

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Havana conference discusses legacy of struggle by blacks in Cuba
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 76/NO. 18 MAY 7, 2012

Union leader framed up in battle against sugar bosses

3rd stalwart targeted by cops in lockout struggle



Vicki Ripplinger

Picket line confronts scabs outside American Crystal Sugar's plant in East Grand Forks, Minn., March 28. Some 1,300 workers in Midwest have been locked out by company since Aug. 1.

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

HILLSBORO, N.D.—Scott Ripplinger, a union leader and one of 1,300 workers locked out by American Crystal Sugar Co. in the Upper Mid-

west, has been framed up on charges of disorderly conduct and lying to the police about a March 5 picket line incident outside American Crystal's plant here.

The workers, members of the Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers union, were locked out Aug. 1 after rejecting American Crystal's concession contract proposal by 96 percent. Three months later, the union rejected a similar contract by 90 percent.

After the lockout, American Crystal Sugar brought in more than 1,000 replacement workers from Strom En-

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'Militant' talks about workers' 'need to stand together, fight'

BY LOUIS MARTIN

At the end of the first week of an eight-week international campaign to win or renew 2,400 subscribers to the *Militant*, we stand at 448, or 19 percent of our goal.

The drive runs through June 10 and is part of a long-term effort to increase the readership of the socialist newsweekly among the broadest layers of working people. Consistent door-to-door sales in working-class neighborhoods is a key aspect.

Two members of the Socialist Workers Party in Minneapolis went to the Red River Valley in the Upper Midwest last weekend, where 1,300 workers have been fighting a lockout by American Crystal Sugar since Au-

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Spanish rulers' 'austerity' aims at workers' living standard

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Working people in Spain are the target of "austerity" and "labor reform" measures being carried out by the bosses and their government in that country and pushed by the strongest imperialist powers of Europe. Spain has become the focus of the continent's propertied rulers as they react to the deepening crisis of capitalism—which appears on the surface to flow from problems of credit and finance, but is actually rooted in a systemic slowdown of capitalist production and trade.

"Spain has become an important testing ground for Europe's austerity strategy," notes the April 17 *Wall Street Journal*. "A failure risks undermining not only Spain's economy, but the euro as well."

Spain's official unemployment rate is nearly 24 percent and rising. It's more than 50 percent for those under age 25.

Spanish banks over the past several months have been bailed out by the European Central Bank, which since December has provided low interest three-year loans. The banks promptly used the funds to buy up Spanish government debt to stave off government default as the capitalist rulers seek to

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Oppose gov't assault on immigrant workers!



Militant/Betsy Farley

Dennis Richter, left, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress in Illinois' 7th District, campaigns at demonstration against immigration jail in Crete, Ill., April 1.

The Socialist Workers Party election campaign in Illinois calls on working people to join May Day actions wherever possible as a demon-

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY CAMPAIGN STATEMENT

stration of working-class solidarity.

May 1 is International Workers Day, celebrated around the world. Its origin is in the workers' struggles of 1886 for an eight-hour workday and

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Trayvon Martin killing sparks fight against pro-vigilante law

BY NAOMI CRAINE

SANFORD, Fla.—Nationwide demonstrations have subsided in the weeks following the April 11 indictment and arrest of George Zimmerman—the self-appointed neighborhood watch

captain who shot and killed 17-year-old Trayvon Martin here. At the same time, discussion among working people and public meetings continue, many focused on the fight to repeal pro-vigilante "Stand Your Ground" laws enacted in states across the country in recent years and brought to the fore by the local police department's refusal to arrest Zimmerman.

"What went through my mind was

Continued on page 4

White House protest demands, 'Free Cuban 5 revolutionaries!'

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

WASHINGTON—Some 300 people picketed in front of the White House April 21 demanding freedom for five Cuban revolutionaries: Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González, Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino and René González.

The Cuban Five, as they have become known, were arrested in Florida in 1998 and convicted on various trumped-up "conspiracy" charges.

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Spring 'Militant' subscription campaign April 14 - June 10 (week 1)

Country	quota	sold	%	2,400
UNITED STATES				
Los Angeles	160	66	41%	
Lincoln	35	9	26%	
New York	260	62	24%	
Houston	90	20	22%	
Chicago*	170	31	18%	
Twin Cities*	155	28	18%	
Des Moines*	140	24	17%	
Miami	100	17	17%	
Washington	70	11	16%	
Philadelphia	90	14	16%	
Denver†	7	1	14%	
Seattle*	190	26	14%	
Boston	60	8	13%	
San Francisco	175	23	13%	
Atlanta*	185	22	12%	
Total U.S.	1887	362	19%	
UNITED KINGDOM				
London	130	26	20%	
Manchester	55	14	25%	
U.K. Total	185	40	22%	
CANADA	95	16	17%	
NEW ZEALAND	80	12	15%	
AUSTRALIA	70	18	26%	
Total	2317	448	19%	448
Should be	2400	312	13% should be

* Raised goal † New to scoreboard

Boston: garment worker wins stay of deportation

BY TED LEONARD

BOSTON—Supporters of the fight to stop the deportation of Noelia Ramos, a garment worker arrested in a 2007 factory raid, won a postponement. Hours after an April 17 press conference and rally outside the Arlington Church here immigration authorities notified Ramos, who is originally from Honduras, they were granting her a one-year stay.

“As an exercise of discretion, ICE granted a one-year stay of removal after reviewing all factors of the case,” said Immigration and Customs Enforcement spokesperson Ross Feinstein.

Recommended reading

Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?
A necessary debate

By Mary-Alice Waters

“To think that a socialist revolution in the U.S. is not possible you would have to believe not only that the ruling families of the imperialist countries and their economic wizards have found a way to ‘manage’ capitalism. You would also have to close your eyes to the spreading imperialist wars, civil wars, and economic, financial, and social crises we are in the midst of.” —\$7

WWW.PATHFINDERPRESS.COM

“Why are they still trying to deport those arrested in the New Bedford raid?” asked Nataly Castaño, at the rally of some 40 people. Castaño is an organizer of the Student Immigration Movement, one of the rally sponsors.

Ramos had been arrested by ICE in March 2007 when hundreds of armed cops stormed the Michael Bianca Inc. plant in New Bedford, arresting 361 workers, most of whom were women and sewing machine operators.

ICE had instructed Ramos to report to immigration authorities April 18 with a ticket to Honduras where she would be deported. She has a two-month-old son and a four-year-old girl who were born in the United States.

The Student Immigration Movement held a vigil on the steps of the Arlington Church throughout the week to draw attention to the fight.

Also speaking at the program was Reina Rivas, another worker who had been arrested in the New Bedford raid five years ago and faces deportation proceedings, and Peter Lowber of the Boston New Sanctuary Movement.

“If we fight, we can win,” Lowber said. “We only have to remember Vinny and Denis.” Last fall the Student Immigration Movement waged a fight in Boston that stopped the deportation of Vinny Quirino and Denis Lemos, two young Brazilian immigrants.

Sponsors of the rally included Presente.org, United We Dream, Centro Comunitario del Trabajador and United Interfaith Action.



Militant/Ted Leonard

Noelia Ramos (holding microphone), a garment worker arrested in 2007 factory raid in New Bedford, speaks at April 17 rally in Boston about fight against being deported to Honduras. Later that day immigration authorities granted her a one-year stay.

Join May 1 actions to fight for rights of immigrant workers

Below are some of the May Day actions planned around the country. All are scheduled for Tuesday, May 1 unless otherwise noted.

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Assemble 1 p.m. at Olympic and Broadway.

San Diego

Assemble 12 noon at Civic Center. Info: (619) 923-3685.

CONNECTICUT

New Haven

Assemble 11 a.m. at City Hall. March at 12 p.m. to Festival on the Green. Info: 203-606-3484

GEORGIA

Atlanta

Assemble 11 a.m. at Georgia Capitol, Washington Street. Info: (770) 457-5232

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Assemble 12 p.m. at Union Park.

LOUISIANA

New Orleans

Assemble 11:30 a.m. at Louis Armstrong Park. Info: (504) 655-6610.

