

THE MILITANT

INSIDE
Socialists set weekly campaigning
in working-class neighborhoods
— PAGES 8-9

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 76/NO. 14 APRIL 9, 2012

Supreme Court affirms 'right' to be denied trial by jury

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

In a pair of decisions issued March 21, the U.S. Supreme Court in a 5-4 vote deepened the denial of jury trials for working people and legitimized plea bargaining as the decisive factor in who goes to prison and for how long.

The vast majority of workers behind bars today are put there through a process of plea bargaining in which prosecutors offer a "deal": plead guilty to lesser charges carrying lesser sentences than you would risk having imposed in a trial. The potential sentence if convicted by trial is often so harsh, and the difference between it and a plea bargain offer so great, that for working-class defendants the decision on how to plead is based solely on avoiding the risk. Innocent until proven guilty has no meaning.

The Supreme Court decisions, praised up and down by liberal commentators and politicians, promises defendants the "right" to competent counsel in plea negotiations, the "right" to be informed of plea bargain deals and the "opportunity" to accept them.

"Criminal justice today is for the most part a system of pleas, not a system of trials," wrote Justice Anthony Kennedy in the majority opinion. Plea bargaining "is not some adjunct to the criminal justice system; it is the criminal justice system."

Pointing to the fact that 97 percent

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Protests explode across country over lynching of Trayvon Martin

Demand arrest, prosecution of 'neighborhood watch' vigilante



Militant/Jacob Perasso

March 26 demonstration of some 8,000 in Atlanta against vigilante killing of Trayvon Martin in Sanford, Fla., and police refusal to arrest the shooter. The action was one of many across the United States that day, the one-month anniversary of the killing. Many more are planned.

BY TOM BAUMANN

SANFORD, Fla., March 26—Over the last week, protests have erupted in hundreds of cities and towns across the United States in response to the modern-day lynching and police cover-up that

**SOCIALIST CANDIDATES:
JOIN, BUILD PROTESTS!**

—See statement, p. 10

took place here one month ago today. Trayvon Martin, an unarmed 17-year-old Black youth, was shot and killed by

self-proclaimed "neighborhood watchman" George Zimmerman.

More than 2,000 people, students and workers, predominantly African-American, marched here today chanting "Arrest Zimmerman Now!" and "Shame on, Shame on, Sanford PD."

In neighboring Georgia some 8,000 rallied at the State Capitol in Atlanta.

"Racism here is not uncommon at all," said Shatee Hall, 39, a medical as-

sistant and Sanford resident who came to the rally here as part of a contingent of five dozen members of her union, SEIU 1199 East. "There have always been racist issues with the Sanford Police Department. They're not protecting and serving us."

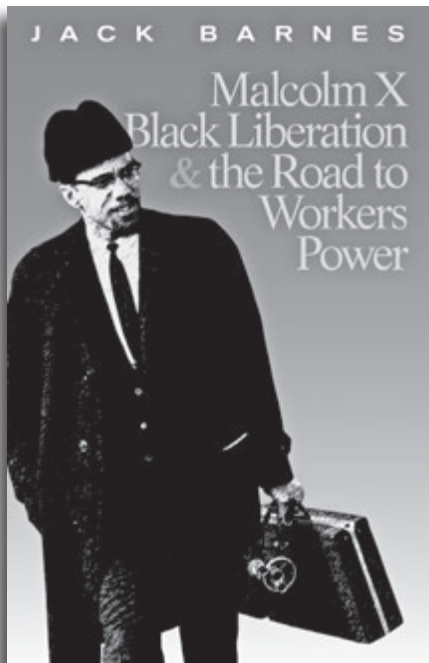
"The Florida I grew up in was racist as hell," said William Turnbull, 61, a carpenter. "I thought it was going to

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Special offer

Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power

by Jack Barnes



"Don't start with Blacks as an oppressed nationality. Start with the vanguard place and weight of workers who are Black in broad proletarian-led social and political struggles in the United States. From the Civil War to today, the record is mind-boggling. It's the strength and resilience, not the oppression, that bowls you over."

—Jack Barnes

Only \$10 with subscription to the *Militant* or \$15 without. Usually: \$20. Book can be ordered direct from pathfinderpress.com

See distributors on page 6

Wash. longshore workers fight frame-ups for defending union

BY MARY MARTIN

LONGVIEW, Wash.—Criminal frame-up charges against Longshore workers and their supporters are still grinding through the courts here in the wake of the ILWU's victory against EGT Development's union-busting campaign.

More than 200 union members and

supporters were arrested in the course of protests during the eight-month battle in which the cops, courts and government sided against the Longshore workers. Three still face trumped-up felony charges.

EGT had refused to hire members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union in violation of an agreement between the ILWU and the

Continued on page 4

Join effort to get 'Militant' into hands of workers

BY LOUIS MARTIN

The *Militant* is urging its readers to join in a campaign to sell the paper to the many workers and others who are outraged at the cold-blooded lynching of Trayvon Martin and looking for ways to do something about it. Among them we'll find those who are open to a working-class explanation of why this racist violence is part and

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1 worker killed, 2 injured at NY construction site 5

Defense of Cuban Revolution based on the people in arms 6

Ex-slave’s letter shows roots of fight for freedom, dignity

Below is a letter dictated by former slave Jourdon Anderson in the mid-1860s. According to the website Letters of Note, Col. P.H. Anderson had written to Jourdon Anderson asking him to come back to work as a free-man on the farm on which he had spent 30 years as the colonel’s slave. The letter was first published in the *New York Daily Tribune* on Aug. 22, 1865.

The *Militant* is printing the letter because it brings to life part of the history of struggle of working people who are Black in the United States, going back to the closing years of the Civil War. It is important to look at the present as history, something working people are not encouraged to do in capitalist society. The legacies of the past deeply mark the present and future class struggle.

In the book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes says, “Don’t start with Blacks as an oppressed nationality. Start with the historical record of the vanguard place and weight of workers who are Black—a place and weight disproportionate to their percentage among the toilers in this country—in broad, proletarian-led social and political struggles in the United States.”

It’s that unique history and record of struggle that strengthens the working class struggles of today and tomorrow.

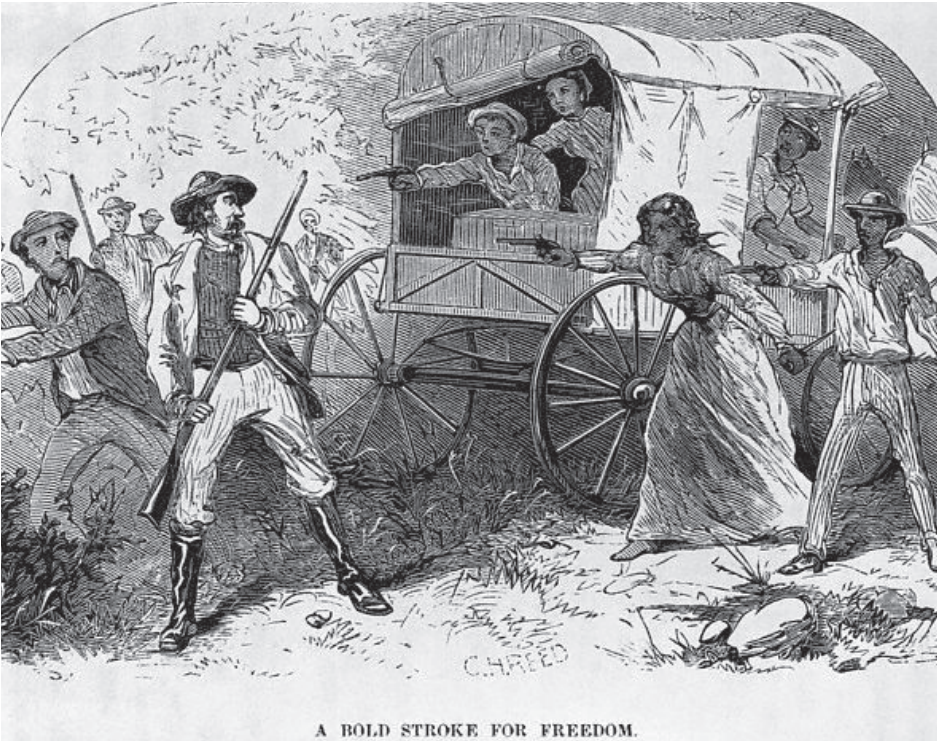


Dayton, Ohio,
August 7, 1865
To My Old Master, Colonel P.H. An-

derson, Big Spring, Tennessee

Sir: I got your letter, and was glad to find that you had not forgotten Jourdon, and that you wanted me to come back and live with you again, promising to do better for me than anybody else can. I have often felt uneasy about you. I thought the Yankees would have hung you long before this, for harboring Rebs they found at your house. I suppose they never heard about your going to Colonel Martin’s to kill the Union soldier that was left by his company in their stable. Although you shot at me twice before I left you, I did not want to hear of your being hurt, and am glad you are still living. It would do me good to go back to the dear old home again, and see Miss Mary and Miss Martha and Allen, Esther, Green, and Lee. Give my love to them all, and tell them I hope we will meet in the better world, if not in this. I would have gone back to see you all when I was working in the Nashville Hospital, but one of the neighbors told me that Henry intended to shoot me if he ever got a chance.

