

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

**Socialist Workers conference:  
party responds to crisis, openings**  
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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## Pro-cop media campaign targets NY workers

BY RÓGER CALERO

NEW YORK—In the wake of the June 17 march here against the city cops' "stop-and-frisk" program, Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly and the *New York Daily News* launched a propaganda offensive aimed at convincing working people and others to back the cops and accept their harassment as necessary to "fight crime."

"Where is the rage?" was the headline of a two-page feature in the July 11 *Daily News*, paraphrasing Kelly when he chastised local politicians and public figures who criticize police harassment for not railing against violence in Black and Latino neighborhoods.

Seizing on workers' real concerns about neighborhood violence, the article pointed out that "seventy-seven people were shot in New York last week during the heat wave, including a 3-year-old winged by crossfire as he played under a sprinkler" in Brooklyn.

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## Clinton visit: US, China vie for trade in SE Asia

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Expanding U.S. trade ties in Southeast Asia was at the center of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's recent trip there, highlighting a key aspect of Washington's intensifying competition with China, its most formidable economic and military rival.

Clinton attended the Association of Southeast Asian Nations meeting in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, July 11-13. In her remarks to the gathering, she said the Obama administration "has elevated our engagement across Asia as a strategic priority of our foreign policy."

"I've assembled and led the largest ever delegation of American business executives to Cambodia," she said. They attended the first U.S.-ASEAN Business Forum in Siem Reap July 13 "to lay the groundwork for economic connections." ASEAN members are Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos,

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## 'Workers can organize and fight independent of bosses'

SWP candidates join labor, social struggles



Militant/Michael Fitzsimmons

James Harris, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president, joined July 10 march to back janitors, members of Service Employees International Union Local 1, on strike in Houston.

BY MAGGIE TROWE  
AND EDWIN FRUIT

"It appears Iowans will have an alternative to President Barack Obama and Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney when they go to the polls in November," the *Daily Gate City* in Keokuk, Iowa, reported July 16. "Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate James Harris stopped in Keokuk Saturday to talk to workers and drum up support for an in-

dependent movement away from the Democratic and Republican parties.

"There needs to be a revolutionary change in America," said Harris, a veteran trade unionist, reported the paper. "Until we take power and organize ourselves, we'll bear the full brunt of the economic crisis. That's why we're talking to working class people, farmers and young people." The article was written by the paper's

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## Thousands rally in NY to back workers locked out by Con Ed



AP Photo/Mary Altaffer

July 17 rally for Con Edison workers in Manhattan as they enter third week of struggle against lockout. Utility Workers Union faces concerted, planned assault by power company.

BY CANDACE WAGNER  
AND SETH GALINSKY

NEW YORK—Thousands of Con Edison workers and their supporters rallied at Union Square here July 17 to protest the giant electrical utility's lockout of more than 8,000 workers since July 1. The rally was called by Utility Workers Union Local 1-2 and the New York City Central Labor Council.

American Postal Workers Union, Communications Workers union, Transport Workers union, Teamsters, United Federation of Teachers, and

others had contingents at the rally.

Every time rally speakers said "your fight is our fight" they were loudly cheered.

Utility Workers spokesperson John Melia told the *Militant* that truck drivers and crane operators who belong to the Teamsters union and the Operating Engineers are refusing to cross picket lines, hampering Con Edison's efforts to install a transformer in the Bensonhurst neighborhood of Brooklyn.

"The police are trying to lean on us

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## Miami meeting denounces latest prison harassment of Cuban 5

BY NAOMI CRAINE

MIAMI—Some 60 people gathered here July 15 to denounce new violations of the constitutional rights of five Cuban revolutionaries imprisoned by Washington and to express solidarity with their ongoing fight for freedom. The meeting was called by the Alianza Martiana, a coalition of Cuban-

American organizations.

Prison officials have been denying legal and consular visits to one of the five, Gerardo Hernández, who is serving a sentence of double life plus 15 years on trumped-up charges of conspiracy to commit espionage and conspiracy to commit murder.

The Cuban Five, as they are widely known around the world, includes Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González and René

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## 'No choice but to strike against Caterpillar'

BY LAURA ANDERSON

JOLIET, Ill.—A dozen unionists and two students from the Joliet and Chicago areas joined 25 striking Caterpillar workers on the picket line here July 15.

Some 780 Caterpillar workers, members of International Association of Machinists Local 851, walked off the job May 1 after rejecting the company's proposal for a new contract that would freeze wages, gut pension

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# Black lung is on the rise among younger miners

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Black lung, a preventable disease resulting from exposure to coal dust, is on the rise, with greater occurrence among younger miners. Black lung, otherwise known as coal workers’ pneumoconiosis, is irreversible, debilitating and often leads to premature death.

The coal mine bosses’ drive to ramp up production and cut corners on safety is responsible for the increase. And the government’s Mine Safety and Health Administration, which is concerned more with the coal industry’s profits than workers’ lives, is complicit.

A recent joint investigation by National Public Radio and the Center for Public Integrity describes aspects of this development.

From 1968 through 2007, black lung caused 75,000 deaths nationwide, according to government data.