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis

Assemble 3:30 p.m. at Lake Street and

Nicollet Avenue.

NEW YORK

Bronx

April 28. Assemble, 1 p.m. at Brook Park, Brook Avenue between E. 141 and E. 140 Street. Info: (718) 292-6137.

Manhattan

Assemble 12 noon at Union Square, 14th Street and Broadway. March at 5:30 p.m. Info.: (212) 633-6646.

OREGON

Portland

Assemble 3:30 p.m. at South Park Blocks. Info: (503) 233-6787.

Salem

Assemble 6 p.m. at Oregon State Capitol. Info: www.oregonmayday.com

WASHINGTON

Seattle

Assemble 3:30 p.m. at St. Mary's Church, 611 20th Ave. March at 5 p.m. Info: (206) 324-6044.

WISCONSIN

Madison

Assemble 5 p.m. at State Capitol, State Street steps. Info: 608-250-9240.

Milwaukee

Assemble Sunday April 29, 12:30 p.m. at Voces de la Frontera, 5th Street and Washington. Info: vdlf.org

THE MILITANT

Defend abortion rights!

The U.S. ruling class and its two parties—the Democrats and Republicans—have been chipping away at women's right to abortion as part of the wide-ranging offensive against the rights of working people. The 'Militant' covers the fight to defend this vital social gain.



Abortion Rights

Protest in London March 30 of supporters of women's right to choose abortion.

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France: Send 76 euros for one year to Diffusion du Militant, P.O. Box 175, 23 rue Lecourbe, 75015 Paris.

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‘Militant’ subscriptions

Continued from front page
gust.

“In Drayton, N.D., we met for a few hours with five locked-out workers at the picket shanty to talk with them about their fight and other political questions confronting the working class,” writes Frank Forrestal. “The meeting was organized by Paul Dalhman, who has been reading the paper for several months.”

“I really like the *Militant*,” said Clayton Bronson, a locked-out worker who recently retired and a long-term subscriber. “After I read it I make sure my neighbors read it. It gets into several hands.”

Workers at the meeting bought two subscriptions and a copy of *Teamster Rebellion* by Farrell Dobbs.

In East Grand Forks, Minn., communist workers met with Manuel Ramón, a stalwart of the fight against American Crystal Sugar and long-term subscriber.

“Manny said he wanted a copy of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by Jack Barnes,” Forrestal reports. “He said he had seen the ads for the book in the *Militant*, so he knew it was important.”

The book is offered at a reduced price with a subscription. So is *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning*, also by Barnes. (See ad below.)

Terry Holm, another locked-out worker from Gardner, N.D., and a long-time subscriber, also got the *Workers Power* book. A few weeks earlier he had bought *Teamster Rebellion*. “I’m not much of a reader, but I guess I will have to change that now,” he said—reflecting a growing thirst among workers to understand the roots of the capitalist crisis and what working people can do about it.

Mary Martin, Socialist Workers candidate for Washington state governor, went to the Longview, Wash., area last weekend with supporters of her campaign. They sold four subscriptions to the *Militant* and two *Workers Power* books going door to door. The International Longshore and Warehouse Union waged a victorious eight-month fight in Longview against an attempt by EGT Development to keep the union out of its new grain terminal.

Robert Harju, a steamfitter, bought a

subscription and a copy of *Malcolm X, Back Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*. “As a working-class person,” he said, “I think we need to stand together and fight. This is what the paper talks about.”

“Five coworkers subscribed this week at the factory where I and another Socialist Workers candidate, Steve Warshell, work. Two of them got copies of the *Workers Power* book,” writes Jacquie Henderson from Houston. Henderson is the party’s candidate for U.S. Senate and Warshell is the candidate for Congress in Texas’ 18th District. Recent subscribers in the plant helped sell two of the five subscriptions, said Henderson.

You too can help win new readers to the socialist newsweekly. Discuss and share it with your friends and relatives. Order a small bundle. Adopt a goal. Contact a distributor listed on page 8 or contact the *Militant* (see page 2).



Militant/Dan Fein

Door-to-door effort signs up new subscriber in working-class neighborhood of Garfield, N.J.

10 1/2 years: imperialists’ Afghan war grinds on

BY SETH GALINSKY

The U.S. government plans to keep a “residual force” of thousands of U.S.-led special forces in Afghanistan for many years after the touted withdrawal deadline of 2014, according to recent news reports.

There are currently some 90,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan, with 22,000 scheduled to leave by Sept. 30, according to the *New York Times*. No schedule has been set for the pullout of the remaining 68,000 soldiers, the paper said.

In the meantime, the Pentagon is planning a major offensive for later this year in the eastern part of the country that could include an additional 5,000 troops, reported the *National Journal* April 4.

After more than a decade of waging war against the Taliban and other Islamist groups in Afghanistan, Washington still faces major obstacles in cobbling together an Afghan army and police force that can prop up a regime that will defend U.S. imperialist interests.

In testimony before the House of Representatives Armed Services Committee March 20, U.S. Defense Department spokesperson James Miller said that attrition in the Afghan army was down from 36 to about 24 percent a year.

At a March 26 forum at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C., Gen. John Allen, the commander of U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan, talked about “an erosion of trust” between the Afghan and U.S. forces and Taliban infiltration of Afghan forces. According to the New America Foundation, 71 NATO troops have been killed by Afghan soldiers or police since September 2009.

Allen pointed to recent U.S. actions as exacerbating the problem, behavior that reflects on the nature of the imperialist armed forces: burning of Korans by U.S. soldiers at Bagram Air Base in February, the slaughter of 17 civilians by U.S. Sgt. Roger Bales on March 11 and a video that became public in January of U.S. Marines urinating on dead Taliban soldiers.

Three weeks after Allen’s speech, the *Los Angeles Times* released photos taken in February 2010 of soldiers from the U.S. 82nd Airborne Division posing with severed limbs of dead Afghan suicide bombers and their victims.

At the same time Washington is also pursuing negotiations with the Taliban over terms that likely include the scope of Taliban involvement in a future Afghan government.

Drone attacks in Yemen, Pakistan

While Washington prepares to scale back its operations in Afghanistan, it is stepping up drone attacks in Yemen, Pakistan, and the Horn of Africa.

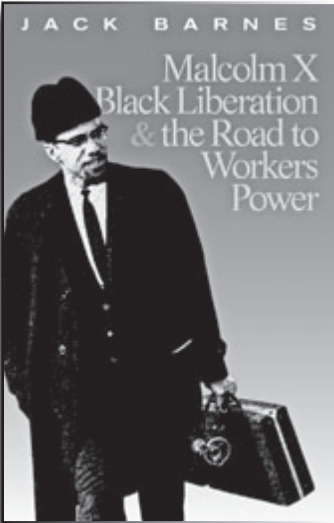
The *Washington Post* reported April 19 that the CIA was pushing for per-

Continued on page 5

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.”

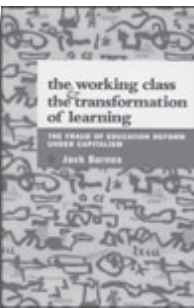
—Jack Barnes

Only \$10 with subscription to the *Militant* or \$15 without. Usually: \$20.

The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning

by Jack Barnes

\$2 with a subscription.



Available from distributors on page 8

Funds start coming in for the ‘Militant’

BY LEA SHERMAN

Contributions for the Militant Fighting Fund have started to arrive. The seven-week fund drive to raise \$120,000 runs through June 4.

The annual fund effort helps cover basic operating expenses such as rent, printing costs and the fielding of volunteer worker correspondents.

As working-class resistance to the bosses’ assaults has grown, increasing numbers of workers see the *Militant* as their own.

Clayton Bronson, a recently retired worker in Drayton, N.D., who became a reader in the course of a lockout by American Crystal Sugar, kicked in \$20 for the fund. Five other locked-out workers in northern Minnesota and North Dakota gave a total of \$50.