I want to know particularly what the good chance is you propose to give me. I am doing tolerably well here. I get twenty-five dollars a month, with victuals and clothing; have a comfortable home for Mandy—the folks call her Mrs. Anderson—and the children—Milly, Jane, and Grundy—go to school and are learning well. The teacher says Grundy has a head for a preacher. They go to Sunday school, and Mandy and me attend church regularly. We are kindly treated. Sometimes we overhear



An 1872 engraving from William Still’s book *The Underground Railroad* depicts fugitive slaves shooting at slave catchers who are pursuing them as they escape.

others saying, “Them colored people were slaves” down in Tennessee. The children feel hurt when they hear such remarks; but I tell them it was no disgrace in Tennessee to belong to Colonel Anderson. Many darkeys would have been proud, as I used to be, to call you master. Now if you will write and say what wages you will give me, I will be better able to decide whether it would be to my advantage to move back again.

As to my freedom, which you say I can have, there is nothing to be gained on that score, as I got my free papers in 1864 from the Provost-Marshal-General of the Department of Nashville. Mandy says she would be afraid to go back without some proof that you were disposed to treat us justly and kindly; and we have concluded to test your sincerity by asking you to send us our wages for the time we served you. This will make us forget and forgive old scores, and rely on your justice and friendship in the future. I served you faithfully for thirty-two years, and Mandy twenty years. At twenty-five dollars a month for me, and two dollars a week for Mandy, our earnings would amount to eleven thousand six hundred and eighty dollars. Add to this the interest for the time our wages have been kept back, and deduct what you paid for our clothing, and three doctor’s visits to me, and pulling a tooth for Mandy, and the balance will show what we are in justice entitled to. Please

send the money by Adams’s Express, in care of V. Winters, Esq., Dayton, Ohio. If you fail to pay us for faithful labors in the past, we can have little faith in your promises in the future. We trust the good Maker has opened your eyes to the wrongs which you and your fathers have done to me and my fathers, in making us toil for you for generations without recompense. Here I draw my wages every Saturday night; but in Tennessee there was never any pay-day for the negroes any more than for the horses and cows. Surely there will be a day of reckoning for those who defraud the laborer of his hire.

In answering this letter, please state if there would be any safety for my Milly and Jane, who are now grown up, and both good-looking girls. You know how it was with poor Matilda and Catherine. I would rather stay here and starve—and die, if it come to that—than have my girls brought to shame by the violence and wickedness of their young masters. You will also please state if there has been any schools opened for the colored children in your neighborhood. The great desire of my life now is to give my children an education, and have them form virtuous habits.

Say howdy to George Carter, and thank him for taking the pistol from you when you were shooting at me.

From your old servant,
Jourdon Anderson.

THE MILITANT

Workers’ struggles around the world

Working people from Myanmar to Greece, from China to the United States are seeking ways to organize to prevent the bosses from slashing wages, cutting benefits, and speeding up assembly lines. Read about those battles in the ‘Militant.’

The Irrawaddy
Strikers from Tai Yi Slipper Company, Feb. 15 in Rangoon, Myanmar.

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New Zealand frame-up trial ends in hung jury

Cleared of main charge, convicted on arms violation

BY PATRICK BROWN

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—The police and government frame-up of the Urewera Four suffered a blow March 20 when a jury failed to convict Tame Iti and three other advocates for Maori rights on the key charge of “participating in an organised criminal group.”

The prosecution—which has until April 18 to declare whether they will retry on this charge—failed to persuade the jury that the four political activists had organized military training to prepare for violent acts in support of land and sovereignty claims by the Tuhoe *iwi*, one of several Maori tribes.

While the jury was “hung” on the central charge and found the defendants not guilty on several firearm possession charges, it convicted each of them on other charges of illegal possession of firearms and restricted weapons.

Convictions under the Arms Act carry a maximum sentence of four years in prison and NZ\$5,000 fine (\$4,100). One of the defendants, Urs Signer, a Swiss-born resident, could face deportation. Sentencing will take place May 24.

“We are victorious in spite of the trouble brought upon us,” said Tame Iti following the verdict, as he and Emily Bailey, Rangi Kemara and Signer emerged from the High Court building to cheers from supporters.

“The whole case is a stitch-up from start to finish, based on illegal evidence,” Valerie Morse told *Militant* reporters outside the court. Morse is a spokesperson for October 15th Solidarity, which campaigns to defend the four.

“It’s a victory for Tuhoe,” said Anaru, a member of the *iwi*, a number of whom had traveled to Auckland to attend court hearings.

The frame-up dates back to a police surveillance operation that began in 2006. On Oct. 15, 2007, more than 300 police officers raided some 60 homes across the country, arresting 18 people. In the single biggest attack of this “Operation 8,” heavily armed police laid siege to the Maori town of Ruatoki in the Urewera region, homeland of Tuhoe.

The police claimed that military training camps had been set up over the previous year. Using material from video surveillance and bugs on houses, cars and telephones—placed with warrants under the 2002 Terrorism Suppression Act—they claimed that the camps constituted a “terrorist threat.”

However, in face of protests throughout the country, the solicitor general ruled in November 2007 that he would not authorize charges under the terrorism law. So the police pressed criminal group charges under the Arms Act, singling out Iti and the three others—plus a fifth, Tuhoe Lambert, who died before the case was brought to court.

In September 2011 the Supreme Court ruled that police evidence had been illegally obtained and could not be used against those facing arms charges only. The decision led to the dropping of the charges against 13 defendants. In the same breath, however, the court ruled that the illegal evidence could be used against the four others because of the more serious charges against them.

During the five-week trial, the prosecution depended heavily on cop testi-

mony involved in the surveillance operation. Crown Prosecutor Ross Burns alleged the four were preparing unspecified criminal actions should negotiations fail with the government over the return of land in the Urewera National Park to the tribe.

To buttress this picture of a violent “Plan B,” the jury was shown brief video footage from cameras placed secretly in the Urewera bush. Extracts were taken from hours of Internet discussions and exchanges of text messages, with reference to the political views of the defendants.

According to the daily report on the Scoop news website, Burns—having said that the defendants were not being prosecuted for their political beliefs—noted in his introductory remarks that “one defendant was found with a book about the Mexican Zapitista [sic] movement and another about Che Guevara.”

In defense testimony, Tuhoe spokes-

Supreme Court affirms ‘right’ to be denied trial

Continued from front page

of federal convictions and 94 percent of state convictions are the result of guilty pleas, Kennedy states, “The negotiation of a plea bargain, rather than the unfolding of a trial, is almost always the critical point for a defendant.”

Kennedy joined four other justices—Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Stephen Breyer, Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan—described in the media as liberal members of the court in issuing these rulings.

In one of the cases, Galin Frye faced a felony charge from the state of Missouri for driving with a revoked license. The prosecutor offered to reduce the charge to a misdemeanor and recommend a 90-day sentence with a guilty plea, a deal Frye’s lawyer never told him about. A judge ended up sentencing him to three years.

The court condemned the attorney’s conduct. But even if the defendant had known about it, “the prosecution would have been able to withdraw it right up to the point that his guilty plea pursuant to the bargain was accepted,” wrote Justice Antonin Scalia in a dissenting opinion.

The second case, arising under the 1996 Anti-Terrorism and Death Penalty Act, charged Anthony Cooper, who shot a woman in her buttock and thighs, with assault with intent to murder and three other charges. Under advice from his lawyer he rejected a prosecutor’s offer to plead guilty to two of the four charges and accept four to seven years imprisonment. After being convicted on all four charges, the judge imposed a 15- to 30-year sentence on Cooper based on a mandatory minimum sentencing guidelines.

Plea bargaining “conserve[s] valuable prosecutorial resources,” Kennedy wrote and has “become so central to today’s criminal justice system that defense counsel must meet responsibilities in the plea bargain process to render the adequate assistance of counsel that the Sixth Amendment requires at critical stages of the criminal process.”

The Sixth amendment to the U.S. Constitution, in addition to guaranteeing the



Gil Hanley

Maori activist Tame Iti answers journalists’ questions March 20 outside High Court in Auckland, New Zealand, after trial of advocates for Maori rights known as Urewera Four.

person Tamati Kruger stressed Tame Iti’s role in the broader Tuhoe fight to regain part of their former lands, which were confiscated by the government in the 1860s. Kruger said that the existence of camps helping people gain bushcraft and other skills was nothing new and was no secret, and that firearms are a common sight in the rural area.

In his summation, Rangi Kemara’s

lawyer, Jeremy Bioletti, said, “Nothing happened because there is no plan B. There is only Plan A” of support for the broader Tuhoe struggle.

The *New Zealand Herald* reported March 21 that prosecution of the Urewera Four is “believed to be the most expensive police case and trial in New Zealand history, up to as much as \$2.5 million.”

right to an attorney, upholds one’s right to trial by jury. It states, “In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed.”