In 1969, a three-week strike by tens of thousands of miners in West Virginia shut down coal production in that state. The strike was a key factor leading to passage of the Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act.

The act set up a benefits program for those with the disease and established stricter standards for coal dust exposure, lowering the permissible concentrations to about one-quarter of what miners were being exposed to at the time.

Diagnosed incidents of black lung plunged more than 90 percent, according to National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health data. But by the mid-1990s this trend reversed, with younger miners in their 30s, 40s and early 50s getting the disease.

“Prevalence of the most severe form

of black lung has tripled between the 1980s and the 2000s and has almost reached the levels of the 1970s,” reported the *Charleston Gazette*.

Figures from NIOSH indicate black lung cases are among the highest in the central Appalachian region. In Kentucky 9 percent of miners were diagnosed with the disease between 2005 and 2009.

Between 2000 and 2011, MSHA issued small numbers of coal mine dust violations despite the thousands of samples submitted to the agency exceeding “acceptable” government limits. “MSHA data show that 53,000 valid samples contained more dust than standards permit but the agency issued less than 2,400 violations,” reported NPR.

Mining companies are often allowed to do their own sampling and reporting of dust levels, and they have ample ways to distort data on the condition of the air miners are forced to breathe. Federal law permits sampling at only 50 percent of average production, when miners have as little as half the exposure. Sampling is required only eight hours a day even though many miners today work at least 10 hours.

## Miners, other workers protest job cuts in Spain



Reuters/Andrea Comas

Thousands marched July 11 in Madrid, Spain, protesting cutbacks in government expenditures adopted by the cabinet that day that target jobs and services working people depend on. Workers in the city joined miners from the north as they ended a 20-day, 250-mile-long march against the slashing of mining subsidies that will result in mine closures and job losses. Others blocked streets and railways. The demonstrations continued through July 13.

This latest round of cuts, the deepest in 30 years, include lower wages for public workers and lower jobless pay. Sales taxes will increase. Meanwhile, one in four workers in Spain are without a job.

The Spanish government is among others in Europe imposing “austerity” on workers in reaction to mounting fiscal and credit crises amid the worldwide slowdown in production and trade.

—EMMA JOHNSON

## Greece: event at anti-racist festival discusses Malcolm X

BY NATASHA TERLEXIS

ATHENS, Greece—Publishing house Diethnes Vima held a meeting on its Greek-language editions of *Malcolm X Talks to Young People*, a collection of speeches by Malcolm X, and *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by Jack Barnes on July

7 at the 16th Anti-Racist Festival here. Both books were originally published in English by Pathfinder Press. The latter translation is a selection of chapters from the original edition.

Several thousand people attended the three-day festival, organized by the Coordinating Committee of Immigrant and Anti-Racist Organizations.

The event took place following a spate of physical attacks against immigrants, many by members of Golden Dawn, a fascist party that won a few seats in parliament in recent elections.

Some 25 workers and students took part in the book meeting.

“We live in the opening stages of the deepest economic and social crisis of capitalism in decades,” said Georges Mehrabian from Diethnes Vima. “The revolutionary example of Malcolm X has greater importance than ever before.

“What road did Malcolm chart in the struggle? An understanding that the

capitalist system cannot be reformed and must be overturned. That the oppressed and exploited must chart our own political course, in opposition to the capitalists’ parties. That our struggle is international. That in the course of our struggles we will become conscious of our own worth.” These are lessons that must be considered by working people in Greece today, Mehrabian said.


“The rulers don’t want to expel immigrants,” said panelist Eraj Nobakht, an Iranian refugee and a member of the Immigrants’ Network, one of the groups organizing the festival. “They want to frighten them, to keep them unorganized. This will allow them to also better exploit Greek workers.”

“Golden Dawn carries out violence against immigrants every day, yet they are not being condemned or stopped,” noted Nobakht. “Malcolm X called on African-Americans to defend themselves when attacked.”

THE MILITANT

*Independence for Puerto Rico!*

*The ‘Militant’ reports on the struggles of working people in Puerto Rico and their fight for independence from U.S. domination, pointing out that workers on mainland U.S. have a common interest and a common enemy.*



June 14, 2011, protest in San Juan, Puerto Rico, demands end to colonial status.

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# Socialist Workers campaign

Continued from front page  
managing editor, Steve Dunn.

Harris was in Keokuk as part of a three-day tour in Iowa, as supporters there wrapped up a petitioning drive to put the working class, labor, socialist campaign—Harris for president and Maura DeLuca for vice president—on the ballot, along with David Rosenfeld, the SWP candidate for U.S. Congress in Iowa's 3rd District.

Supporters there gathered well over 2,200 signatures in nine days, hundreds more than required.

In Keokuk, Harris participated in a meeting at the home of Buddy Howard, a corn-processing worker and veteran of a fight against the 10-month lockout by Roquette America in 2010-2011. He, along with his wife Doris Howard, hosted the get-together.

## Campaign can help give workers 'one big voice'

*Below is a message from Byron Jacobs, former secretary-treasurer of International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 21 in Longview, Wash., and leader of an eight-month-long fight against union busting by EGT Development there.*

I met James Harris when he came to Longview for the rally during the trial of union president Robert McEllrath. What impressed me about him was first, he is a worker. Also he is very knowledgeable about the issues today and he has many of the same concerns I do. I read the campaign brochure and I also met Maura DeLuca when she was campaigning here. Meeting these candidates who come here and talk with us means a lot more to me than seeing some candidate on TV.