Consider supporting the socialist newsweekly and help get it out far and wide. Every contribution helps. Contact distributors of the *Militant* listed on page 8, or send a check, made out to the *Militant*, to: the *Militant*, 306 W. 37th St., 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.

<i>‘Militant’ Fighting Fund</i>			
April 14–June 4			
Country	Quota	Paid	%
UNITED STATES			
Atlanta	\$8,600	\$1,025	12%
Boston*	\$4,000	\$5	0%
Chicago	\$10,000	\$25	0%
Des Moines	\$2,200	\$182	8%
Houston	\$4,000	\$0	0%
Lincoln	\$375	\$0	0%
Los Angeles	\$9,000	\$0	0%
Miami	\$3,200	\$30	1%
New York	\$21,000	\$100	0%
Philadelphia	\$4,000	\$300	8%
San Francisco	\$15,000	\$765	5%
Seattle	\$8,800	\$338	4%
Twin Cities	\$6,500	\$0	0%
Washington.	\$7,600	\$70	1%
Total U.S.	\$104,275	\$2,840	3%
CANADA			
	\$7,000	\$0	0%
NEW ZEALAND			
	\$4,500	\$0	0%
AUSTRALIA			
	\$1,500	\$0	0%
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	\$700	\$0	
Manchester	\$375	\$0	
Total U.K.	\$1,075	\$0	0%
Total	\$118,350	\$2,840	2%
Int’l goal	\$120,000		

Event recalls Harry Moore, Black rights fighter in Florida

BY TOM BAUMANN
AND THERESA KENDRICK

COCOA, Fla.—More than 75 people packed the Florida Historical Society’s Research Library April 17 to attend a panel discussion on “From the Civil War to Civil Rights and Beyond: The Past, Present, and Future of the Fight for Racial Equality in Florida,” featuring Evangeline Moore, surviving daughter of Harry T. Moore, a Florida civil rights fighter lynched by the Ku Klux Klan in 1951.

Harry Moore organized the Brevard County National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in 1934 and became the president of the Florida State Conference of the organization. In 1937, he filed the first lawsuit in the South demanding equal pay for teachers who were Black. In 1944, he set up the Progressive Voters’ League. He also led independent investigations into Florida lynchings and pressed for the indictment of those responsible.

Moore was centrally involved in the fight against the notorious frame-up of four African-American youths in Groveland in 1949. He spoke at scores of public meetings and demanded Lakeland Sheriff Willis McCall be charged and tried for the murder of Samuel Shepherd, one of the defendants whom he killed while in his custody. Moore and his wife were lynched on Christmas Day 1951 by a bomb placed under their bed. Local, state and federal authorities never charged anyone with the crime.

The panel kicked off the 9th Annual Moore Heritage Festival of Arts and Humanities, named in his honor. This year’s opening takes place against the backdrop of the national outcry against the killing of Trayvon Martin in nearby Sanford by neighborhood watchman vigilante George Zimmerman.

The murder of Harry and Harriette Moore took place in the midst of a number of Klan and white supremacist attacks in Florida, including the bombings

of Jewish community centers in Miami. The NAACP responded by urging national action, demanding that those responsible be prosecuted. They urged the trade union movement to call a national political strike to back the demand and set up a special committee to press for action.

The Socialist Workers Party joined the campaign. The front-page editorial in the Jan. 7, 1952, *Militant* was “Avenge Harry Moore—End Jim Crow Terror!” and subtitled “NAACP, Labor Must Give Lead For Mass Action.” The party worked with local NAACP branches to organize public protests and pressed for the unions to act. In response to this call, 5,000 people marched in Los Angeles.

Farrell Dobbs, the party’s national chairman, wrote a letter to 25 national unions and civil rights organizations, urging them to join the campaign to

Martin killing sparks fight against vigilante law

Continued from front page

that finally the person who shot and killed my son was going to be held accountable for what he has done,” Sybrina Fulton, Martin’s mother, said on NBC’s “Today Show” when asked what she was thinking when prosecutor Angela Corey announced the indictment.

Zimmerman was charged with second-degree murder.

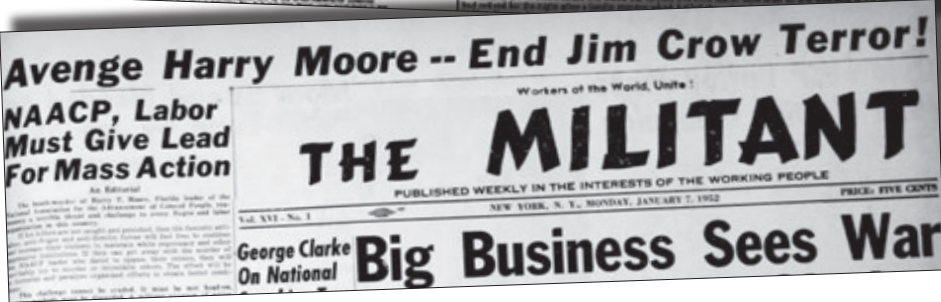
“Now that he’s charged, we’ll wait and see. He should have been charged from the beginning,” Dorothy Daniels, a retired custodian, told *Militant* correspondents in front of her house in a predominantly Black neighborhood here April 19.

Fulton and Tracy Martin, Trayvon’s parents, participated in an April 19 town hall meeting titled “Standing Our Ground for Justice,” sponsored by the National Bar Association, a largely African-American organization of lawyers, in Tampa. The *Florida Courier* reported that about 300 people attended the meeting, which discussed the vigilante killing of Martin and called for protests against Stand Your Ground laws.

John Page, the association’s president-elect, called for “examining the effects of this law, particularly the increasing justified homicide claims in its wake.”

The Florida version of the law makes it legal for an individual to use deadly force in public “to prevent the imminent commission of a forcible felony,” even if there is a clear option to simply walk away.

Tanya Clay-House, the bar association’s Civil Rights Law Section Chair, told the crowd that the law encouraged



Top, banner headline in Jan. 5, 1952, *Afro-American* highlights killing of NAACP leader Harry Moore. Bottom, Jan. 7, 1952, *Militant* calls for mass action to protest Moore’s lynching.

combat racist violence.

He proposed they follow the NAACP’s action call by holding a national march on Washington, and that they organize defense guards to protect lives, homes

and meeting places from the Ku Klux Klan.

The annual Moore Heritage Festival in Cocoa is aimed at keeping Harry Moore’s fighting heritage alive.

“this vigilante justice that George Zimmerman ultimately acted upon by killing young Trayvon Martin.”

“You can’t, . . . as my boys at home call it, pick a fight and then kill somebody and say ‘I was standing my ground,’” said Benjamin Crump, attorney for the Martins.

The day before, several dozen students attended a memorial for Trayvon Martin at Florida International University in Miami. Martin’s mother and brother Jahvaris, an FIU student, attended the event, where students circulated petitions calling for repeal of the state’s “Stand Your Ground” legislation.

Under the pressure of the popular mobilizations demanding action in Martin’s killing, Florida Gov. Rick Scott announced the formation of a task force April 18 to “review” the law. The 17-member “Task Force on Citizen Safety and Protection” is headed by Lt. Gov. Jennifer Carroll and includes state Rep. Dennis Baxley, who sponsored the 2005 legislation, as well as a number of area neighborhood watch groups. Following the announcement of the commission, Baxley defended Stand Your Ground, telling *The Associated Press* he hoped the killing of Martin would “yield a better articulation of when and how the statute applies.” He voiced opposition to any changes that in his view would diminish citizens’ “ability to protect themselves.”

Carolyn Collins, president of the Hillsborough National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, told

people at the National Bar Association meeting to prepare for action when Scott’s panel comes to town: “When they come here to Tampa, be here.”

On April 19, the day before a court hearing on his request for bail while awaiting trial, Zimmerman asked to meet with Martin’s parents, saying he wanted to apologize to them.

“There may be a time and a place for that, but not right now,” Martin’s attorney told the press. “We believe Zimmerman’s request at this time is very self-serving, some 50 days later [after the killing of Martin], and the day before his bond hearing.”