The Supreme Court ruling “opens a whole new field of constitutionalized criminal procedure: plea-bargaining law,” wrote Scalia. “In the United States, we have plea bargaining a-plenty, but until today it has been regarded as a necessary evil. It presents grave risks of prosecutorial overcharging that effectively compels an innocent defendant to avoid massive risk by pleading guilty to a lesser offense.”

In federal district courts in 2010 there was one acquittal for every 212 guilty pleas or trial convictions. Thirty years ago, the ratio was one for every 22, reported the *New York Times*.

The expanding number of state and federal mandatory sentencing laws and harsher penalties for those convicted under a growing number of felony statutes further empower prosecutors to bargain for guilty pleas.

Put ‘Militant’ in workers’ hands

Continued from front page

parcel of capitalist America and why a socialist revolution is needed in this country.

The *Militant* is a tool in the campaign for the arrest and prosecution of the vigilante killer who took Martin’s life and for making the truth known.

This is the time to sell subscriptions to the socialist paper going door to door and at street tables in working-class neighborhoods, at work, on picket lines and other labor resistance to the bosses’ assaults on working people, and at protest actions and demonstrations.

The *Militant* has been explaining why the fight for Black liberation is key for unifying the working class and building a revolutionary movement of workers and our toiling allies to overthrow the capitalist exploiters and begin to estab-

lish a society based on solidarity and dignity.

To help advance the discussion on these questions, the book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, is being offered at a reduced price of \$10 with a subscription to the *Militant* or \$15 without.

Join this effort. To get more information or to order a *Militant* bundle, call a distributor in your area (see page 6) or contact the *Militant* office (see page 2).

As this issue of the paper comes off press, a reporting team of worker correspondents is on its way to Sanford, Fla. You can help cover the cost of this special trip by sending a contribution to the *Militant* office earmarked “Militant Reporting Trips.”

ILWU longshore workers

Continued from front page

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. In January, EGT agreed to hire the ILWU members who today work in the terminal.

Members of ILWU Local 21 and their supporters organized protests at the railroad tracks leading to EGT’s grain terminal from July through September. During this time, cops, doing the bidding of EGT, arrested demonstrators on a range of charges, including trespass, assault, resisting arrest and disorderly conduct. Meanwhile, the city government piled up fines against the ILWU.

Unionists say they were often arrested, in rough and physically abusive fashion, outside the protests—during the middle of the night in their homes, on picket duty, while driving, and outside church. In response to the cops’ anti-labor campaign, some 200 unionists marched to the local police department Sept. 16 demanding they be arrested then and there as a group. The police refused.

Scores of union militants have been cleared of charges. In many cases, prosecutors have dangled plea bargain deals, pressing for guilty pleas in exchange for

sentences substantially lower than the union stalwarts would risk having imposed if convicted by trial.

Shelly Porter and Alison Beam were cleared of trespass charges Jan. 23. “I knew I could prove I never stepped on EGT property except when forced to by police order to ‘move over here now,’ which can be seen on video,” Porter told the *Militant* in a February interview. “When the prosecutor learned we were not accepting the plea bargain deal, he concluded he had no case.”

A half dozen workers have been acquitted in trials. Among them, Porter was found not guilty of assaulting an EGT official. She had pushed away the boss’s hand when he put his cell phone camera in her face to take a photo during a July 22 union protest.

Byron Jacobs, 28, secretary treasurer of ILWU Local 21, was charged with three felony counts of assaulting an officer, resisting arrest and intimidating a public official, and three charges of criminal misdemeanors, including trespass and blocking a train.

The trumped-up charges stem from a peaceful protest on Sept. 21. That day members of the union’s Ladies Auxiliary and Local 21 President Dan Coffman sat down on the railroad tracks near EGT holding union signs to protest a train car on its way to be unloaded by non-ILWU labor at EGT’s terminal.

Jacobs along with Kelly Muller were on the sidelines videotaping the protest. Jacobs told the *Militant* what happened next. “Without warning, the cops from four agencies swarmed on the women and Dan and tore their picket signs out of their hands and yanked their arms behind them to handcuff them. They pushed some of the women down on the ground. They wrenched Phoebe Wiest’s arm so violently that she went to the hospital with a torn rotator cuff. They pulled Dan Coffman to his feet by his thumbs. My wife was among those the cops were going after. Phoebe Wiest yelled in pain.

“Kelly and I shouted at the police over and over to stop hurting the women. Then we rushed to their side. We were tackled by several cops. They pushed us to the ground and handcuffed us. They put a choke hold on me and I passed out briefly. Then I came to and saw a cop bringing a



Dawn Des Brisay

Cops assault ILWU protest at EGT Development terminal, Longview, Wash., Sept. 7. A number of unionists still face criminal frame-up charges in connection with protest in July-Sept. 2010.

canister toward my face. They held open my eyelids and pepper sprayed me in each eye. They did the same to Kelly. Then the cops dragged us to the road. At some point emergency medical technicians from the Fire Department were on the scene and squirted water in our eyes. Then the cops took us to jail. We were later charged with assaulting the cops.”

The Sept. 21 police assault as described by Jacobs is documented in videos posted on YouTube.com.

In order to avoid the possibility of felony convictions, which for assault carries a sentence of at least one year and a \$5,000 fine, Jacobs agreed on March 19 to plead guilty to three misdemeanor charges, including one count of misdemeanor assault, one count of obstructing a train and one count of criminal trespass. The felony assault and other felony charges were dropped. Jacobs will have to serve 20 days in jail; pay \$500 in court costs; serve one year of probation and attend an “anger management” assessment. He began serving his sentence on March 24.

Jacobs’ application for work release was denied on the grounds that longshore work is irregular and requires leaving town. Jacobs said the union will assist his family while he is in jail.

“I feel like there is right and there is wrong,” Jacobs told the *Militant*. “What I did was to stand up for what I believe in during a labor dispute. What Kelly and I did on Sept. 21 resulted in harm to no one but ourselves. The plea agreement doesn’t change my mind. This was the best scenario for me to move forward.”

Felony trials are still pending on charges against three other union members. William “Sonny” Halladay,

Ronald Stavas and Conner McLeod. Stavas’ and McLeod’s charges come from a Sept. 8 protest at the port.

Halladay’s charges also stem from the Sept. 21 protest. On that day Halladay was at work at the terminal operating a log loader on the other side of a fence from where the train was stopped and the ILWU protest was taking place. He raised his log load up high at one point to get an unobstructed view of the ground, a common practice for that job. For this he was charged with endangering the safety of a train and “assault with a deadly weapon” (the log loader). The prosecution claims he was threatening to drop his load on the train.

“There was no way he was going to drop logs on the train,” said Jacobs. “Union people were protesting there.”

Prosecutor Sue Baur said she waited five months to bring charges against Halladay because the investigation had to be coordinated with the Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad, which has its own private cops. The BNSF cops along with Cowlitz County and Thurston County sheriff’s department deputies and Longview police all took part in a coordinated assault on the union protest.

Coffman and Muller also pled guilty to trespassing charges stemming from Sept. 21 and other protests. Both were sentenced with fines and community service.

The ILWU filed a federal suit Sept. 22 charging cops with violating their civil rights, forcing them to back off. That trial has now been set for March 4, 2013, a year away. The lawsuit names Cowlitz County Sheriff Mark Nelson and Longview Police Chief Jim Duscha, as well as the county and city.

Corrections

The second paragraph in the On the Picket Line story titled “Job Safety Key Issue in Contract Fight with Oil Companies” in the Feb. 13 issue should read: “The next day BP changed the valve that caused the accident, which proves it could have been made safe in the first place,” Jacobus, a member of United Steelworkers Local 675, told the *Militant*.

The article “New Zealand Port Workers Stand Up to Union Busting” in the March 26 issue should have stated that the demonstration along the waterfront took place March 10, not March 3.

In the article “Fukushima 1 Year Later: Nuke Panic Vs. Real Disaster” in the April 2 issue, the sentence “the deaths of 20,000 people cannot be chalked up to an avoidable natural disaster” should have said: “an unavoidable natural disaster.”

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Our Politics Start With the World. Speaker: Steve Clark, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., April 7, 7:30 p.m. 4025 S. Western Ave. 90062. Tel.: (323) 295-2600.

San Francisco

Arrest and Prosecute Killer of Trayvon Martin! Speaker: Eric Simpson, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., April 6, 7:30 p.m. 5482 Mission St. Tel.: (415) 584-2135.

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis

Justice for Trayvon Martin: How the Working Class Can Fight Racism and Police Brutality. Speaker: Leah Morrison, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., April 6, 7:30 p.m. 1311 1/2 E. Lake St. Tel.: (612) 729-5861.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

A Speak-Out Against the Racist Killing of Trayvon Martin: Arrest and Prosecute the Vigilante Killer! Fri., March 30, 7:30 p.m. 307 W. 36th St., 10th floor. Tel.: (212) 629-6649.

TEXAS

Houston

The Keystone XL Pipeline Debate: Where Should Workers Stand? Speaker: Mike Fitzsimmons, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., April 6, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 4800 W. 34th St., Suite C-50L. Tel.: (713) 688-4919.