It seems like politics today is about money. You only get to shake Obama's hand if you won a championship or donated a big campaign money sum. These smaller lesser known candidates are doing what politics was supposed to be when our country started. A grassroots campaign, meeting with real everyday people and finding out their problems and issues and seeing if they can help bring all the little voices to be one big voice. Because of work I can't be there but I wanted to say good luck in the campaign!

Byron Jacobs  
Longview, Wash.

"When workers unite in a struggle, you see the flowering of creativity, and people learn to do things they never thought they could do," Harris told workers there. The wide-ranging discussion lasted several hours.

Harris explained why neither Democrats' nor Republicans' health care proposals are good for working people. He contrasted health care in revolutionary Cuba, which goes from cradle to grave, with what workers receive under the profit-driven, bureaucratic capitalist system, taxing and gouging working people while ensuring large returns for the medical, pharmaceutical, and insurance capitalists.

Buddy Howard asked if the rise of corporate power and the bosses' increasing attacks on workers signified the gradual rise of fascism. "The rulers will only reach for a fascist movement when the working class rises and they have no alternative," Harris responded. "We're not mobilized to that point yet. But the bosses are putting ever more severe conditions on us, and more workers will decide to fight."

Larry Long, another corn-processing worker and rank-and-file leader of the fight against the Roquette lockout, asked if Swedish socialism is connected to the SWP.

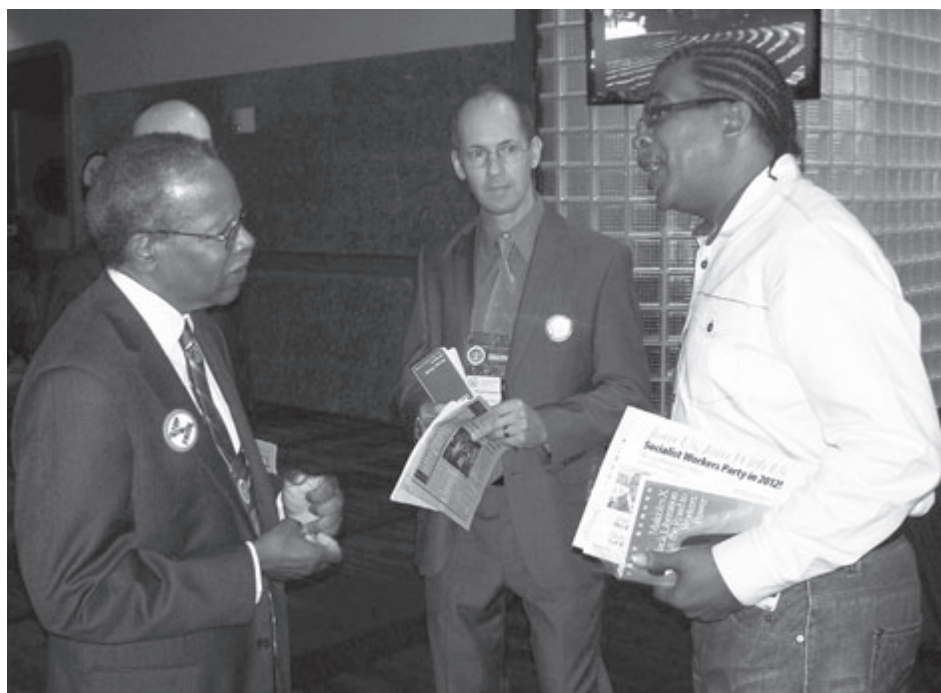
"Many European countries have large social democratic parties based on the unions, but in fact these parties support the capitalists and carry out the same anti-working-class measures," Harris said. "The SWP is a revolutionary party that joins in with labor and social struggles, charting a working-class road to workers power." Harris pointed out that the big battles of the proletarian Black rights movement that brought down Jim Crow segregation were mass social struggles, as was the Cuban Revolution.

### Harris attends NAACP convention

Harris participated in the national convention of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, held in Houston July 9-11.

"There's a little more resistance today. You see strikes, protests and other struggles," responded Harris to comments by Kenneth Davidson, a leader of the NAACP in Palestine, Texas, who told the SWP presidential candidate about protests he helped organize against the April 2011 Anderson County Commissioners' declaration of Confederate History Month and flying the Confederate flag over the county courthouse.

Harris also met members of the Service Employees International Union, who came to the convention to publicize



Militant/Sam Manuel  
James Harris, left, speaks with Kenneth Davidson, president of NAACP chapter in Palestine, Texas, at NAACP convention in Houston, July 10. Davidson helped lead recent fight against Anderson County officials flying Confederate flag over county courthouse.

a march and rally launching a strike against their bosses—the companies that contract to clean commercial office buildings in Houston. Harris joined the protest later that day.

"The boss threatened to fire us if we went on strike," Salvatore Carrara, a 25-year-old janitor and SEIU member, told Harris. "But we face harassment like that almost every day. I'm here to fight against that and for higher pay."

