eradication of racism is unparalleled,” Nelson Mandela told the Cuban people at a mass rally in Cuba in 1991.

With the sharp economic and social crisis in Cuba that began in the 1990s with the collapse of the Soviet Union and Cuba’s increased exposure to the world capitalist market, class differentiation has increased and, along with it, social inequalities that disproportionately affect working people who are black. It is in the context of how to address this challenge that the silence has been broken.

The spotlight at the book fair on this history and on the ongoing fight to eradicate the vestiges of racism and prejudice was well received.



Havana book fair commemorated two events in Cuban history: 1812 pro-independence, antislavery revolt led by mestizo carpenter José Aponte, and 1912 armed protest by Independent Party of Color (PIC), which fought racism and championed broader social demands. Commemorations are part of efforts to promote knowledge of the role of Cubans who are black in history of struggles against exploitation and oppression. Above, leaders of PIC; party founder Evaristo Estenoz is in center (white jacket and mustache). Inset, José Aponte.



‘Workers must fight as a class to defend their interests’

Teamster Power, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for March, tells how Minneapolis Teamsters Local 574 used the power won through three strikes in 1934 to extend the union throughout the Upper Midwest, help the unemployed organize, and combat employer frame-ups and assassinations. The book is the second volume in a four-part series by Farrell Dobbs, the central organizer of an 11-state campaign to unionize over-the-road truckers. Dobbs later served as national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party from 1953 to 1972. Below is an excerpt from the chapter “Class-Struggle Policy.” Copyright ©1973 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY FARRELL DOBBS

Workers who have no radical background enter the trade unions steeped in misconceptions and prejudices that the capitalist rulers have inculcated into them since childhood. This was wholly true of Local 574 members. They began to learn class lessons only in the course of struggle against the employers.

Their strike experiences had taught them a good deal. Notions that workers have anything in common with bosses were undermined by harsh reality. Illusions about the police being “protectors of the people” began to be dispelled. Eyes were opened to the role of the



Teamsters Local 574 set example in mobilizing union power. Above, hosiery workers won 1935 strike for union recognition at Strutwear Knitting Co. in Minneapolis with help of Local 574.

capitalist government, as revealed in its methods of rule through deception and brutality. At the same time the workers were gaining confidence in their class power, having emerged victorious from their organized confrontation with the employers.

To intensify the learning process already so well started, the union leadership now initiated an educational program. Study courses open to all members were organized. The curriculum included economics, labor history and politics, public speaking, strike strategy, and union structure and tactics. Wherever practical, officers' reports at membership meetings were given with a view toward making them instructive as well as factually informative. Articles of an educational nature were printed in the union paper. The themes varied from analysis of local problems to coverage of events and discussion of issues in the national and international labor movement.

These endeavors stood in marked contrast to the policies of bureaucratic union officials. Bureaucrats don't look upon the labor movement as a fighting instrument dedicated solely to the workers' interests; they tend rather to view trade unions as a base upon which to build personal careers as “labor statesmen.”

Such ambitions cause them to seek collaborative relations with the ruling class. Toward that end the bureaucrats

argue that, employers being the providers of jobs, labor and capital have common interests. They contend that exploiters of labor must make “fair” profits if they are to pay “fair” wages. Workers are told that they must take a “responsible” attitude so as to make the bosses feel that unions are a necessary part of their businesses. On every count the ruling class is given a big edge over the union rank and file. . . .

Local 574's leadership flatly repudiated the bankrupt line of the class collaborationists. There can be no such thing as an equitable class peace, the membership was taught. The law of the jungle prevails under capitalism. If the workers don't fight as a class to defend their interests, the bosses will gouge them. . . .

Union bureaucrats are quick to include a no-strike pledge in contract settlements and refer grievances to arbitration. The workers lose because arbitration boards are rigged against them, the “impartial” board members invariably being “neutral” on the employers' side. Moreover, the bosses remain free to violate the working agreement at will, as grievances pile up behind the arbitration dam.

In a similar vein, conservative union officials are prone to make a general no-strike pledge when the capitalist government proclaims a “national emergency.” They do so by bureaucratic fiat, giving rank-and-file workers no voice in the decision. Such “labor statesman-

ship” amounts to proclaiming an overall “truce” between the workers and the bosses. Actually no truce results at all. The capitalists simply use their government to attack the trade union movement under the guise of a “national emergency”; and the workers, deprived in such a situation of their strike weapon, get it in the neck.