The next day Judge Kenneth Lester Jr. granted Zimmerman bail, setting the amount at \$150,000. Disregarding their statements, Zimmerman addressed Martin’s parents, who were present at the hearing, saying, “I am sorry for the loss of your son. I did not know how old he was. . . . And I did not know whether he was armed or not.”

During the hearing investigator Dale Gilbreath, appearing as a defense witness, said authorities don’t know who started the fight between Martin and Zimmerman. He also said the prosecution has a witness who reported seeing one person chasing the other at the time and place Martin was killed and that the five police statements Zimmerman gave included points that were not consistent with physical evidence.

Zimmerman was released April 22 and went into hiding. He is allowed to move out of state, but was fitted with a GPS monitoring bracelet.

Indonesian women’s rights organization Kalyanamitra tour in New Zealand

Auckland

Changes Facing Women Today in Indonesia and Iran: Why Previously Banned Books are Now Being Published. Speakers: Rena Herdiyani; Hegel Terome; Mary-Alice Waters; Sharyn Graham Davies, Auckland University of Technology. Thurs., May 3, 4 p.m. Sponsored by New Zealand Asia Institute. Room 325, Level 3, Owen G. Glenn Building, 12 Grafton Road., University of Auckland.

Changes Facing Women Today in Indonesia and Iran: What Can We Learn. Speakers: Rena Herdiyani, Hegel Terome, Mary-Alice Waters. Fri., May 4, 5:30 p.m. Manukau campus, Auckland University of Technology, 640 Great South Road, near Cavendish Drive.

Meet the speakers for an informal lunch. Sat., May 5, 12:30 p.m. Hosted by the Indonesia Human Rights Committee. Bring finger food to share. Peace Place, 22 Emily Place (close to Britomart station).

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

From the Fight for Trayvon Martin to Picket Lines to Defend Workers—the Militant is Part of the Struggle. Militant Fighting Fund event. Speaker: Maura DeLuca, Socialist Workers Party, recently returned from a *Militant* reporting trip to Cuba. Sat., May 5, 7:30 p.m. 4025 S. Western Ave. Tel.: (323) 295-2600.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Our Politics Start With the World. A Militant Fighting Fund meeting. Speaker: Joe Swanson, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., May 5. Dinner, 6 p.m.; program, 7 p.m. Donation: \$5 program, \$5 dinner. 806 W. Washington Blvd., #202. Tel.: (312) 455-0111.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

Our Politics Start With the World. A Militant Fighting Fund event. Speaker: Louis Martin, *Militant* staff writer, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., May 5. Dinner, 6:30 p.m., program, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5 program, \$5 dinner. 3701 Pulaski Ave. Tel.: (215) 225-1270.

—CALENDAR—

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

Meeting to Celebrate Two New Books on the Cuban Revolution: Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution and The Cuban Five: Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should Be Free. Speakers: Maria del Carmen Herrera, Cuban Ambassador to New Zealand; Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press; others to be announced. Sun., May 6. Reception, 1 p.m., program, 1:30 p.m. Trades Hall, 147 Great North Road, Grey Lynn. Sponsored by Cuba Friendship Society and Pathfinder Books.

Bangladesh protests demand ‘arrest killer of union leader’

BY SETH GALINSKY

Aminul Islam, a garment workers’ union leader in Bangladesh, was tortured and killed at the beginning of April. Union organizers in the country’s growing garment industry have been targets for harassment and victimization by factory owners, cops and the government.

“We are demanding an impartial investigation and the arrest of those responsible,” said Kalpona Akhter, a leader of the Bangladesh Centre for Worker Solidarity, in a phone interview from Dhaka April 24. “Aminul was killed because of his union activities.”

Some 300 unionists protested in Dhaka April 13 demanding the government arrest and prosecute the killers of Islam.

Islam, 41, was a leader of the Bangladesh Garment and Industrial Workers Federation and the Bangladesh Centre for Worker Solidarity. He was arrested and tortured by National Intelligence Service cops in June 2010, according to Akhter. He refused to sign blank documents that would be used to prosecute his colleagues and managed to escape, he later told Human Rights Watch.

In July 2011, Islam, Kalpona Akhter, Babul Akhter, and other leaders of the solidarity group were indicted on frame-up charges of criminal intimidation, violence against civil servants, mischief causing damage, and unlawful assembly related to a June 18, 2010, protest at a factory operated by the Nassa Group. Nassa makes clothes for Kmart, Walmart, Gap, Sears, and J.C. Penney.

“This case against us is harassment,” Kalpona Akhter said. “The security forces are still following us. They tap our phones. And they waste

our time in court. All the charges should be dropped.”

According to the Dhaka *Daily Star*, Islam closed the Centre for Worker Solidarity early on April 4 after he observed a police van parked outside. He disappeared later that day. His tortured body was found near a police station two days later.

While still a predominantly agricultural country, the industrial working class in Bangladesh has grown tremendously since 1985, especially in garment, which makes up more than three-quarters of the country’s exports. Today Bangladesh is the second largest clothing manufacturer in the world, with 3.6 million workers, most of whom are women.

The minimum wage was increased 80 percent to 3,000 taka (\$36) per month as a result of protests by tens of thousands of garment workers in mid-2010. Bangladeshi garment workers



American Center for International Labor Solidarity, Bangladesh Office
Protest at National Press Club in Dhaka, Bangladesh, April 13 against killing a week earlier of Aminul Islam, leader of garment workers’ union fighting for improved wages and conditions.

still receive less than half the wages of their counterparts in China, and less than in Cambodia.

The workers also confront a major fight for safety on the job. According

to ABC News, nearly 500 workers have died in garment factory fires in the last five years due to conditions that include locked gates and shoddy wiring.

Unionist framed up in fight against sugar bosses

Continued from front page

gineering, a scab-herding outfit based in Minnetonka to run its five sugar factories in the Red River Valley—Hillsboro and Drayton in North Dakota and Crookston, Moorhead, and East Grand Forks in Minnesota—as well as two smaller plants in Chaska, Minn., and Mason City, Iowa.

Since late November, the company has hired some scabs from the local region by placing job ads in newspapers.

According to union pickets on duty March 5, a van driven by a female replacement worker approached the picket line at an unusually high speed. “For us it was get out of the way or get your legs broke,” Brian Berg, who was picketing at the time, told the *Militant*.

Following the incident, Ripplinger filed a report with the police saying the scab driver attempted to injure him and his fellow pickets. On April

3 officers of the county Sheriff’s department arrested Ripplinger at his home. He was released on \$400 bond later that day.

Ripplinger was charged in Traill County District Court with misdemeanor counts of giving false information to police and disorderly conduct. Cops claim company surveillance video backs up the scab’s allegation that Ripplinger jumped on the hood of her car and pounded on the window, according to the *Grand Forks Herald*.

“The scab was driving so recklessly that the only direction Scott could go was up onto her hood to avoid being hit,” said Berg.

Ripplinger’s arrest was splashed as a “crime” story in local papers and TV news in the Red River Valley and the surrounding region.

“The news coverage was a smear job against the union, making all of us look like criminals in the eyes of

the public,” Terry Holm, a locked-out worker from Hillsboro told the *Militant*.

The frame-up of Ripplinger is the third case against union leaders in the nine-month-long lockout by American Crystal Sugar against union members.

Brad Knapper, a member of the union’s negotiating committee locked-out from the Moorhead plant, faces trumped-up felony charges alleging that he “keyed” a replacement worker’s car at the picket line last December.

Brad Nelson, a leader of the union in Drayton and a member of the negotiating committee, is framed up on charges for allegedly spitting on a scab worker during shift change in another incident last December.

Both of these cases are scheduled to go to trial in early May. Ripplinger is scheduled for arraignment on April 25 in the Traill County District Court-house.

Afghanistan

Continued from page 3

mission to expand its use of drones in Yemen, where there have already been eight strikes this year. The spy agency wants to use “signature strikes,” modeled on those carried out in Pakistan that are based not on individual targets for assassination but “patterns of suspicious behavior.”

The Long War Journal, a website that tracks U.S. drone attacks, reports 27 strikes in Yemen since 2009 killing nearly 250 people, at least 48 of them civilians.