WASHINGTON

Seattle

Fukushima, Hanford, Wash., and the Keystone Pipeline: A Marxist View on Energy and Nuclear Power. Fri., April 6, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5 5418 Rainier Ave. S. Tel.: (206) 323-1755.

CANADA

Montreal

Celebrate the Publication in English and Spanish of Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution. Speaker: Michel Dugré, Communist League. Thur., April 5, 7:30 p.m. 7101 St. Denis, room 204. Tel.: (514) 272-5840.

Wash. state Socialist Workers launch campaign

SEATTLE—Supporters of the Socialist Workers Party election campaign of Mary Martin for Washington state governor held a campaign launching rally here March 24 attended by some 25 people.

Martin spoke about the crisis of capitalism and the continuing onslaught against the working class in order to prop up the profit system. She called attention to the importance of working-class resistance today, from sugar workers in the Midwest to the longshore workers in Longview, Wash.

Campaign chairperson John Naubert read a letter of solidarity to Byron Jacobs, secretary-treasurer of International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 21 in Longview, who started a 21-day jail sentence that day. The participants in the meeting unanimously ratified the message with applause and signed their names below it, pledging to “spread the word ... of your union’s ongoing fight against frame-up charges of its members.”

—JOHN NAUBERT AND EDWIN FRUIT

ON THE PICKET LINE

Air Canada walkout ends, suspended workers reinstated

MONTREAL—Some 150 Air Canada ground crew workers in Toronto walked off the job March 22 to protest the suspension of three coworkers. The following day, members of the International Association of Machinists in Montreal, Quebec City and Vancouver followed suit. Hundreds of flights were cancelled or delayed.

The three were part of a group of 15 workers who had “slow clapped” federal Labour Minister Lisa Raitt and sarcastically told her “great job” after a flight she was on landed at the airport March 22.

Thirty seven unionists were fired for participating in the walkout. They, along with the three suspended workers, were reinstated in a back-to-work agreement rapidly put in place the following day.

The previous weekend, numerous pilots had called in sick as part of an ongoing contract fight.

On March 15 the Canadian government, at Raitt’s urging, imposed binding arbitration on unions representing Air Canada’s 8,600 baggage handlers, mechanics and other ground crew, and 3,000 pilots. Their contracts expired a year ago. Raitt also paved the way for banning all strikes at the airline by asking the Industrial Relations Board to determine if airline service is “essential for Canadians’ national health and safety,” reported the *National Post*.

—Katy LeRougetel

Machinists in Canada protest firing of aircraft workers

MONTREAL—Aircraft mainte-

nance workers organized daily pickets outside Air Canada’s main offices here after Aveos Fleet Performance Inc. locked its doors here March 18 and told many of the 1,800 workers to leave with their tools and belongings.

The next day the aircraft maintenance company filed for bankruptcy. Some 350 workers in Winnipeg, Manitoba; and 250 in Vancouver, British Columbia, were then fired.

In 2007 Air Canada sold its Technical Services division that did aircraft overhaul and refurbishment to Aveos over objections from the International Association of Machinists, which said the sale violated the Air Canada Public Participation Act—passed in 1988 when Air Canada was privatized.

On March 20 the Montreal police riot squad, using tear gas, removed hundreds of unionists from the road in front of Air Canada’s offices.

“Aveos is a mask for Air Canada. That’s why we’re protesting here,” Dan Daigle, a technician in the engine shop for 22 years, told the *Militant* at a March 23 picket.

The union is demanding government intervention to force Air Canada to hire the fired workers.

—Beverly Bernardo

Washington aerospace workers picket for first union contract

KENT, Wash.—Workers at Hytek Finishes and their supporters picketed for 12 hours here March 21 over lack of progress in talks for a first contract. Last August some 175 Hytek workers voted to join the Machinists union.

The main issues are safety, pay and



Militant/John Naubert

Workers at Hytek Finishes in Kent, Wash., picket March 22 demanding first union contract.

health insurance, Bryan Corliss, an IAM District 751 staff member, told the *Militant*. Corliss said that health insurance for Hytek workers sets a \$7,200 deductible before medical expenses are covered.

“We work around toxic and carcinogenic materials and the company’s safety program doesn’t really protect us,” said Mark Lopez, who has been employed by Hytek for 15 years. Hytek’s main customers include Bell Helicopters, Boeing and Lockheed. The company provides parts for the Pentagon’s Joint Strike Fighter.

—Edwin Fruit

Locked-out UK packaging workers start 24-hour pickets

LIVERPOOL, England—Workers locked out by Mayr-Melnhof Packaging

for refusing to agree to the way the company planned to lay off 49 of 149 workers at the plant say the company has begun sending out layoff notices here. The company also fired four workers for allegedly threatening managers Feb. 18, the day the lockout began.

In response, workers have extended their picket line to 24 hours a day to prevent Mayr-Melnhof from removing packaging and equipment.

The company’s hearing that approved the firings was “a kangaroo court,” Graham Manley, one of the four sacked workers, told the *Militant*. He was accused of entering the factory with the intent to threaten a manager. Forty workers had gone into the plant Feb. 18 to demand a meeting with managers, Manley said. The workers left after an hour when the company agreed to talks.

Unite union lead shop steward Phil Potter said that he was denied access to the hearings by security “heavies” hired by the company.

Prior to the lockout the workers had held a series of one-day strikes protesting the handpicked way the company planned to lay off the workers and the amount of redundancy (severance) payments.

“This is about destroying the union,” said packaging worker Billy Wright on the picket line. “If we win, every union will see our example.”

—Pete Clifford

1 worker killed, 2 injured at NY construction site

BY EMMA JOHNSON

NEW YORK—Juan Ruiz, 69, died and two coworkers were severely injured March 22 at a construction site here cited several times for safety violations.

Ruiz, Sakim Kirby, 30, and King Range, 60, were demolishing a 100-year-old warehouse when the building collapsed around them. According to a spokesperson for the city’s Department of Buildings, the workers were cutting a structural beam that gave way.

“I’ve just seen brick falling down on the workers,” Willy Katende, who lives nearby, told DNAinfo.com. “It sounded like a bomb—boom.”

It took rescue workers 45 minutes before all three men had been dug out from the debris. Kirby and Range are in serious, but stable condition.

The building is owned by Columbia University. The collapse occurred at the 17-acre construction site for its new \$6.4 billion Manhattanville campus.

Building inspectors have issued partial stop-work orders, and violations and fines over safety hazards a number of times for different parts of the site over the past two years. They include using a damaged crane, unsafe scaffolding, cracked walls, working without a permit, and walls that dislodge bricks, mortar and cement.

In February 2010 another construction worker, Jozef Wilk, 51, was killed after falling from scaffolding into an elevator shaft at a site just around the block from the warehouse.

The workers were all employed by Breeze National Inc., a company with a history of safety violations and hazard-

ous working conditions. After Wilk was killed a Buildings Department investigation showed that the scaffolding was improperly constructed and the elevator shaft was open and unguarded.

On March 5 a stop-work order was issued for lack of safety harnesses and for not notifying the Buildings Department that the demolition was about to start. Two days later it was lifted.

Breeze National is a major company in demolition work here. It was one of

the subcontractors cleaning up Ground Zero and did most of the \$17 million demolition of Shea Stadium.

In a statement sent to the *Militant* Breeze said “this accident was the result of an unknown, unusual, latent condition in one of the structural beams...one that was truly no one’s fault.” According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics 10,826 workers have been killed in the U.S. construction industry during the past 10 years, more than 1,000 every year.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



April 10, 1987

BISMARCK, N.D.—For 10 years, Leonard Peltier has fought for a new trial. An activist in the American Indian Movement, he is now serving two life sentences, having been framed up for the 1975 deaths of two FBI agents.

The agents were killed during a government attack on Indians at the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. An Indian rights activist was also killed.

Recently, Peltier filed for reconsideration of his appeal for a new trial by the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals. Last December, the appeals court had conceded that the main evidence used to convict Peltier was invalid and that the government prosecutors knew this and concealed it from the jury. But the court ruled that Peltier must continue doing life anyway.



April 9, 1962

American troops, sent to Vietnam to save the tottering regime of Dictator Ngo Dinh Diem, have been given the dirty work of organizing “Operation Sunrise,” a brutal campaign of driving peasant families from their homes and villages and forcibly resettling them elsewhere in prison camps. This campaign similar to that tried by the French in Algeria, is intended to isolate the Viet Cong guerrillas.

“Operation Sunrise” gives the lie to Washington’s official pretext for intervention—the claim that the guerrillas fighting Dictator Diem are “invaders” from North Vietnam. The campaign of forced resettlement is a damning admission that the only hope for victory over the small Viet Cong force is to imprison the peasant population, the main source of guerrilla strength.



April 17, 1937

Pushing ahead with its history-making campaign, the Steel Workers Organizing Committee signed 51 steel companies to union contracts in the month following the signing by U.S. Steel.

The rush of membership drove the total far past the 200,000 mark. In the ten days following March 2 approximately 35,000 new members signed. In the Bethlehem mills followers of the steel union virtually captured the company unions.