"Because their capitalist system is in a historic crisis," Harris said to Carrara, "they are doing the one thing they know will shore up their profits: forcing more work on fewer workers and cutting pay and benefits. Your fight for better wages and working conditions is very important. Workers need to come together, fight, grow stronger and more self-confident, and organize politically independent of the bosses and their parties."

### DeLuca wins support in Washington

Nearly 50 people attended a campaign rally in Seattle July 14 with Maura DeLuca, culminating her tour in Washington state.

DeLuca was joined on the panel by Syd Coe, a member of Teamsters Local 117 on strike against the Davis Wire Corp. in Kent, Wash., as well as SWP candidates from Washington and California.

"We really did not have a choice," said Coe, explaining why they went on strike May 21. "The company has refused to bargain in good faith and we could not continue to work under the conditions we faced, including denying us lunch breaks and working us for weeks without a day off."

"Even though workers speak several different languages, coming from Vietnam, Russia, Ukraine, Korea, and the Philippines, as well as the U.S.," Coe added, "we are all solidarity conscious and we stick together for our rights."

"I see the *Militant* as a tool to keep me fighting and it educates the masses as to what is really happening to working people and how they fight back," said Coe, who has worked at Davis Wire for nine years.

"Our campaign is fighting for a massive, government-funded public works program to create jobs and build schools, roads, parks, public transportation, child care and other infrastruc-

ture working people need," DeLuca told the meeting.

More than \$2,300 was raised for the Socialist Workers National Campaign at the event.

A message was read from Byron Jacobs, former secretary-treasurer of International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 21 and a leader of the union's eight-monthlong fight in Longview, Wash., against a union-busting campaign by EGT Development Corp. (See accompanying article.)

DeLuca's tour started July 11 in Longview. She campaigned outside the local Walmart and Lowe's where more than 150 people signed petitions to put the socialist candidates on the ballot.

As Crystal Clarke signed, she remarked, "We need jobs and day care. For every job opening in Longview, 50 or more people show up. I've got seven kids and have been out of work for four years."

The Longview *Daily News* did an interview with DeLuca at the Walmart and printed an article with her photo. "Several people signed the petition while a journalist was there," the paper noted. (See accompanying box.)

DeLuca was also invited to collect signatures outside the ILWU Local 21 hall, where the union's monthly meeting was occurring. Several members stopped to talk and sign.

The next day DeLuca joined the Davis Wire picket line where strikers told her they would not go back to work without a contract and are getting a lot of community support.

Michael Fitzsimmons in Houston contributed to this article.

## THE DAILY NEWS

VP CANDIDATE

### Socialist Workers Party vice presidential candidate campaigns in Longview



JULY 11, 2012 8:25 PM • BY LESLIE SLAPE / THE DAILY NEWS

Although she knows the odds are against the Socialist Workers Party winning the U.S. election, vice presidential candidate Maura DeLuca said it's important to give voters a choice beyond the "lesser of two evils."

"I think a lot of people are seeing what's going on," DeLuca said Tuesday during a campaign stop at the Ocean Beach Walmart in Longview. "There's more and more people dropping out of the work force. There's health care. Prices are going up. People are thinking, 'What can we do to get out of

Article in July 11 *Daily News*, published in Longview, Wash.

### Literature on SWP presidential campaign



Campaign flyer: \$2.50 for 25  
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# Governments of Australia, Indonesia strengthen ties

## Part of imperialists' pursuit of allies against China

BY RON POULSEN

SYDNEY—Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono and Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard led official delegations in bilateral talks in Darwin, Australia's northern-most city, July 2-3. The focus was on deepening military ties, including over maritime "border security," and on furthering trade links.

Before the meeting, Australian Defense Minister Stephen Smith revealed plans for a military exercise with Indonesian, Australian and U.S. forces early next year in a training area in the Northern Territory that will host some 2,500 U.S. Marines within the next few years.

Canberra, with Washington's backing, is encouraging Jakarta to play a greater strategic role in backing imperialists' interests in the Asia-Pacific region, as Washington leads an effort to counter the economic and military rise of China.

In an interview with the *Australian Financial Review*, Smith listed Indonesia as one of Australia's closest military allies alongside the U.S., Britain and Japan.

Indonesia, with a population of 240 million, is the fourth most populous country in the world. Capitalist rulers from Australia to the U.S. are keen to expand their trade and investment there. At its current growth rate of over 6.5 percent per year, Southeast Asia's largest economy is projected to nearly double in size over the next decade.

As part of deeper military ties, the Australian government is giving Indonesia four refurbished C-130 Hercules transport planes, as well as a grant of two coastal patrol boats and financial backing for 12 new police stations along the Indonesian coastline nearest to Australia.

Meanwhile, two recent sinkings of

boats claimed the lives of nearly 100 Indonesian refugees. Some 90 asylum-seekers drowned June 21 while 110 were rescued when their boat sank off the coast of Indonesia en route to Christmas Island, an Australian territory in the Indian Ocean. Days later, another four drowned when a boat in the same area foundered.

Canberra is seeking closer cooperation from Jakarta on stemming the flow of immigrants from Asia.