Washington restarted drone attacks in Pakistan Jan. 10, after a 55-day hiatus. Since then there have been 12 strikes and 87 people killed, according to the South Asia Intelligence Review.

The drone strikes there were temporarily halted after U.S. airstrikes killed 24 Pakistani soldiers on the Afghan border in November and Islamabad blocked supply routes in protest. A Pakistani parliamentary review in April called for an immediate end to the drone strikes, which are extremely unpopular. But an April 20 article in *Dawn*, said that the two governments are now “exploring various options for joint ownership of drone attacks against militant targets.”

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



May 8, 1987

Bernhard Goetz is being tried for attempted murder in the Dec. 22, 1984, subway shooting of four Black youths.

The prosecutor declared the teenagers—Troy Canty, Barry Allen, James Ramseur, and Darryl Cabey—were shot by Goetz not because he thought they intended to rob him, but “because they were the kind of people he hated with a ferocious and all-consuming passion.”

The facts, and Goetz’s own statements, make it unmistakably clear that his was not an act of self-defense, but one of cold-blooded racist violence.

When the youths approached Goetz in the subway car and one asked him for \$5, he responded, “I have \$5 for each of you” and pulled out a gun. He shot all four of them—two in the back as they fled. The Goetz case calls for the strongest protest. The fight to deter racist violence demands that he be put behind bars for his crime.



May 7, 1962

The propaganda image of the Cuban counter-revolutionaries as “freedom-fighters” doesn’t jibe with the April 27 gangster-assault by six of them on the New York office of the Cuban news agency, *Prensa Latina*.

In a carefully planned attack, they entered the office in late afternoon when but four employees were present. At gun point they forced a teletype operator to send a message to Havana. Addressed to Fidel Castro, it spoke of “freedom.”

The four employees—two teletypists and two editorial workers—were bound and gagged and forced to kneel. They were then beaten with gun butts. One suffered a concussion, another nose injuries. Fortunately, all escaped serious injury.

Files were strewn on the floor, a teletype machine damaged, and the office and four victims smeared with red paint from spray guns.



May 1, 1937

MINNEAPOLIS—For the first time in years this coming May Day finds the Minneapolis labor movement solidly behind preparations for a May Day parade and demonstration. While in other years such demonstrations were due mainly to the efforts of the left of the movement, this years finds the Central Labor Union sponsoring the affair enthusiastically aided and supported by all sections of the labor movement.

There is no doubt therefore that this year’s demonstration will overshadow that of last year, which in itself was a fine tribute to the militant section of the labor movement, having been the largest May Day parade and demonstration in many years.

All workers should get into the spirit of May Day. It is OUR DAY, the only holiday that the bosses have not given to us, consequently we should make the most of it.

Conference discusses legacy of struggle by blacks in Cuba

Havana event takes up fight against discrimination

BY RÓGER CALERO
AND OMARI MUSA

HAVANA—The eighth Nicolás Guillén International Colloquium and Festival of Music and Poetry was held here April 2-6. Meeting at the headquarters of the National Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba (UNEAC) and at the University of Havana, the more than 100 participants discussed the important place of Cubans of African descent in the fight for independence from Spain, their political and cultural contributions to the forging of the Cuban nation, and their weight in the revolutionary struggle that led to the overthrow of the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship in 1959 and the first socialist revolution in the Americas.

Organized by the Nicolás Guillén Foundation, the conference commemorated two important events in Cuban history: the 200th anniversary of the 1812 pro-independence and anti-slavery rebellion led by José Antonio Aponte, a free black; and the 100th anniversary of the 1912 armed protest by the Independent Party of Color (PIC), a political party founded in 1908 mostly by veterans of Cuba's independence wars who were of African descent.

The activities also celebrated the 110th anniversary of the birth of Nicolás Guillén, known as Cuba's national poet. The title of the event "I came in a slave ship," was taken from one of Guillén's best-known poems.

The conference and related events are part of the consistent effort led by UNEAC for more than a decade to raise consciousness about the legacy of slavery in Cuba and discrimination based on skin color. Making the true history of blacks in Cuba's revolutionary struggles more widely known is an important part of this effort.

The Spanish colonial regime and the Cuban propertied classes that followed denounced both the rebellion by Aponte and the armed protest organized by the Independent Party of Color as racist conspiracies, said Guillermo Rodríguez Rivera, a historian associated with the

Nicolás Guillén Foundation, in his keynote presentation at the conference. For decades afterward "the national bourgeoisie made sure they were buried in oblivion," he said. "We have not yet given them the recognition they deserve."

The rebellion led by Aponte was the first attempt nationwide to unite blacks, both free and slave, and Cubans of Spanish and mixed descent in the struggle for independence and the abolition of slavery. Spanish authorities and their Cuban collaborators brutally suppressed the movement claiming that Aponte was organizing "a race war" as in Haiti, Rodríguez said. Similar charges were used against the revolutionaries who won Haiti's independence from France in 1804, a result of a massive slave revolt. Aponte and several of his closest collaborators were hanged and their severed heads displayed in a cage at one of the principal entrances to Havana.

"The Haitian revolution *did* have an impact on Aponte," said Rodríguez, as it did on other independence movements in the hemisphere.

"The strategy of the colonial government was to terrorize blacks—who were mostly slaves—and whites who joined or sympathized with this cause," said Rodríguez.

Several participants in discussions pointed out how little about the Aponte rebellion is included in Cuba's school textbooks, and even less about the Independent Party of Color.

One of the purposes of the conference was to contribute to changing this. Participants welcomed the announcement that at the initiative of the Communist Party of Cuba an official public event was to be organized on April 9 at the site where the remains of Aponte and other fighters were so gruesomely displayed after they were hanged. Schools throughout Cuba that day also began their morning activities with presentations about Aponte and the 1812 rebellion, as did thousands of tobacco workers in their workplaces in central Havana.

Heriberto Feraudy, head of UNEAC's Aponte Commission Against Racial



Militant/Róger Calero

Workshop at 8th Nicolás Guillén International Colloquium and Festival of Music and Poetry, April 6. Conference was part of efforts to raise consciousness about legacy of racial discrimination in Cuba and of proud history of toilers who are black in Cuba's revolutionary struggles.

Discrimination, told conference participants that one of the things Cuban students would learn about was the origin of the popular Cuban expression "you are as bad as Aponte," and why it should be erased from their vocabulary.

Independent Party of Color

The final day of the conference was devoted to a panel of prominent Cuban historians and others on the conditions that led to the formation of the Independent Party of Color in 1908. "The situation was much more serious than simple discontent" among former slaves and other Cubans who were black, said María del Carmen Barcia, a well-respected Cuban historian. In addition to having to compete for jobs after slavery's abolition, Cubans of African descent were being displaced by a massive increase in immigration from Spain, said Barcia. She and the other panelists noted the contradictions be-

tween the economic and social conditions facing blacks and those of mixed descent in post-slavery, U.S. imperialist-dominated Cuba and the aspirations of equality they had fought for in the wars of independence.

The party won thousands of members and supporters nationally. The program of the Independent Party of Color advocated an end to racial discrimination, land distribution, free and compulsory education, the right to a trial by a jury that included blacks, opposition to the death penalty, an eight-hour work day, and other social demands in the interests of working people irrespective of skin color.

The Liberal Party government of José Miguel Gómez, the second president of Cuba after formal independence was gained in 1902, banned the party and arrested leaders of the PIC in 1910. Unable to function as an open legal party, the

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Illinois rally protests killing by cops

BY BETSY FARLEY
AND JOHN HAWKINS

NORTH CHICAGO, Ill.—Three hundred and fifty people marched to City Hall here April 21 demanding the firing and prosecution of the cops responsible for the death of Darrin Hanna. At a North Chicago City Council meeting April 9, new evidence was presented against the six cops who beat Hanna Nov. 6 as they arrested him for allegedly attacking his pregnant girlfriend. He died a week later.