What the new steel union has brought to the steel workers in money alone was shown by a report of the American Iron & Steel Institute. Payrolls of the industry increase[d] approximately \$130,000,000 when union contracts became effective.

The average hourly earnings exceed the 1929 average of 65.4 cents an hour by 28 percent, the Institute reported.

Defense of Cuban Revolution based on the people in arms

The Spanish-language edition of *Making History: Interviews with Four Generals of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces* is one of *Pathfinder's Books of the Month* for April.

The interview excerpted below with Gen. Néstor López Cuba was conducted in Havana in October 1997 by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, Mary-Alice Waters, editor of the book, and Martín Koppel.

In the interview López Cuba refers to Cuba's internationalist missions. The most prominent of these was in Angola. From late 1975 to May 1991, 375,000 Cuban combatants volunteered to help that newly independent country defeat invasions from the white supremacist regime in South Africa. Copyright © 1999 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

WATERS: An interesting interview appeared in *Granma International* a few weeks ago with Cuban brigadier general Luis Pérez Róspide, who heads up military industries for the Revolutionary Armed Forces. The interviewer paraphrases Pérez Róspide as saying that his department of the FAR has the “basic mission of guaranteeing that each Cuban has a rifle, a land mine, and a grenade to defend the country.”



Granma/Ricardo López

Neighborhood drill during December 2002 Day of Defense, Havana, Cuba. “Our weapons have a popular character and strictly defensive purpose,” says Cuban general López Cuba.

The article continues, noting that when the general was asked about the manufacture and utilization of land mines, which are opposed by some rich countries, Pérez Róspide “gave his opinion that no one discussed this issue with the poor or those who are threatened by nuclear weapons and have none of their own. ‘Land mines are the weapon of the poor,’ General Pérez Róspide declared.”

We'd like to get your opinion on this question, since a very big campaign is under way in the capitalist world, promoted by the governments of Canada and various members of the European Union, to sign an international treaty banning land mines.

LÓPEZ CUBA: Yes, and unfortunately this campaign also has broad backing among persons who are very progressive, very humanitarian, and who have enormous respect in world public opinion. To some extent this is understandable, since this is a very human question.

But one has to ask: What about the two flights by B-29s that dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki? How many people were killed? How many victims are still dying from the effects? If a nuclear arsenal exists capable of annihilating the world, why not fight against this?

Because mines are the weapon of

the poor. They are the weapon of those who don't have the resources to buy a B-52 bomber or an F-16 fighter jet.

A number of years ago, when the collapse of socialism had already begun, the Soviets gave us a final squadron of MIG-29 fighters. Six were delivered.

Recently, the Russian government proposed to sell the FAR more of these MIG-29s. [Raúl Castro, then minister of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces] asked them: “How much do they cost?”

“Twenty million dollars,” he was told.

So the minister replied: “We'll sell you back the six we already have!”

Actually, we have been making an effort to sell these MIG-29s, and to get authorization from the Russians to collect payment. Because a poor country like Cuba, whose armed forces and budget depend on our economic possibilities, cannot afford these expensive aircraft. We cannot afford other types of expensive and sophisticated weaponry, nor are they particularly necessary if we take into account the popular character and strictly defensive purpose of our weapons, including the antipersonnel mines we have, which are not for use in another country.

So what can we use to resist? Weap-

ons that are the least expensive—rifles, mines, Molotov cocktails, antitank grenades. That is why we have to adopt this stance against banning land mines.

How many billions of dollars does the United States sell in arms to Third World governments? It's an incredible figure—and at the cost of hunger, of dire poverty. How many millions are killed by the “bombs” of starvation, lack of electric power, health care, food? And why does this happen? Because of the dependency of these countries on big capital. Because of the exploitation of the people of those countries. That's the truth.

Yet they single out mines to be against—because they are weapons of the poor. If we had our way, we would rather not have mines, or rifles, or any other weapons. Let them respect the sovereignty of the peoples. Let there be justice. But as long as we continue to be under constant threat, we are the ones who are accountable for the security of our people.

That is why we have been very cautious in giving our opinion on this world campaign against mines.

We know all about land mines. The majority of the combatants we lost in internationalist missions were due to mines. The majority of those crippled were due to mines. We know the effects of this weapon. But isn't that true of all weapons? In any case, there are weapons that are much more deadly than mines.

That's the reality. That is the reason for our position.

BARNES: It's when the peoples give up their right to defend themselves that they will be slaughtered.

LÓPEZ CUBA: Yes, that's the truth.

BARNES: People sometimes ask us, “Do you really believe the Americans will use their nuclear weapons someday?” We reply, “They've already used them! Against the peoples of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.” And it is only the readiness of people around the world to fight that stops the U.S. rulers from using those weapons of mass destruction once again.

LÓPEZ CUBA: Exactly.

BARNES: So that gives us time to fight to take their arms away from them. American workers will come to understand this very well.

April BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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Trayvon Martin protests

Continued from front page

change, but after Trayvon I'm not so sure." Turnbull, who is Caucasian, held a sign that read, "If Trayvon Martin was white, he would still be alive."

"I want to know what happened to my son and I want to prevent this from happening to another parent," said Martin's mother, Sabryna Fulton, at a Sanford City Commission meeting at the end of the demonstration.

"We're not asking for an eye for an eye. We're asking for justice! Justice! Justice!" said his father, Tracy Martin, who works as a truck driver.

The demonstration was the latest in a series of protests here. The largest, a rally of some 10,000 organized by Rev. Al Sharpton, took place March 22. That same day, Sanford Police Chief Bill Lee announced he was temporarily stepping down "in hopes of restoring some semblance of calm to a city which has been in turmoil for several weeks."

Martin, a 140-pound high school student from Miami, was in Sanford, 25 miles north of Orlando, visiting his father. He was walking with a bag of Skittles candy and a can of iced tea he had just bought at a convenience store.

A 250-pound armed Zimmerman was conducting a vigilante patrol near the gated community where Tracy Martin's fiancée lives when he spotted Trayvon Martin and called 911: "There's a real suspicious guy. ... looks like he's up to no good, or he's on drugs or something. It's raining and he's just walking around."

"Now he's just staring at me," Zimmerman said as he kept watch on Martin and provided a description to 911. The dispatcher tells him that cops are on the way. "These assholes they always get away," Zimmerman responded. He then tells the dispatcher that Martin has started to run away and that he is following him.

"We don't need you to do that," the dispatcher says. But Zimmerman apparently pursues Martin on foot.

According to Martin's girlfriend, who was on the phone with him at the time, Martin attempted to lose his follower. She overheard Martin ask Zimmerman, "Why are you following me?" and Zimmerman replied, "What are you doing around here?" The phone then cut off. Other 911 calls report an altercation ensuing, ending with Zimmerman fatally shooting Martin in the chest.

"Martin decked the Neighborhood Watch volunteer ... climbed on top of [him] and slammed his head into the sidewalk," the *Orlando Sentinel* wrote March 26, citing police sources. Zimmerman reportedly had a bloody nose

and head wound.

Zimmerman, who had a license to carry a handgun, has still not been arrested or charged for the killing. "We don't have anything to dispute his claim of self-defense," Police Chief Lee said March 12. That same day, ABC News reported that the police allegedly "corrected" at least one eyewitness's account. Cops tested Martin's body for drugs and alcohol, but not Zimmerman's.

Florida is among a number of states that in recent years have passed so-called "stand your ground" laws. The legislation makes it legal to use deadly force under threat of attack in public, even when there is a clear option to walk away from the situation.

Zimmerman was the head of a neighborhood watch group that works with the cops, Police Chief Lee told the *Miami Herald*. Zimmerman, 28, is of Peruvian and Caucasian descent. Before the incident and his disappearance from public view, he worked as a loan analyst at a mortgage risk-management company and was studying criminal justice at Seminole State College.

Family launches public campaign

This city of 53,000, where 30 percent of the residents are Black, has a history of vigilante violence and police cover-up. In 2005 there were protests after police waited months to arrest two security guards who shot and killed a 16-year-old through the window of their car, claiming self-defense. They were eventually arrested, but later cleared of charges.

The Police Department and city prosecutors tried to sweep the killing of Martin under the rug. But his parents mounted a public fight to prevent that from happening, taking part in demonstrations and speaking out on national TV.

More than 1,000 people turned out for Martin's funeral March 3. On March 9 Martin's family publicly demanded police release the 911 calls and make an arrest. By mid-March protests, especially following the March 16 release of the 911 calls, began spreading around the country.

Martin's family publicly appealed March 18 to Attorney General Eric Holder and the FBI to get involved in the case. The next day, state officials announced a grand jury hearing April 10 to decide whether to indict Zimmerman and the U.S. Justice Department announced the launching of its investigation.

NAACP President Ben Jealous called for the removal of Police Chief Lee at a March 20 protest meeting of 400 at a church here. The next day city commissioners passed a vote of "no confidence"

Protests continue against NY cop killing



Militant/Deborah Liatos

NEW YORK—One hundred people participated in a March 22 vigil and march from the home of Ramarley Graham to the nearby police precinct headquarters in the Bronx.