A development in the fall of 1934 involved this very issue. In the name of “national recovery,” President Franklin D. Roosevelt asked labor to forgo its right to strike. Concerning disputes with employers, he said, trade unions should accept decisions by government boards as final and binding. William Green, president of the AFL, was quick to second Roosevelt's proposal and call upon the labor movement to put it into practice. Local 574 gave both Roosevelt and Green its answer through an editorial in *The Organizer*:

“Labor cannot and will not give up the strike weapon. Labor has not in the past received any real benefits from the governmental boards and constituted authorities. What Labor has received in union recognition, wage raises and betterment in conditions of work, has been won *in spite of such boards*. . . . The strike is the one weapon that the employers respect. . . . Whether or not there is a period of industrial peace will depend upon the employers' reply to our demands.” (Emphasis in original.)

It did not follow from this position that Local 574 called strikes lightly. There are always hardships involved for the workers in such struggles. If the union moved blithely from one walk-out to the next, without careful regard of all factors in the situation, it could easily wear out its fighting forces. The important thing is that a union stand ready and able to take strike action when required. In fact there are occasions where readiness to use the strike weapon can make its employment unnecessary.

Retention of the unqualified right to strike and readiness to use the weapon were central to the local's enforcement of the 1934 settlement with the trucking firms. Employer attempts to impose arbitration of workers' grievances were brushed aside. There had to be full and immediate compliance with the settlement terms—or else.

March BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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US, Israel squeeze Iran

Continued from front page
its own in the past. In 1981 and 2007 unilateral Israeli bombing destroyed nuclear reactors in Iraq and Syria.

The Iranian government says its nuclear program is for much-needed energy production and medical research. Washington and its imperialist allies maintain that Tehran is trying to develop nuclear weapons capacity.

U.S. rulers need Israel

In the months leading to Netanyahu's recent visit, the White House pressed the Israeli government to drop its threat of airstrikes against Iran and let Washington's sanctions run their course.

Obama reiterated this position during Netanyahu's visit, while recognizing "Israel's sovereign right to make its own decisions about what is required to meet its security needs" in remarks he presented March 4 to the annual policy conference of the American Israel Public Action Committee.

This reflects how much the U.S. rulers value their longtime strategic alliance with Tel Aviv for maintaining the regional "stability" necessary for advancing their imperialist interests in the Middle East. The Israeli government's stance indicates that its actions in relation to Iran will not depend on Washington's wishes, that Washington needs Tel Aviv more than Tel Aviv needs Washington.

Netanyahu made no commitment not to attack Iran during his U.S. visit. But around that time Tel Aviv did ask Washington "for advanced 'bunker-buster' bombs and refueling planes that could improve its ability to attack Iran's underground nuclear sites," reported Reuters, citing an unnamed Israeli official.

At the same time, differences over when Washington should consider military options against Iran are growing within the U.S. ruling class, including within the Obama and Clinton wings of the Democratic Party.

Speaking before AIPAC March 6, Republican presidential candidates Mitt Romney, Rick Santorum, and Newt Gingrich each presented themselves as unafraid of the consequences of military conflict with Iran. Obama responded, "Those who are suggesting or propos-

ing or beating the drums of war should explain clearly to the American people what they think the costs and benefits would be."

The *New York Post* noted March 5 that Obama told AIPAC, "I have a policy to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon. I will not hesitate to use force when it is necessary."

"Note the word 'obtaining,'" the *Post* pointed out. "Secretary of State Hillary Clinton last week told Congress that US policy is 'to prevent Iran from having nuclear-weapons *capability*.' [Emphasis added.] But White House officials quickly said she had misspoke—and, tellingly, Obama didn't use the word 'capability' yesterday."

As this debate is going on, U.S. and European sanctions are increasingly biting Iran's economy and Tehran is more isolated than ever internationally.

Washington has rallied the support of the Arab League and Turkey against the murderous regime of Bashar al-Assad in Syria, Tehran's closest Mideast ally.

In a March 8 joint statement, what's known as the 5+1—United Nations Security Council permanent members Britain, China, France, Russia and the U.S., plus Germany—issued what the *New York Times* characterized as a 'blunt request' that the Iranian government "allow international inspectors unfettered access" to its nuclear facilities. This represents a shift for Beijing and Moscow, who for their own reasons have opposed Washington's aggression against Iran and defended Tehran's right to develop nuclear power.

The 5+1 have agreed to Tehran's request to resume negotiations on its nu-

Joblessness necessary product of capitalist crisis

Continued from front page
substantially over the past decade. For men aged 19 to 25, it's down 10 percent to \$11.68; for women it has dropped 9 percent to \$9.92, according to an Economic Policy Institute report.

The big owners of capital worldwide are reacting to the crisis of their system by driving down wages, assaulting unions, and speeding up production as

in response to three questions. "Do you believe in God?" "Do you pray to God?" and "Do you pray to God to forgive you for shooting that boy down?" Another ruling that year said police can, in the words of the *New York Times*, "vary the wording." Yet another says cops can pick up individuals who have invoked their right to remain silent for a second round of questioning two weeks after releasing them.