At their meeting, Yudhoyono pressured Gillard to release 54 underaged Indonesians imprisoned in Australian jails.

## 'No choice but to strike against Caterpillar'

**Continued from front page**

and seniority rights, and expand the use of "supplemental" workers at low-er wages and benefits.

Alex Forgue, 18, a freshman at Joliet Junior College, initiated the show of solidarity by contacting Northern Illinois Jobs for Justice and getting their help to publicize the action. "Its time people stand up and fight for the rights that our parents and grandparents fought for," he told the *Militant*.

"I've never been more proud than to be on this picket line with you all today," Mark Ferry, a member of Steelworkers Local 7517 at the Citgo refinery in Romeoville told a rally at the picket line.

Mike Haynes, a truck mechanic and member of the Machinists union at a dealership in Joliet, joined the picket for the first time. "I came out to support my union brothers and sisters," he told the *Militant*.

"The younger guys are looking out for the pensions for the older members and the older members want younger ones to have a wage to grow



Australian Department of Defense/Chris Dickson

**First 200 of 2,500 U.S. Marines arrive April 3 at Australian base in Darwin, which is strategically located 500 miles from Indonesia and part of growing military encirclement of China.**

into," said Joe Ahern, a member of the union negotiating committee at the Joliet plant. "The guys who weren't as active before are rising to the occasion."

In a statement on the company website, Caterpillar says it seeks to bring wages at the plant in line with other manufacturers in the region to remain competitive.

## Locked-out Con Ed workers

**Continued from front page**

to take down the picket lines," Melia said. "But we have a legal right to picket."

"The pickets have not had any effect on our moving the transformer," Con Ed spokesperson Allan Drury told the *Militant*.

So far Con Edison has avoided major disruptions in electrical service, using 5,000 supervisors along with contractors to do the work of the locked-out union members. Workers on the picket line say at least four

"It's not easy but there was no choice but to strike," said Donald Utke, a machinist for more than 30 years in the Joliet plant.

"We are getting cheated," said Lance Rod, who has worked for five years at Caterpillar. "I have a family and house payment, but I'd rather die trying than cross the line and die anyway."

Con Ed employees have been injured on the job since the lockout began due to the company sending in employees without adequate training. Supervisors are working 12 hours a day trying to keep up.

Con Edison is proposing a steep increase in the amount workers pay for medical insurance as well as cuts in pensions for new hires.

"I would say no to this," Bill Munson, a cable mechanic with 39 years at Con Ed, said at a July 14 picket line in Manhattan. "We're fighting for the new hires. That's my son or my nephew or my grandson."

"They are trying to break the unions," said Margaret Mangino, who joined the picket line to back her son, one of the locked-out workers. "I think it's going to swing back, where we have stronger unions again. It's the only way."

A spokesperson for Gov. Andrew Cuomo said the governor "has urged both sides to resolve the lockout." Several city council members and Democratic Party politicians have criticized Con Edison for imposing the lockout, but none have come out backing the union.

## US, China vie for trade in Southeast Asia

**Continued from front page**

Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

"The United States is the number one importer of Cambodian-made garments," Clinton said, "so the now 350,000 Cambodians, 90 percent of whom are young women, working in the textile industry in Cambodia have seen tremendous advances."

Garment workers in Cambodia receive among the lowest wages in the region—\$61 a month. Recent strikes and other protest actions over unsafe working conditions and pay have forced some bosses to raise the monthly wage to \$73.

Over the past decade trade with ASEAN members has shifted in China's favor. In 2004, the U.S. was ASEAN's largest trading partner, with total trade of \$192 billion, but by 2010 China eclipsed this figure with \$293 billion in two-way trade.

"China is the biggest trading partner of Asean, Japan, Korea, India and Australia, and the biggest source of investment for many countries in the region," Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Cui Tiankai said July 5, addressing the Asia Society, an institution based in New York.

For the first time in its 45-year history, the ASEAN meeting failed to conclude a joint statement because of contention between Beijing and several ASEAN governments—the Philippines, Vietnam, Brunei and Malaysia—over territorial waters and islands in the South China Sea.

Washington is exploiting this dispute to deepen its alliances and military operations in the region. More than half the world's shipping tonnage travels through the South China Sea, which is believed to hold vast oil and gas reserves.

**'Increased investments' in Mongolia**

Prior to appearing before the ASEAN gathering, Clinton stopped in Mongolia July 9. In a talk before the International Women's Leadership Forum in Ulan Bator, she said "the United States is making substantially increased investments."

The secretary of state's eyes were on the huge coal, copper and uranium reserves as well as untapped deposits of gold, lead and zinc in this undeveloped landlocked nation bordering China and Russia.

The following day Clinton visited Vietnam, where in a speech in Hanoi,

the capital city, she touted the increased trade between the two countries—\$22 billion in 2011, up from \$1 billion in 2001. "We hope the U.S. will become the top foreign investor in Vietnam in the near future," Vietnamese Foreign Minister Pham Binh Minh told Clinton, reported the *Wall Street Journal*.