In March, the state attorney's office cleared the cops, claiming they "acted reasonably and appropriately." On April 20 the U.S. Department of Justice told the *Chicago Tribune* that it has begun a preliminary inquiry into the case.

Hanna's relatives played a police audio recording at the April 9 meeting obtained through the Freedom of Information Act that contradicts the cops' version, indicating Hanna, 45, was not resisting the police and was pleading for his life.

"Put me down, please. I'm about to die," Hanna is heard on the tape. "I was down. They're killing me!"

The cops say they Tasered Hanna two or three times, punched him in the face twice, and hit him repeatedly with batons on the back of his legs.

"The county coroner's report says Hanna received multiple Taser shocks," Muriel Collison, attorney for Hanna's mother and son, told the *Militant*. "The

pictures from the medical examiner's office shows seven Taser marks."

On Feb. 22, Collison and attorney Kevin O'Connor, said that results of an independent autopsy showed that Hanna died from "sickle cell crisis" and "multisystem organ failure" caused by "multiple blunt traumas," including hemorrhages of the abdomen, chest and spleen.

The tape is "the smoking gun that was never talked about by the state's attorney or state police," O'Connor told the *Chicago Tribune*. "It's the complete opposite of what they reported. And nobody analyzed it because nobody wanted to analyze it."

Among the speakers at the April 21 rally were Jesse Jackson, president of Rainbow/Push Coalition; Juan Rivera, exonerated and released from prison after serving 19 years for a rape and murder he did not commit; and state Rep. Rita Mayfield, a cousin of Hanna.

Nearly every week since Hanna was killed dozens of people in North Chicago and from surrounding communities have joined Gloria Carr, Hanna's mother, and Ralph Peterson, Hanna's cousin, at meetings of the North Chicago City Council to demand prosecution of the cops and to shine a spotlight on other instances of cop brutality in this predominantly African American working-class town in Lake County, about 35 miles north of Chicago.

Hanna's family filed a civil wrongful death suit in federal court Dec. 13.

Havana conference protests killing of Trayvon Martin

Printed below is a message protesting the murder of Trayvon Martin sent to the Justice for Trayvon Martin Foundation on behalf of participants in the 8th Nicolás Guillén International Colloquium and Festival of Music and Poetry held in Havana, Cuba, April 2-6. The conference marked the 110th anniversary of the birth of Nicolás Guillén, Cuba's national poet. Guillén was black and much of his poetry highlights the African roots of Cuban culture.

Justice for Trayvon Martin!

In 1955, another child—Emmett Till—was murdered in the U.S. South. That year, Nicolás Guillén wrote an Elegy that began: "In North America/ the mariner's rose/ has its southern petal stained with blood." Today the South turns red again, with the treacherous murder of Trayvon Martin, a black student, only 17 years old, attacked without cause by a self appointed "neighborhood watchman" in Sanford, Florida, who has not been charged for such a hideous crime. The event that led Guillén to say in 1955: "A dead child, murdered, alone/ black," has been repeated, almost 60 years later, in a society that claims to be a model of democracy and justice.

The participants in the Eighth Nicolás Guillén Conference and Festival of Music and Poetry," held in Havana, April 2-6 of this year, demand that the U.S. government and the responsible authorities arrest and prosecute George Zimmerman, the murderer of Trayvon Martin, and stop all racist attacks in that country, which are protected by laws that seek to justify them.

We also want to extend to Trayvon's family and to the Black community in the United States our solidarity and our commitment to continue fighting against any manifestation of racism, discrimination, and exclusion.

Illinois uranium workers continue fight after lockout

BY BETSY FARLEY

METROPOLIS, ILL.—Workers at the Honeywell uranium processing plant here continue to defend their union, United Steelworkers Local 7-669, and wield it in the ongoing in-plant skirmishes over working conditions and other issues.

After a 14-month lockout, the 200 Steelworkers returned to work in the fall of 2011. They pushed back company demands to eliminate seniority and cut wages and pensions, turning the bosses' lockout into a fight for solidarity.

"During the fight a new group of workers stepped up," said Stephen Lech. "The executive board couldn't do everything, so many of the younger workers took on responsibility for organizing the picket lines and solidarity." Lech, 34, is the newly elected president of Local 7-669.

The Honeywell workers joined other struggles from Madison, Wis., where public workers protested state government attacks on their union, to Keokuk,

Iowa, where corn-processing workers fought a 10-month lockout by Roquette America.

They took their fight to the Honeywell shareholders meeting in Morristown, N.J. They joined with groups in Los Angeles involved in the fight against Arizona's anti-immigrant law, and workers rallies in Indianapolis and Washington, D.C.

"Now harassment of workers on the job is a daily thing," said Lech. "The company is doing random drug testing and breathalyzer tests for alcohol." He described how one worker was sent for a drug test after he was observed smoking a cigarette in the company parking lot.

Since the lockout ended seven workers have been fired, some, like Steve Allen, for alleged picket line incidents. The company accused Allen of breaking the car window of some line-crossers, although local police never charged him for lack of evidence.

Rick McConnell was fired in December for alleged misconduct on the



Militant/Laura Anderson

Rally in Metropolis, Ill., June 25, 2011, on one-year anniversary of lockout of 230 members of USW Local 7-669 by Honeywell. Lockout ended in August after 14-month fight.

job. "These are two of the most active union members, who never missed a picket line or a demonstration," Lech said. "The company fired them to take out leaders, and the union is fighting to get all of those fired back to work."

"I don't regret anything I did. I learned more," McConnell added. "I don't want to have to do it again, but if I have to, I'll

do a better job."

Christian Musselman, a fluorine cell operator with eight years in the plant, was part of a group that traveled to Marcus Hook, Pa., during the lockout, winning support from oil refinery workers. "The company is treating maintenance workers so bad that many are bidding

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Protest at White House demands freedom for Cuban Five

Continued from front page

Three were convicted of "conspiracy to commit espionage." Among them was Hernández, who was also convicted on false charges of "conspiracy to commit murder."

All but René González remain in prison. He was released last fall after 13 years, but is forced to serve an additional three-year parole in the U.S. Hernández is serving double life plus 15 years.

The U.S. government claims Hernández bore responsibility for the Cuban government's 1996 shutdown of two hostile aircraft that provocatively entered its airspace in disregard of repeated warnings. The plane was flown by Brothers to the Rescue, a counterrevolutionary group of Cuban exiles based in southern Florida. The Cuban government's defense of its sovereignty put an end to what had been a growing pattern of provocative incursions.

At the time of their frame-up arrests by the FBI, the five were living and working in southern Florida gathering information for the Cuban government on activities of Cu-



Militant/Ned Measel

April 21 demonstration in Washington, D.C., demanding freedom for five Cuban revolutionaries framed up by U.S. government was joined by contingent supporting three Puerto Rican political prisoners held in U.S. jails.

ban-American counterrevolutionary groups with a long history of violent attacks on Cuba and supporters of the Cuban Revolution. For decades these forces carried out various acts of murder and sabotage with the complicity of Washington.

The April 21 action took place on the last of five days of activities by supporters of the framed-up revolutionaries around the world. The actions were initiated by the International Committee for the Freedom of the Cuban Five and endorsed by more than 270 organizations.

In the big-business media "there is silence about the Cuban Five, but every day that passes more people can learn about this case," Erik Fundora, 40, who came from Cincinnati, told the *Militant* on the picket line.

On the day of the action a Joint Declaration was issued, demanding freedom for the five as well as three Puerto Rican political prisoners—Oscar Lopez Rivera, Avelino González Claudio and Norberto González Claudio—incarcerated in the U.S. The declaration was signed by 14 former Puerto Rican politi-

cal prisoners and dozens of groups and individuals supporting this fight.

The declaration said: "Today, when our sons, heroes of our homelands, suffer unjust prison sentences in the dungeons of the Empire and when their most basic human rights are being trampled upon by the government of the United States, our people demand with one voice the freedom of our patriots: Freedom for the three Puerto Rican heroes and for the five Cuban heroes ... their only 'crime' has been to defend the freedom, peace and tranquility of the Cuban people and to demand the right to freedom of the Puerto Rican people."