Most working people, particularly those who are Black, are convicted today as a result of plea bargains extracted through coercion by police and prosecutors—making Miranda rights largely irrelevant. "The jury trial has become a rare occurrence," noted an article in the January 30 issue of the *Nation* magazine. The article pointed out that prosecutors often threaten to push for life sentences for minor crimes unless a "deal" is struck prior to going to trial. Today, it reported, "more than 95 percent of felony convictions in metropolitan counties are the result of guilty pleas."

British Columbia students support teachers strike



Militant/Steve Penner

VANCOUVER, British Columbia—More than 500 students rallied here March 2 to support teachers fighting for a contract. It was one of dozens of rallies across the province by thousands of high school students.

The 41,000-member British Columbia Teachers' Federation organized a three-day work stoppage starting March 5 after voting 87 percent for a strike mandate. The teachers have been without a contract since July.

The British Columbia Federation of Labour and the teachers union held a March 6 rally Victoria to oppose a proposed bill that would prohibit strikes by teachers, make violations punishable with fines and impose a wage freeze.

—NED DMYTRYSHYN AND STEVE PENNER

clear program.

On March 5, Salah al-Bardawil, a leader of Hamas, said the Palestinian organization, which rules Gaza, would not fight against Tel Aviv if there is a war between Israel and Iran. Hamas has never given its "complete loyalty" to Tehran, he said, adding that their relationship "had been based on common

interests." Hamas used to be a staunch supporter of the Iranian government.

After Tehran threatened to cut off oil to European countries in retaliation for stiffer sanctions, the government of Saudi Arabia pledged to "pump more oil to compensate." This minimized the effect of the threatened move, which would only further damage Iran's economy.

Further inroads on 'Miranda'

Continued from front page
identification.

The court's most recent decision says the Miranda procedure does not apply to prisoners, using the crooked argument that inmates are "not in custody" even though they are behind bars. The case involved Randall Fields, held in a Michigan jail on disorderly conduct charges. Armed deputies moved him from his cell for seven hours of interrogation, coercing him to confess to a sex crime for which he was sentenced to 10 to 15 years in prison.

This revision to the law is but the latest attack on Miranda rights over the last couple years. In 2010 the FBI issued then secret "guidelines" instructing its agents to say nothing about Miranda during the initial interrogation of individuals labeled "terrorists," and maybe to "Mirandize" detainees later.

Also in 2010, the Supreme Court ruled that a Michigan man who remained silent despite three hours of harsh police interrogation should be convicted after the cops tricked him into answering yes

they compete to squeeze more profits out of the labor of working people. U.S. capitalists have made more progress in this offensive than their main rivals in Europe and elsewhere.

The conjunctural rise in hiring registers the competitive advantage the U.S. bosses have gained. While new orders generated by U.S. companies are rising, they have been dropping in many eurozone countries including Germany, Europe's strongest economy.

The Labor Department's U-6 alternative unemployment rate—which includes so-called discouraged workers and those forced to work part-time—stands at 14.9 percent.

The percentage of the population the government counts as part of the labor force ticked up to 63.9 percent in February, making it the second lowest in nearly 30 years.

When Barack Obama became president in 2009, the labor force participation rate was 65.7 percent. Its decline since then translates into 4.4 million people not working who are no longer counted in the unemployment figures.

Long-term joblessness remains at record heights. The average duration of unemployment is more than 40 weeks, double the previous record from the early 1980s, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The increased number of workers without jobs serves as a necessary reserve army of labor for the bosses. They use it to keep pressure on those employed and drive down the wages and social benefits of the entire working class.

Meanwhile, Congress cut the num-

ber of weeks that workers can collect federal jobless benefits. Currently the maximum is 99 weeks. By September, states with jobless rates below 6 percent will be reduced to 40 weeks of benefits, those around the national unemployment rate to 63 weeks, and those above 9 percent to 73 weeks. Initial cuts will begin in June.

Push to raise labor productivity

With the temporary increase in employment, the bosses' concerns are about workers' short-term rise in wages and slower growth in productivity rates. Hourly pay grew by a slight 1.9 percent last year, and "unit labor costs" rose at the fastest pace since late 2008. Workers still lost ground in real income, as inflation was a full percentage point higher than wage raises.

Overall labor productivity rose just 0.4 percent last year. In manufacturing, where 31,000 jobs were added in February, productivity increased 2.6 percent in 2011, compared to 6 percent the previous year. Bosses raise labor productivity—more goods produced with lower costs—by making us work harder, faster, under more unsafe job conditions, and with fewer workers.

"We're getting a fuller picture of the U.S. labor markets: more jobs, slower productivity and a bigger cost squeeze," stated a MarketWatch article, expressing concern over maintaining the bosses' momentum against the working class and their competitive edge in the world. Without more "progress" in driving down labor costs, they warn, the uptick may be short-lived.