On July 11, Clinton made a four-hour stop in Laos, the first visit by a U.S. secretary of state in 57 years. During the Vietnam War in the 1960s and early '70s, the U.S. military conducted more than 580,000 bombing missions in Laos, making it the most heavily bombed country on a per-person basis, noted the *Times*.

After the war ended, more than 30 percent of the bombs, many cluster bombs containing hundreds of bomb-lets, remained unexploded. "In recent years about 100 people have been killed by unexploded ordnance, 40 percent of them children," the *Times* said.

In a visit to an orthotic and prosthetic center, Clinton asked "why more sophisticated technology could not be used to find the bombs," said the *Times*. The paper didn't report the secretary of state offering any further assistance, as she promptly flew to Phnom Penh.

## —MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

**FLORIDA**

**Miami**

**Cuba and the Coming American Revolution.** Speakers: Maura DeLuca, Socialist Workers Party candidate for vice president; Naomi Craine, SWP candidate for Senate in Florida. Thurs., July 26. Reception, 7 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 719 NE 79th St. Tel.: (305) 757-8869.



## ON THE PICKET LINE

### Houston janitors: 'We want better pay and dignity'

HOUSTON—Hundreds of janitors walked off the job July 10 at seven cleaning companies.

"For more than six years I've worked for ABM [one of the seven companies] at these buildings putting up with their abuses for a lousy \$8.35 per hour—and only six hours per day," Alfonso Saavedra told the *Militant*.

ABM did not respond to a request for comments.

The janitors, members of Service Employees International Union Local 1, have been without a contract since May 31. Union officials say the companies have proposed a contract that would raise hourly pay to just \$8.85 by 2016. The union is seeking \$10 an hour.

Since June 5, janitors have held one-day strikes at locations around the city. Last month, 11 janitors were barred from returning to work after joining the walkouts. According to the union several contractors ended payments to workers' health insurance plans.

On July 11, NAACP national board member Clayola Brown delivered a donation of \$3,255 for the strike collected by participants at the group's national convention here.

"Every night I clean the plaza floor, 28 elevators, and empty the trash on two floors," said Salvatore Carrara, 25. "We want dignity and better pay."

—Steve Warshell

### Mass. seafood workers demand severance, back wages

LAKEVILLE, Mass.—"They let us go like we were trash," said Brenda Santos, one of 52 workers fired by Kyler Seafood in nearby New Bedford in early May.

Santos was among some 30 protesters at a July 12 vigil here outside the home of Jeff Nanfelt, owner of the seafood processor. The workers left Nanfelt a letter demanding vacation and overtime pay they say they are owed. They also demand one week's severance pay for each year worked.

"After years of our work they are rich," said Maria Santos, who like many of those fired is from Guatemala. "But we're sore from hard work."

"They exploited us a lot," said Diego Chivalan, who worked for Kyler Seafood for six years earning minimum wage. "Sometimes they would ask us to work through breaks and then we would never get paid for that extra time."

The workers were fired as the result of an I-9 immigration audit by Homeland Security immigration authorities. Kyler

fired those who did not provide proof of their work status within three days.

In an email response to the *Militant*, Nanfelt said the workers were paid all wages owed and denied requiring employees to work during breaks. He added that the "52 employees were not fired, according to ICE, their current identification/documentation made them ineligible to work."

The vigil was organized by the Centro Comunitario de Trabajadores (Workers Community Center) and joined by representatives from the Chinese Progressive Association, Chelsea Collaborative, Jobs with Justice and the Socialist Workers Party.

—Laura Garza

### Tomato workers in Calif. vote for United Farm Workers

MADERA, Calif.—Workers at Gargiulo Inc. in nearby Firebaugh voted July 11, by a margin of 186 to 40, to be represented by the United Farm Workers. Two days earlier 170 workers struck over working conditions and pay and filed a petition for the election.

During an interview here July 13, three workers, then back at work, talked about conditions they face on the farm.

The rows of tomatoes are a mile long and workers are only allowed to



Militant/Ted Leonard

Workers protest July 12 in Lakeville, Mass., outside home of Kyler Seafood factory owner Jeff Nanfelt against firing in early May after immigration audit. They are demanding severance pay.

use the bathroom after finishing a row, they explained. There are no set breaks. Lunchtime is whenever the lunch truck stops by and the bosses turn off the conveyor belt. After five or 10 minutes they turn it back on. Many workers have to work and eat at the same time.

"A boss told us 'every year the workers talk about getting the union but nothing happens,'" noted German Carreño,

26, who has been working for Gargiulo since 2003. "We surprised them."

Gargiulo Inc. did not respond to a request for comment.

Two weeks earlier the UFW signed a three-year contract for 800 tomato workers at Pacific Triple E in Tracy that includes wage increases of 12 to 50 percent.

—Willie Cotton

## Scranton, Pa., mayor slashes wages to \$7.25 an hour

BY CHRIS HOEPPNER  
AND GEORGE CHALMERS

SCRANTON, Pa.—Mayor Christopher Doherty has cut the pay of nearly 400 city employees here to minimum wage, \$7.25 an hour, on the excuse that the city has no money. As of July 6, the paychecks of several hundred municipal workers, as well as cops and government bureaucrats, including the mayor himself, were slashed.