A Puerto Rican contingent organized by ProLibertad joined the picket line with a large banner that included photos of all eight political prisoners.

Four busloads traveled from New York to participate in the picket. One of these was sent by AFSCME Local 372, which organizes New York City Board of Education workers. Many of the workers decided to make the trip after hearing a report at a recent union meeting by Local 372 President Santos Crespo on his recent trip to Cuba. They were eager

to learn more about the case of the five and the fight for their freedom.

A special edition of Local 372's newsletter on Cuba, which includes a section outlining the frame-up, was distributed to everyone on the bus.

"Many more can be educated on what the Cuban Five case is all about," Shaun Francois, 45, an African-American who works for the Board of Education delivering food goods to local schools, told the *Militant* after participating in the White House action. "Power is in numbers and we need more to participate. Many workers living here need to learn more about Cuba."

At a rally held at the conclusion of the picket line, a message was read from Gerardo Hernández on behalf of the Cuban Five. "We are overwhelmed by the success of the five days for the Cuban Five in Washington, D.C.," he wrote. "It is the perfect example of the power of solidarity in our struggle to win over the hearts and minds of others into our road to freedom."

"We know that justice is on our side and in the end we will be victorious because of our friends around the world that continues to grow not just in numbers but in determination and energy. ...

"After almost 14 years of unjust imprisonment, the cause of the Cuban Five is in a very special moment. A moment that requires us to double our efforts for our claim to be heard and to make it impossible for the U.S. government to ignore," he wrote.

The evening before the demonstration, a public meeting was held at the Festival Center in northwest Washington that included an exhibit of political cartoons by Hernández. Among the speakers were Dolores Huerta, co-founder of the United Farm Workers; actor Danny Glover; professor and filmmaker Saul Landau; and Wayne Smith, former chief of U.S. Interests Section in Havana.

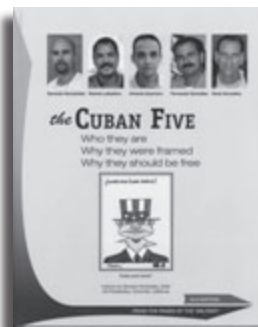
The five days of events was wrapped up following the picket with a meeting at the Venezuela Embassy.

Must reading!



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

The Cuban Five: Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should Be Free Articles from the *Militant* - \$5



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Havana conference

Continued from page 6

PIC organized an armed protest in May 1912, which was brutally suppressed by thousands of well-armed soldiers and paramilitary groups resulting in the massacre of more than 3,000 supporters of the PIC, mostly in eastern Cuba, the party's stronghold.

"We must rescue this history from oblivion," said Fernando Martínez Heredia, a noted author and essayist. "In it is engraved the struggle against racism. We must take ownership of the history of the Cuban people and their immense struggle for justice past, present and the future."

"It's essential that this discussion not be limited to an enlightened elite," Martínez added, referring to the challenge of taking this knowledge and discussion to broader layers of working people in Cuba. "Popular participation cannot be turned into just another phrase. We need to facilitate it and promote interest in broader sectors."

As part of meeting this challenge the Communist Party of Cuba in 2007 established a commission to organize the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the PIC's founding, and more recently UNEAC set up the Aponte Commission Against Racial Discrimination.

Publishing efforts

Speaking from the floor, Zuleica Romay, president of the Cuban Book Institute, reviewed the recent policy changes that have prioritized the publication of children's books that include more characters who are black and indigenous.

Romay noted the decision to dedicate the next International Havana Book Fair to Angola. "It is the first time it has ever been dedicated to an African country. This is not by chance," she said. "Nothing is by chance."

During the discussion the panel moderator, Graciela Chailloux, a well-known historian, who concentrates on the history of slavery and its aftermath in the Caribbean, pointed to the revolutionary changes that took place in the United States during 1867-77 Radical Reconstruction in the post-Civil War South, and the counterrevolution that defeated the Reconstruction governments. This history must be taken into consideration when studying what happened in Cuba, she said. "The politics of Cuba and the United States are interrelated," she noted. "What was happening to Blacks in the U.S. South cannot be disconnected." She urged participants to read *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by Jack Barnes to further their understanding of this connection.

King and Malcolm

One session of the conference was devoted to a panel entitled "Racism and Antiracism." It included presentations on Martin Luther King Jr. by Raúl Suárez, former director of the Martin Luther King Center in Havana, and on Malcolm X by Omari Musa, representing Pathfinder Press, the main publisher of Malcolm's speeches.

Speaking about Malcolm X's relevance in today's world, Musa described the economic crisis of the capitalist system worldwide and the devastating consequences of the rulers' assault on working people's living standards and constitutional rights. He pointed to the incarceration and criminalization of millions in the United States, a disproportionate number of whom are Black, as a necessary component of the ruling-class assault.

Musa's presentation highlighted Malcolm X's political understanding that the U.S. capitalist system cannot be reformed to bring about equality



Leaders of Independent Party of Color, which led armed protest in May 1912 in Cuba. Party advocated end to racial discrimination, land to peasants, eight-hour workday and other social demands in the interests of working people. "We must rescue this history from oblivion," Fernando Martínez told conference in Cuba.

for African-Americans and that the system has to be overturned. "Malcolm's stance on the need for political independence from both capitalist parties, Democrat and Republican, distinguished him from all other leaders of the struggle for Black rights," said Musa. Quoting from Malcolm X's speeches, he pointed to his uncompromising internationalism: "Malcolm saw the political course he was on as part of a worldwide revolution."

He counterposed Malcolm's course to King's perspective of reforming the capitalist system and his support for the liberal wing of the Democratic Party.

Suárez, whose presentation dealt primarily with King's religious background, spoke about the studies done by King on the brutal methods used by the slave masters to train "an ideal slave," and the role of the traditional Baptist church in the South in legitimizing segregation and racism. He noted that King had gone through a substantial political evolution in his final years, registered in his "more radical" criticism of the brutality of segregation and his opposition to the U.S. war in Vietnam.

Many of the participants appreciated Musa's explanation that the murder of Trayvon Martin was not a cop killing like so many others in the U.S., but the act of an armed vigilante, aided and abetted by the cops. "This is one more confirmation that for the descendants of African slaves in the United States, equal protection under the law remains to be won," Musa noted.

On the last day of the conference, the more than 100 participants present approved a message of solidarity to Trayvon Martin's family and supporters and demanded the arrest and prosecution of his killer. The message was read by Nicolás Hernández Guillén, president of the Nicolás Guillén Foundation (see message on page 6).

A table with a display of titles published by Pathfinder, among them the 10 books and pamphlets of speeches by Malcolm X, in English, Spanish, and French, as well as many titles on the class struggle in the United States, was a busy center of continuing discussions as participants purchased many books and pamphlets. The most sought-after title was *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, with 20 copies sold. A set of each of the Pathfinder books in English and Spanish with speeches and interviews by Malcolm X was donated to the UNEAC library.

Conference participants also had a chance to enjoy many hours of music and poetry. Highlights included an impromptu performance by famous rumba singer Pedro Fariñas and a reading by internationally known Cuban poet Nancy Morejón. Presentations on other topics ranged from African influences in Nicolás Guillén's poetry to the contributions of Afro-Cuban women to music, the history of discrimination against Chinese in Cuba, and anti-Semitism in the country before and during the second world war.

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Oppose gov’t attacks on immigrants!

Continued from front page

the working-class martyrs in Chicago who were framed up by the cops for their part in it. In the U.S., the holiday’s working-class spirit was reclaimed in 2006 when nearly 2 million immigrant workers and supporters of immigrant rights took to the streets to demand an end to deportations and discrimination.

The reclaiming of May Day was a response to a renewed assault by the capitalist rulers on those of us who are foreign-born. This offensive has continued unabated ever since.

Over the last several years the U.S. government has forced the firing of thousands of workers without papers through “silent raid” immigration audits, established that fingerprints of everyone taken into police custody be checked against Department of Homeland Security databases, and conducted nationwide sweeps to arrest and deport immigrants they label “criminals.”