The action demanded prosecution of the cops who killed 18-year-old Graham in the bathroom of his apartment Feb. 2.

"We face the same thing in Jamaica—police brutality," one resident originally from this Caribbean country, who didn't want her name used, told the *Militant*. "We say in Jamaica police are public enemies. They say there are good ones but the good ones cover for the bad ones."

"I'm here because I faced harassment by Richard Haste," said Ronell Cohioo, a high school student, referring to the cop who shot and killed Graham. Cohioo described an incident leaving school with friends after football practice.

"Thanks to the community. All we ask is justice. They killed my son like an animal," Frank Graham, told the crowd.

There will be vigils every Thursday at 5 p.m. for the next 18 weeks beginning at the Graham home at 749 E. 229th St. in the Bronx.

— DEBORAH LIATOS

that prompted the chief's decision to "temporarily" step down.

Both parents took part in a demonstration of some 1,000 March 21 in New York City's Union Square, dubbed the "Million Hoodie March." Martin was wearing a black hooded sweatshirt when he was killed and donning hoodies has become a theme at protest actions, meetings and church services around the country. "My heart is in pain, but to see the support of all of you really makes a difference," Martin's mother told the crowd.

An action of some 250 people through the Black community of Liberty City in Miami was among many other demonstrations across the country that day.

Rayquel Fredricks, a friend of Martin's, wearing an "R.I.P. Trayvon Martin" T-shirt, came with two friends. "He was like a little brother to me," she told the *Militant*. "I would like to see George Zimmerman go to jail."

On March 22, 300 students at Miami's Carol City High School, where Martin attended his freshman and part

of his sophomore year, walked out. The next day some 12,000 walked out at 31 schools in Miami-Dade County.

Opponents of the campaign to arrest and prosecute Zimmerman have attempted to smear Martin, emphasizing that he was serving a third suspension from the high school he attends in Miami for allegedly having marijuana residue in his book bag. The vilification campaign includes digging up and publishing a Twitter message from Martin's cousin that suggests Martin may have been involved in a violent altercation with a bus driver.

"They've killed my son and now they're trying to kill his reputation," said Fulton.

A CNN poll today suggests 73 percent of people in the U.S. are for the arrest of Zimmerman.

"What has to happen next?" CBS News anchor asked Tracy Martin in a March 23 interview.

"Arrest, trial, conviction, sentence for the murder of Trayvon Benjamin Martin," replied the father.

Protests over killing of Trayvon Martin around the US

Chicago

About 800 protesters rallied and marched in Chicago's Loop March 24 for the second day in a row.

Airricka Gordon-Taylor brought greetings to the rally from the family of Emmett Till, a 14-year-old Black youth from Chicago who was kidnapped and lynched in 1955, in Money, Miss. The famous case helped spark the civil rights movement.

"It's only through demonstrations like this that we have any chance of getting justice," Anton Ford, a student at the University of Chicago, told the crowd gathered in Daley Plaza. "Otherwise they'll just sweep this under the rug."

—Betsy Farley

Washington, D.C.

Some 4,000 people rallied March 24 in Freedom Plaza here.

"We are just friends coming together around a cause that we thought was just," Heather Raspberry told the *Militant*, one of three young women who put out a call for action that quickly spread through campus groups, churches, and Black rights organizations, including the NAACP.

"I'm here to fight for equality and justice," said Derrick Armstrong, 50, who works in home improvement and came with his family. "These are troubled times. For someone to do this and not be charged. I just don't understand. They would prosecute someone so quick for

Continued on page 10



Militant/Tom Baumann

Students from University of Central Florida in Orlando protest in Sanford, Fla., March 26.

Socialist Workers set weekly campaigning with ‘

BY STEVE CLARK

The new charts were hard to miss in the headquarters of the Socialist Workers Party branch in New York City as I walked in one evening a day or so before this issue of the *Militant* went to press.

One chart keeps track of subscriptions and individual copies of the socialist newspaper, as well as books such as *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, sold each week door to door and on street corners in working-class communities across New York City and its environs.

Another records weekly results from sales in Black working-class neighborhoods in the city, along with additional information about that political campaigning.

A third logs information from trips to sell the socialist press in working-class neighborhoods in small towns and rural areas outside the city, from upstate New York to Connecticut, New Jersey and elsewhere.

These prominent displays provide a way for members of the New York branch to gauge their progress in implementing the course set by the SWP National Committee in mid-March, building on cumulative decisions by SWP leadership conferences since last June. The National Committee discussed and decided on concrete tasks that will lead to more effective participation in the stepped-up response by workers nationwide to mounting employer and government attacks.

Over the past two years socialist workers have joined actions across the U.S. to stop the execution of Troy Davis; protests in Alabama and other states against assaults on immigrant workers; and picket lines and other activities in solidarity with resistance to employer lockouts and union busting by grain millers in Keokuk, Iowa; dockworkers in Longview, Wash.; sugar beet workers in the Red River Valley of North Dakota and Minnesota; nuclear processing workers in Metropolis, Ill.; tire workers in Ohio; state employees in Wisconsin; and many, many more. A substantial number of workers in these battles have become regular readers of the *Militant*.

Soon after the SWP leadership meetings, protests against the lynching of Trayvon Martin, a 17-year-old African-American, brought thousands into the streets—from an outpouring in Sanford, Fla., where the shooting by an armed vigilante occurred, to actions in cities and towns across the United States.

The nearly full week of political dis-

cussions in New York opened with a Saturday, March 10, public meeting of 360 people, featuring talks by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes and party leader Mary-Alice Waters.

On Sunday a follow-up discussion for participants in the previous day's event drew workers from Boston, Chicago, the Twin Cities, and Birmingham, as well as students from upstate New York and Montreal. The same day a meeting took place of nearly 150 supporters of the communist movement who are organizing to keep in print and upgrade books and pamphlets used by the party in its work.

That was followed by four days of SWP leadership meetings, with participation from leaders of communist organizations in countries from Europe through the Middle East and the Pacific.

At the Saturday meeting, a number of SWP candidates in the 2012 elections were introduced from the floor. The socialist campaigns, which offer the working-class alternatives to the Democrats, Republicans and other capitalist parties, are reaching out to win support and endorsement from fighting workers attracted to the SWP's class-struggle course and its revolutionary perspectives.

The National Committee set a party convention for June 21-23 in Ohio. Progress by party branches in carrying out the weekly rhythm of *Militant* sales in working-class neighborhoods and other political activity and mass work will be the register of the convention's success.

National question in U.S.

During a reception before the March 10 meeting and the dinner and party afterwards, participants visited a large literature table and browsed books and pamphlets on revolutionary politics. These ranged from the two latest titles released by Pathfinder Press—*Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution* by Vilma Espín, Asela de los Santos and Yolanda Ferrer, edited with an introduction by Mary-Alice Waters; and *The Cuban Five: Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, and*



Why They Should Be Free—to some of the nearly 40 books and pamphlets in the Farsi language produced by publishers in Iran.

Participants went from table to table in the meeting hall looking at the more than 20 panels of political displays. Many people picked up copies in the display area of a recently discovered 1865 letter to a former slave master who had written freedman Jourdon Anderson asking him to return to work on the plantation (see page 2).

One display reproduced a letter by Sam Manuel, an SWP leader now living in Atlanta, to Jack Barnes. Manuel wrote in early 2010 after reading Barnes' book, *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*. Barnes quoted from the letter in his talk.

Manuel refers to a chapter in the book that reprints the account of a 1939 discussion by SWP members with Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky, then living in forced exile in Mexico. Manuel said he had “often read and reread” that discussion, but returning to it in the new book “was like reading a different discussion. Trotsky's focus on workers who are Black, his proletarian orientation, comes through sharply.”

Manuel was struck by the Bolshevik leader's insistence that the SWP's political activity among workers who are Black is, as Trotsky put it, “a question of the vitality of the party. ... [O]f whether the party is to be transformed into a sect or if it is capable of finding its way to the most oppressed part of the working class.”

The book had also given Manuel a “new appreciation of the importance of sales of the *Militant* and Pathfinder books among Black workers. ... Branches need to follow these sales weekly, with accurate records,” he said.

In his talk, Barnes emphasized that the vanguard place of workers who are Black in social and political struggles remains central to the working-class line of march toward power in the United States. The breakdown of the U.S. rulers' criminal “justice” system, Barnes said, is one powerful indicator of the continuing fact and significance of the



Militant pl
Socialist Workers Party ha
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eas. Such efforts in past y
with ironworker Tim Cam
area, May 2011; (middle) l
*Liberation, and the Road to
nity, Sept. 2010; (right) Aly
to Larry Eskins during trip*

African-American national question in the U.S. class struggle.

Over the past three decades, there has been an explosion in the numbers of working people incarcerated in the U.S. and on probation or supervised release. There were some 2.3 million in prison at last count, and nearly 5 million under court supervision. A vastly disproportionate number of them are Black. While Blacks represent some 12 percent of the U.S. population, they make up more than 40 percent of those behind bars.

Equal protection, even under the loaded dice of bourgeois law, has moved farther away from reality than it has been for almost half a century.