The city council blocked an earlier proposal from the mayor to raise property taxes. Doherty countered with a pay proposal. He then carried out his threat despite an injunction against the move by Lackawanna County Judge Michael Barrasse.

Public workers unions, as well as the

Fraternal Order of Police, filed a petition demanding the mayor be held in contempt. They also filed a lawsuit against the city for abrogation of contracts.

The city government's credit has tanked and banks have stopped lending. Now the mayor and city council, all members of the Democratic Party, are scrambling for loans.

Workers on the street expressed various points of view.

"This is horrible," said Devin McNear, a 19-year-old construction roofer who makes \$10 an hour. "Something has to change. Something has to be done and somebody has to do it."

"It's a hard situation to straighten out," said John Benson, a retired hospital laundry worker. "They should have raised taxes a long time ago." Benson's

employer ran three shifts cleaning laundry for hospitals in the region before closing and moving to New Jersey.

"How are people supposed to live?" asked Melvin Lundy, who works at a local restaurant. "They should fight. If the city gets away with it here they'll get away with it everywhere."

Scranton is one of about 20 cities across Pennsylvania operating under a state law for fiscally distressed cities, which includes Harrisburg, the capital, and Pittsburgh, the state's second-biggest city.

Bankrupt cities from Stockton, Calif., to Jefferson County, Ala., have also cut public workers' pay, benefits and hours.

In November 2009, President Barack Obama froze the pay of federal employees for 2011 and 2012.

## 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



July 31, 1987

The United States Court of Appeals has ordered Trans World Airlines to reinstate 1,500 former strikers who are members of the Independent Federation of Flight Attendants.

After taking over the reins of TWA in 1985, corporate raider Carl Icahn demanded that most unions at the airline take a 15 percent pay cut. But he told the IFFA membership, which is 85 percent female, to take a 44 percent wage and benefit cut.

He said the additional cut was necessary since "you girls aren't breadwinners" and that we were only working for "second [family] incomes."

IFFA went on strike to resist Icahn's demands. Icahn hired replacement workers. The six-week strike ended in May 1986 when IFFA made an "unconditional offer" to return to work.



July 30, 1962

Medicare has been a political football ever since Aime Forand introduced a comprehensive medical care plan for Social Security pensioners in 1957.

That bill finally died in the House Rules Committee in 1959.

Kennedy made Medicare one of his campaign promises. The King-Anderson Bill, a paler version of the Forand measure, was introduced in January 1961 and has been kept in a pigeon-hole in the House Ways and Means Committee ever since.

The only people who are not happy with the latest defeat are some 17 million retired persons, who need that care, and their children, who face the hard choice of dumping their aged parents on the unloving arms of charity or mortgaging their own and their children's future.



May 1, 1937

HOUSTON—The drive to organize the \$14 billion oil industry is gaining momentum throughout the country, particularly in the three centers: Killgore, Texas, the center of the world's largest oil field; in Oklahoma City, capital of the middle west oil industry; and in the Houston, Port Arthur and Beaumont district, the world's largest refining and distribution center.

At the same time the oil companies have been announcing wage increases with a big share of publicity. The oil companies, not sure that the wage increases will stop organization, are trying to pep up company unions and all kinds of vicious propaganda is being issued against the CIO.

The whole labor movement throughout Texas and the Southwest has been stimulated as a result of the drive to organize the oil workers.





# Socialist Workers conference charts working-class

## Strengthening branches of a proletarian party in response to capital

BY JOHN STUDER

Out of the seeming chaos of today's world capitalist crisis and false "solutions" offered by bourgeois politicians and middle-class misleaders of workers and the oppressed, there is a clear voice speaking for the interests of the working class in the 2012 U.S. elections, said Jack Barnes in his opening talk to the Socialist Workers Party Membership Conference held June 21-23 in Oberlin, Ohio. Barnes is the party's national secretary.

That voice, Barnes said, is the Socialist Workers Party campaign, and its ticket of James Harris for president and Maura DeLuca for vice president, as well as candidates for state and local offices across the country.

Coming out of the June conference, Harris and DeLuca began a campaign tour that is taking them across the United States. "Join us, join with us! The working-class, labor, socialist campaign"—that was the banner displayed at the final session of the Ohio gathering, which introduced the 2012 presidential ticket.

The socialist candidates stand shoulder to shoulder with workers in struggle, talking with them about the roots of the capitalist crisis and of Washington's wars and unleashing of killer drones from Pakistan and Afghanistan to Africa and elsewhere. The candidates and campaign supporters present a course for workers and our unions to strengthen solidarity, to fight for a massive public works program in face of rising long-term joblessness, and to chart an independent working-class road toward the fight for political power.

"Thank you for taking on the task of making sure there is a voice for the millions of workers who aren't being heard," said Buddy Howard in a message to the Socialist Workers candidates read to participants at that closing event. Howard was a leader of a fight by some 240 union grain millers locked out for 10 months in 2010-2011 at Roquette America's corn processing plant in Keokuk, Iowa. (See message in July 16 issue.)

SWP members, young socialists, and other campaign supporters are signing up workers, farmers and young people as endorsers of the 2012 socialist ticket



Militant/Eric Simpson

Participants at Socialist Workers Party Membership Conference, June 21-23, in Oberlin, Ohio.

of Harris and DeLuca.