In one of the latest operations, Immigration and Customs Enforcement carried out coordinated arrests at the beginning of April of more than 3,100 immigrants that ICE claims are “convicted criminal aliens” and “those that game our nation’s immigration system.”

We should recognize this scheme as part of the capitalist rulers’ stepped-up criminalization of the working class. It’s of a piece with the massive increase in recent decades of workers behind bars or on probation or parole, one aspect of the assault on the working class aimed disproportionately at workers who are African-American.

The exploiting class’s assault on working people is a reaction to the deepening crisis of the capitalist system.

This has begun to engender resistance, which is why the bosses try to undermine our unity and solidarity on many fronts. Their attacks on those of us without “proper papers” is a key component in this offensive.

The real target of their anti-immigrant offensive is all working people. In the same way they use the lever of high and persistent unemployment to increase competition for jobs, they scapegoat the foreign born. The aim is to weaken our capacity to mount an effective fight against their drive to foist the burden of the capitalist crisis onto our backs and to intensify the rate of exploitation across the board and around the globe.

And just as the capitalist owners seek to divide and conquer workers to better assault our wages and living conditions, they seek to pit factory workers in the U.S. against those in Mexico or China, or garment workers in China against those in Bangladesh, etc.

It’s not immigrants vs. U.S.-born or workers in the U.S. against those of other countries. It’s the boss class, the capitalist class, backed up by their army, their cops and their courts, on one side. On the other side stands the working class, working farmers and our allies—representing the overwhelming majority of humanity.

Championing the fight of immigrant workers in the U.S.—who have proven to be a combative section of our class and whose breadth of experience strengthens our ranks—is a life and death question for the labor movement. Our solidarity across the capitalists’ national borders is the answer to their trap of pitting worker against worker.

Legalization for undocumented workers now! Extend solidarity to all those in struggle against the common enemy! An injury to one is an injury to all!

Spanish rulers’ ‘austerity’ targets workers

Continued from front page

buy time to prepare to deal lasting blows to the socially accepted living standards of working people. But the loans are having less and less impact on the government’s ability to continue selling its bonds, which is leading to renewed calls, in particular from the German government, for steeper austerity measures.

“In the long run [austerity] is expected to boost productivity and stimulate new jobs,” the *Wall Street Journal* said. In other words, Spain will be able to attract job-creating investment to the degree workers are forced to work harder for lower wages.

Inevitable rise of class struggle

In the short term the measures are expected to accelerate economic contraction with falling wages, shrinking consumer spending, rising unemployment, lower tax receipts, declining production and increased government indebtedness. Among the rulers’ chief concerns is the inevitable rise of the class struggle. “Without a doubt [the measures] will bring more unemployment and more strikes,” the *Journal* said.

Spain, with the eurozone’s fourth largest economy, has seen industrial production fall at an accelerated pace over the past few months. In February it declined 5.1 percent after dropping 4.3 percent in January.

The Spanish government has announced plans to reduce its budget deficit from 8.5 percent of gross domestic product in 2011 to 5.3 percent this year, the largest reduction of any of the 17 countries that comprise the eurozone.

Towards this end, Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy last month presented his plan to slash \$35 billion from the central government budget through spending cuts and tax hikes. Part of this package is what the government terms “labor market reform.” This proposal makes it cheaper and faster for bosses to lay off workers. It lifts restrictions on wages and hours, cuts costs in eliminating jobs, and facilitates the use of temporary contract workers.

As the Spanish government was preparing to announce its new austerity budget, hundreds of thou-

sands of workers participated in a nationwide strike and street protests March 29, shutting factories and severely limiting mining, port facilities and public transportation.

“I’ve spent 45 years working for the same company and now they can get rid of me almost for free,” textile worker Jose Jimenez, 60, told the *Huffington Post* at the Madrid protest.

The government’s next move was to announce April 9 that funds for health and education will be cut by \$13 billion. Spain’s 17 regions provide these social services, which are mostly financed by taxes collected by the central government. Legislation currently before parliament would allow Madrid to make automatic spending cuts in regions that exceed budget targets, as well as give the central government power to take over regional finances.

The European Commission—the European Union’s executive branch—applauded the new cuts in health and education, describing the 2012 budget as a “substantive package” of spending cuts, reported the *Wall Street Journal*. Leading the call for greater austerity is Berlin, the dominant economic power in Europe.

Housing bubble collapse

Spain’s earlier period of economic growth was largely based on massive investment in housing construction. In 2006 at the peak of its decade-long housing boom, “Spain started 800,000 homes—more than Germany, France, Italy, and the United Kingdom combined,” noted a 2009 International Monetary Fund report. Construction workers represented one in eight jobs (compared to one in 18 during the height of the U.S. housing bubble).

Today, in a country of some 47 million people, “some 1.5 million unfinished, unsold or unwanted residential units stand scattered across the country,” reported the *Journal*.

Housing starts were down by 94 percent and new mortgages by 80 percent in 2011, and many who had construction jobs are now out of work. “The number of homes being foreclosed on is estimated to triple in Spain,” writes John Mauldin in his on-line investment newsletter. “About 120 evictions take place every day.”

Argentina seizes Spanish oil firm

BY EMMA JOHNSON

When the Argentine government recently nationalized the Spanish oil company YPF, Madrid responded with fury, bombast and threats of reprisals. But the threats have proven hollow and subsided.

Argentina’s president, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, announced on national television April 16 that the government would seize a majority stake in Yacimientos Petrolíferos Fiscales. YPF is a subsidiary of Spain’s largest oil company, Repsol.

Fernández argued that the nationalization was justified because of Repsol’s policy of “emptying out [YPF], not producing, not investing.” She called it “a recovery of sovereignty and control.” Argentina, which was previously energy self-sufficient, had to spend more than \$9 billion on energy imports last year.

“This is a very big blow for Repsol,” said one former company executive to the *Financial Times* April 17. “The business model has been based on YPF being a cash cow, and reinvesting that into other areas. I think any compensation Repsol will get will be peanuts in comparison.”

YPF accounts for two-fifths of Repsol’s estimated reserves of crude oil and one-third of the company’s profits. Repsol called Buenos Aires’ move “gravely discriminatory and manifestly illegal” and threatened legal action.

The week before the announcement Madrid warned Buenos Aires that any meddling with YPF would be considered an attack against Spain and turn Buenos Aires into an international pariah. But not much has happened.

The European Parliament adopted a nonbinding resolution April 20 supporting Madrid, and calling on the EU’s executive arm, the European Commission, to suspend tariffs beneficial to Argentina’s exports to the EU.

The European Commission did cancel a meeting of the EU-Argentina joint committee set for April 19-20 in Buenos Aires.

EU officials have publicly condemned the nationalization, but José Ignacio Torreblanca of the European Council of Foreign Relations said to Reuters April 23 that the EU could give little more than moral support and that Spain’s “threat really has very little credibility. What measures can they take?”

Spanish banks and companies have invested significantly in Argentina and rely on their Latin American assets to offset dwindling revenues at home.

The Argentine government has not backed off. The decision has the approval of 62 percent of Argentines, according to a public opinion poll.

“What we want is for Argentina to return to ... the path of dialogue,” Spanish Foreign Minister José Manuel García Margallo pleaded, as he went into a meeting with EU counterparts April 23.

Uranium workers

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on production jobs,” he said. Under the new contract the company can fill maintenance positions that come open with contractors.

About 100 current workers in the plant are contractors employed by The Shaw Group Inc., a company that brought scabs across the picket line during the lockout.

“A lot of us now understand that our fight is against the company, not against the replacement workers. They didn’t lock us out, Honeywell did,” Lech said. “They get fired just the same as we do. Many of them can’t afford to pay for health insurance. Now we all work together and we have to trust each other to uphold safety on this dangerous job.”

The USW Local 7-669 website continues the job it did during the lockout keeping members and supporters informed of the day-to-day struggle in the plant. “We came out of the lockout a stronger, more experienced union,” Lech said, “and we’ll continue to fight to get every fired worker back.”