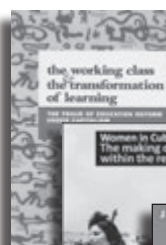
Through their state apparatus, the rulers organize *how* their laws are enforced and *against whom*. This includes the concentration of “stop and frisk” operations in Black working-class neighborhoods (by New York City cops' own figures, well over half those stopped in recent years are Black), the “War on Drugs,” longer and longer mandatory sentences—all topped off by “plea bargaining” blackmail of workers by prosecutors, judges, and often “defense” lawyers.

This was confirmed and driven home literally within a few days after the SWP meetings when the U.S. Supreme Court, in two majority decisions, further entrenched the denial to workers of a jury



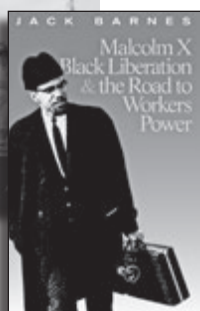
Massive expansion of energy is needed to close en
tion and other social conditions between working
and imperialist countries. Without power, running
impossible. Above, boy carries water for family, Ma

Further reading



The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning - Jack Barnes \$3

Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution -- Vilma Espín, Asela de los Santos, Yolanda Ferrer - \$15 (normally \$20)



Malcolm X, Black Liberation and the Road to Workers Power - Jack Barnes (Special: \$10 with subscription to the *Militant*, \$15 otherwise)

For a full listing of other books by Pathfinder press visit www.pathfinderpress.com

Available from distributors listed on page 6

'Militant,' books in working-class neighborhoods



Photos left to right by Carole Lesnick, Dan Fein, Alex Huinil
has set course to renew weekly *Militant* sales
activities where it has branches—with added at-
tentions—and surrounding towns and rural ar-
eas year or so include: (left) Paul Mailhot talks
with a woman (gesturing) at home in San Francisco
Francisco Cambero shows *Malcolm X, Black
to Workers Power* in Brooklyn Black commu-
nityson Kennedy and Jacob Perasso show paper
to tornado-hit Hueytown, Ala., April 2011.



trial, let alone a jury *of your peers*, as established for centuries in common law. The court did so in the guise of guaranteeing defendants the “right” to a “competent lawyer” during plea negotiations (almost always a harassed and often jaded public defender or court-appointed attorney).

Saying that plea bargains today “account for nearly 95% of all criminal convictions”—that is, almost everyone now sentenced to years behind bars—the high court’s opinion, citing a law journal, ruled that to a large degree “horse trading [between prosecutor and defense counsel] determines who goes to jail and for how long. It is not some adjunct to the criminal justice system; it is the criminal justice system.”

The ruling noted that today’s increasingly onerous “sentences exist on the books largely for bargaining purposes”—that is, to tighten the screws on workers “to cop a plea” in face of more and more risk of long years in prison or sometimes death. (See article on front page.)

‘Equal protection’

No state shall “deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws,” says the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, a direct conquest of the greatest revolution so far

in American history—the U.S. Civil War and establishment of Radical Reconstruction governments across the South, led in part by freed Black slaves.

The gutting of “equal protection” began in the 1870s with the murderous terror unleashed by racist forces that overthrew the Reconstruction regimes—the biggest counterrevolutionary blow to the working class in U.S. history.

Those bloody defeats were codified by Supreme Court rulings

in the late 19th century that provided the legal rationalizations for lynch-mob violence and buttressed Jim Crow segregation in the South for nearly a century. In addition to African-Americans, others who became targets across the former Confederacy and beyond include Catholics, Jews, immigrants, union militants, communists, and anyone—Black, Caucasian, or otherwise—who organized labor or political action, especially if it sought to cut across racial lines.

De facto segregation was pushed back by a new rise of struggles for Black freedom during World War II and powerful proletarian-led battles in the 1950s and 1960s. But the class reality facing the big working-class majority of African-Americans remains racism and brutality. It will take another revolution, one organized and led by the working class, to enforce true equal protection.

The propertied ruling families infect working people with their own bourgeois dog-eat-dog values. Observing that some workers—including workers who are Black—prey on each other, the rulers then rationalize capital’s corrupt and repressive police forces on grounds that morally depraved sections of the populace must be “kept under control.”

That’s why Malcolm X put so much emphasis on the need for workers and young people engaged in the fight for Black liberation to recognize “your own self-worth.” It’s why Farrell Dobbs—the revolutionary workers leader who helped organize and guide the labor battles that built the Teamsters into a fighting union across the Midwest in the 1930s, and who was later SWP national secretary and the party’s four-time presidential candidate—always pointed to workers’ capacity, *by fighting together*, to change our habits, strengthen our discipline and character, and transform ourselves through the battle.

In short, to turn our backs on the rulers’ view of us, and, above all, on its reflections in ourselves and in our actions toward each other.

Historic capitalist crisis

Today’s historic crisis of capital accumulation worldwide, Barnes pointed

out at the Saturday meeting, is like nothing virtually any working person has experienced in their adult lives. The crisis is rooted not in money, banking, and leveraged financial speculation. That’s where it initially exploded in 2008. But its foundations lie in the long-term tendency of the capitalists’ profit rates to fall—a crisis of production and intensifying competition for markets.

The capitalist rulers *react* to their crisis pragmatically. They pile up highly leveraged debt instruments of all kinds—from unheard-of levels of consumer and business loans, to derivatives and “swaps,” packaged mortgage-backed securities, and sovereign (government) debt—in an effort to postpone the day of reckoning and push off stepped-up struggles by working peo-

ple.

Among the major imperialist powers, the United States was the hardest hit by initial symptoms of the crisis. But now capitalist “Europe” is being torn apart at the seams. The consequences of the crisis for working people the world over were addressed by participants in the SWP leadership meetings from Canada, the United Kingdom, Scandinavia, Iran, Australia, and New Zealand.

What SWP members explain to fellow workers is that *the only way* the bosses can solve their crisis is by attacking our living standards, our job conditions and hours of work, our unions, and our basic human dignity. And that’s what they have been doing.

The workings of capitalism are increasing the ranks of the long-term jobless. A prominent display at the March 10 event showed that record numbers are dropping out of the labor force, pushing it below 64 percent of those of working age. Nearly 10 percent of the jobless have been out of work a year or more, the highest in half a century.

The exploiters use an expanding reserve army of unemployed workers to drive down not just real wages but the value of workers’ labor power—the living standards that have been fought for and won by workers and are seen as “normal” historically—in the United States and other imperialist countries.

The heightened competition over jobs and wages results not only from the growing ranks of the unemployed but above all from the massive increase in immigrant labor in recent decades and U.S. employers’ expanding exploitation of workers in China, India and other semicolonial countries.

This is a reminder of the pressing need for workers to organize to defend and advance the interests of our class as a whole, *on a world scale*, in order to stand up

to the assaults by capital. And the default in facing this challenge and acting on it is testimony to the continuing historic betrayal of the membership by the official misleaders of labor.

Capitalist disaster in Japan

The SWP National Committee meeting opened the day after the first anniversary of the March 11, 2011, earthquake and tsunami in Japan. More than 20,000 people were killed along Japan’s coastline—the equivalent of over 50,000 in a country with the population of the United States.

But not one of those people had to die, Barnes said. They were killed because Japan’s capitalist rulers (like propertied ruling families the world over) condemn tens of millions of workers, farmers, fishermen and small shop owners to live in low-lying coastal or river-basin areas most vulnerable to flooding and other damage.

Working people are relegated to shoddy housing that—unlike the homes and other buildings where the rulers and privileged middle classes live and work—aren’t constructed to withstand powerful tremors. What’s more, the capitalist rulers reject cutting into their profits to build adequate roads and evacuation routes, warning systems, and levees and sea walls.

Above all, under capital’s exploitative social relations, it’s impossible for toilers—through organizations and a working-class government of our own—to mobilize, *in action*, the class solidarity and mutual trust that minimize deaths and injuries in face of natural calamities.

Energy policy of proletariat

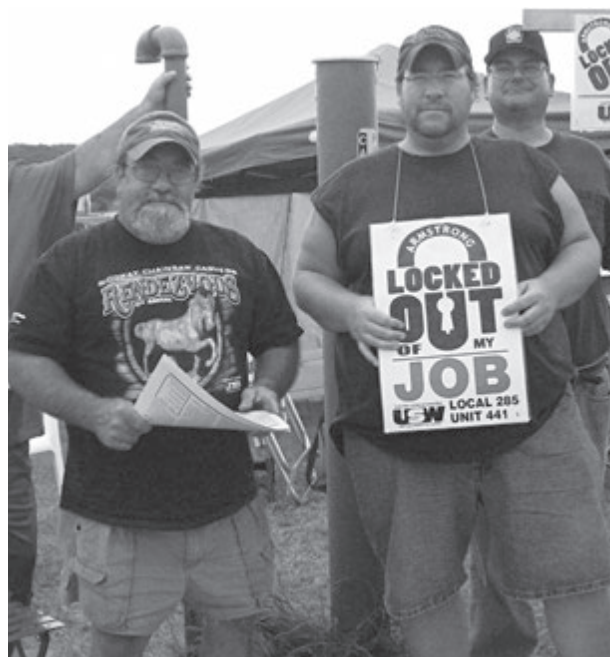
Barnes noted that the actual scope of the capitalist-caused social catastrophe in Japan has been overshadowed by sensationalized media accounts of the “nuclear disaster” at the Fukushima power plant, damaged by the tsunami. Yet one year later, not a single person has died from radiation poisoning from the plant, nor has serious illness been reported.

In fact, the anti-nuclear hype *added* to capital’s human toll. According to recent press reports, tsunami survivors who were old, sick, or trapped in rubble starved to death after Tokyo ordered rescuers to evacuate the area near the reac-

Continued on page 10



UN Photo/Tim McKulka
ormous gap in electrifica-
g people in semicolonial
water and sewerage are
alalal, Sudan, 2006



Locked-out Steelworkers picket Armstrong World Industries, Marietta, Pa., August 2011. Over past two years, workers nationwide have stepped up response to employer attacks. Readership of *Militant* has grown.

— SWP CAMPAIGN STATEMENT —

Join protests against lynching!

The Socialist Workers Party candidates in Iowa, Illinois and Washington state join in calling for the arrest and prosecution of Trayvon Martin’s killer. We should call this murder by its right name: a lynching. Martin, a 17-year-old high school student, was killed because he was Black.

George Zimmerman, the “neighborhood watchman” who shot Martin, told a 911 police dispatcher that Martin looked “suspicious, up to no good.” Martin had the nerve to stare back as Zimmerman stared him down. And then the nerve to run away. We’re told that an unarmed Martin may have had the audacity to try to defend himself from this menacing stranger who asked him “what are you doing here?” steps away from where Martin was staying with his father. In response, Zimmerman drew his gun and shot.

It’s not their own murderous cops the police department is protecting this time, but a vigilante killer. “We don’t have anything to dispute his claim of self-defense,” the Sanford police chief said of Zimmerman’s account, citing recent laws used to sanction vigilante violence. In a word, the police organized a racist cover-up.

But the victim’s family would not let it rest. Neither will the thousands more coming into the streets each day to prove in action that it’s too late in history for a lynching to be accepted. And they are backed by the sentiments of tens of millions.

The killing has touched a deep chord among workers and youth of all backgrounds, especially those who are Black. In cities and towns across the country demonstrations, vigils, school walkouts and other protests against this lynching have taken



Militant/Laura Anderson
Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Cook County State’s Attorney in Illinois, speaks at March 24 rally in Chicago demanding arrest of Trayvon Martin’s killer.

place and more are planned. We urge our supporters to help build these actions. Among the most important will be the NAACP-called national demonstration in Sanford, Fla., March 31.

Socialist Workers Party candidates

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

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

Washington state: Mary Martin, governor.

Actions across US

Continued from page 7
a lesser charge.”

“I’m in awe by the volume of the crowd,” Nelisa Ballosingh said. “I love the fact that everybody of all backgrounds and ethnicities is here to support a common cause.”

—Paul Pederson

Atlanta

Some 800 people rallied here March 22 to protest the killing of Trayvon Martin.

“The whole police department has got to go!” Shamiq Thompson told the *Militant*. “How could you shoot an unarmed child and not be arrested, not have your weapon taken away ... not even drug tested?” asked the 20-year-old fast food worker.

The crowd broke into applause when Freda Waiters spoke briefly. Her 19-year-old son Ariston Waiters was killed last December by a cop in nearby Union City, Ga., shot in the back twice while running away.

—Sam Manuel

Philadelphia

Several thousand marched through the downtown streets here March 23 and crowded into the Center City’s Love Park.

The overwhelmingly young and Black demonstrators—many in hoodies—waved packets of Skittles candy and ice tea cans shouting, “I am Trayvon Martin; Justice for Trayvon Martin.” Pockets of the crowd held signs saying, “Do I look suspicious?”

The evening start of the action—7:17 p.m.—was called to coincide with the arrival of police shortly after Martin was fatally shot.

—Osborne Hart

SWP sets weekly campaigning with ‘Militant’ and books

Continued from page 9

tor and blocked even family members from returning to their homes to seek out missing kin.

Class-conscious workers must not bend to such hysteria, Barnes said. It flies in the face of expanding electrification and industrialization to the semi-colonial nations of Asia, Africa, the Mideast, and the Americas in order to close the enormous gap—measured in access to electricity and in other social conditions—between workers and farmers there and those in the imperialist world.

An energy policy of the proletariat aims to bring the earth’s toilers together in common worldwide struggle to bring about a convergence in access to electrification—a struggle against the exploiting classes that lays the foundations for an international revolutionary movement of working people.

Windmills, solar panels, Chevy Volts, and other “green energy” can’t come close to meeting the energy needs of billions around the globe. That’s why nuclear power reactors are coming on line at an accelerated pace from China and India to Brazil, Argentina, and elsewhere—and will continue to do so.

Whatever the forms of electrical generation and industry, under capitalism the bosses’ goal is to maximize profits—and the health and safety of working people and stewardship of the soil, waters, air and atmosphere be damned. As Marx wrote, capital in its ceaseless drive for accumulation “lays waste and ruins” both workers and the natural world we transform with our labor to create all wealth.

Far from a justification for unscientific and anti-working-class antagonism to massively expanding energy production, however, these facts are a powerful indictment of the dictatorship of capital. They’re an argument to strengthen our unions and use union power to enforce the health and safety of workers and the public.

Above all they’re another reason capitalist rule must be overturned in revolutionary struggle and replaced by the state power of the working class.

Halt war threats on Iran!

It’s a mistake for opponents of imperialist war threats against Iran to assume that Tel Aviv can’t launch a massive air assault without Washington’s go-ahead,

Barnes said. The Israeli rulers will never allow their defense to be dependent on another power, including U.S. imperialism.

The Israeli regime would prefer the bloody job in Iran get done by Washington’s substantially greater military power, but if not, they’re ready to initiate the effort themselves.

The best thing that could happen for working people in Iran and the Mideast, Barnes said, would be for Tehran to make a convincing case to world opinion that it has no intention of developing nuclear weapons—not the wink-of-the-eye denials the bourgeois rulers make today.

If not reversed, Tehran’s game of bourgeois bluff becomes a death trap for the Iranian people. It is an obstacle to working people in Israel mobilizing to take power from the bourgeoisie and put an end to the nuclear weapons stockpile there once and for all.

The revolutionary government of Cuba unconditionally opposes military assaults on Iran and defends its right to develop nuclear and other energy sources. At the same time, Cuba rejects Washington’s provocative lie that it is helping Iran develop nuclear arms.

As for Cuba itself, “We have never considered producing nuclear weapons because we don’t need them,” Fidel Castro told an audience at the University of Havana in 2005. He continued, “We possess a weapon as powerful as nuclear ones and it is the magnitude of the justice we are fighting for.” Cuba’s communist leadership relies on the revolutionary political consciousness and military readiness of workers and farmers there.

Revolutionary continuity

The March 10 event and SWP leadership meetings emphasized the political continuity of the party’s course with lessons of the revolutionary working-class struggle for power over the past 165 years.

That record, both Barnes and Waters emphasized, opens with political conclusions drawn by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels from battles in the 19th century—from the revolutions of 1848-49 in Europe, to the 1870 Paris Commune. Marx and Engels drew those lessons as participants and central leaders of the communist workers movement of the day.

That continuity extends through lessons from the history of forging the Bolshevik leadership of the Oc-

tober 1917 Russian Revolution, guided by V.I. Lenin, as well as organized efforts by revolutionary-minded workers to extend that conquest of working-class power to other countries the world over.

The most recent experience, the proletarian revolution that lives and fights today, is the Cuban Revolution and the leadership that began to be built by Fidel Castro and others in the Rebel Army in the 1950s. Decisive chapters of that effort are detailed in the new book, *The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution* (see coverage of its launching at the recent Havana International Book Fair in the March 5 issue of the *Militant*).

The decades-long struggle to build a proletarian party in the United States draws its strength and political clarity from this unbroken revolutionary legacy.

Join the campaigning!

The SWP’s weekly efforts to systematically sell the socialist press and books on revolutionary politics in working-class neighborhoods—and the readership the *Militant* newspaper is winning among fighters in labor struggles and the battle for Black freedom—are essential to building a political vanguard of working people in the United States.

No other organization even claiming to be a workers party today any longer produces a weekly newspaper its members use to reach out to militants from the streets of Sanford, Fla., to the docks in Longview, Wash. None sell their press at mines, factories, and other workplaces. At no place other than meetings of the Militant Labor Forum in cities across the U.S. can working people come, week in and week out, for debate, discussion and clarification of pressing political questions facing our class.

And between now and the November elections, Socialist Workers Party candidates and their supporters will be campaigning with the *Militant*, with *Malcolm X*, *Black Liberation*, and the *Road to Workers Power*, and with other literature to present their fighting working-class course in opposition to the assaults on workers and farmers in the U.S. and abroad by the Democrats, Republicans and other capitalist parties.

We urge workers and youth who follow the *Militant* to join us in these campaigning efforts.