The conference projected building on the more than 2,400 *Militant* subscriptions sold during the spring international circulation drive to expand the readership of the only weekly newspaper presenting a working-class perspective on world politics. SWP members and young socialists are selling the paper door to door and on street corners in working-class neighborhoods, including communities predominantly of workers who are Black; on the job in factories and other workplaces; on union picket lines; and at actions of social protest.

They are helping get out the truth about struggles, from the demonstration of some 7,000 against New York City cops and their "stop-and-frisk" harassment, which took place the weekend before the socialist conference; to the fight that began the week afterwards by more than 8,000 workers in New York against a lockout by Con Edison; to actions in support of unconditional legalization of immigrant workers and in defense of a woman's right to choose abortion.

### Building a proletarian party

Politically strengthening branches of a proletarian party able to effectively carry out such a course—from Los Angeles to New York, from Seattle to Omaha—was at the heart

of the opening conference talk "What We've Accomplished, Where We Are Going," which Barnes presented to some 325 members, supporters and young socialists.

Today's deteriorating conditions of working people are not the product of breakdowns in banking and financial markets, Barnes said. What today's generations are experiencing for the first time in our lives is a deep-going crisis of capitalist production, profitability, and contraction of investment to expand plants, equipment and employment.

As workers respond to the consequences of this crisis, SWP members are also finding greater interest than in many years in reading books and pamphlets recording lessons from past working-class battles.

Among the essential tools socialist workers and young socialists are using in their campaigning, including special offers with a *Militant* subscription, are two titles by Barnes: *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*, and *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning: The Fraud of Education Reform Under Capitalism*. Coming out of the June 21-23 conference, a special offer is being added for the new book *Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution* by Vilma Espín, Asela de los Santos, and Yolanda Ferrer.

### Space for politics worldwide

Both the capitalist crisis and workers' resistance are global in scope. The space to practice working-class politics is opening from Europe, to growing parts of Asia and the Pacific, and to the Middle East—from the so-called "Arab Spring" and massive protests in Israel over the past year, to the growing circulation in Iran of revolutionary literature.

Stretching the reach of the communist movement to meet these openings was the focus of the other conference talk, "Starting with the World: The Practical Work of the Party," presented by Mary-Alice Waters, a member of the Socialist Workers Party National Committee. Waters described the opportunities to take the *Militant* and books published and distributed by

Pathfinder Press—and translations of them into more and more languages—to workers, farmers and youth from the Americas to China, Iran, Indonesia and Sri Lanka.

Five classes given during the conference supplemented the political themes of the talks.

### Crisis of capitalist production

Under capitalism, history moves like a drunken beggar on horseback, Barnes said in his opening talk. Tendencies inherent to capitalist production produce and reproduce crises, he said, but there's nothing predictable about its course.

Today's crisis of production and capital accumulation will stretch out and deepen in coming years and decades. The owners of capital, their governments and politicians, their universities, think tanks and press commentators are not prepared for what they face, Barnes said. They are in denial.

No matter who is elected president in 2012, the global contraction of production, trade and employment will continue. The social crisis will deepen. No bourgeois policy course or financial manipulations can make it otherwise. The propertied rulers are pressing their attacks on our living and working conditions, our ability to hold a job, our unions, and our basic human dignity.

Barnes called attention to a recent, widely publicized study by the Federal Reserve bank pointing to a nearly 50 percent drop in what it called median family wealth (or "net worth") since 2007. But workers have no wealth, he said. If we did, we could support ourselves and our families off dividends and interest, instead of having to sell our labor power to a boss in return for wages—and then there would be no working class!

The illusion that workers possess wealth is one of many ways the capitalist rulers seek to blunt working-class consciousness, Barnes said. They want to persuade us that if we become "home owners," we too have "an equity stake" in preserving capitalist social relations, just like the employers who hire us, lay us off, and *do grow wealthy*



Expansion of U.S. capitalism, built on its victory in World War II and emergence as dominant world imperialist power, stalled at end of 1960s. As capitalist profit rates trended downward investment in expanded plant, equipment and employment contracted.



Workers at May 1 march in Paris called for vote against Sarkozy of Peugeot Citroen plant in Aulnay. Sarkozy lost May 6 office. On July 12 Peugeot announced it will close plant



# s course as party joins labor fights, social protests

## alist crisis and political openings to present road to workers power

from the value we produce with our labor. Or they want us to believe the payroll taxes we pay into Social Security, or equivalent wage deductions for a private pension, end up in a lockbox where they sit safely and collect interest for the time later in life when we need those funds.

That's why when class-conscious workers hear the question, "What are you worth?" dollar signs don't flash in our minds, Barnes said. To us, he added, "worth" signifies workers' capacity, *by fighting together*, to strengthen our discipline and transform ourselves through the battle.

### Global in scope and resistance

The U.S. ruling families have made more progress in squeezing profits from the labor of working people than their imperialist rivals in Europe and the Pacific, and even more than capitalists and landlords in parts of the semi-colonial world. So much so that some manufacturing jobs overseas have begun "coming back" to the United States—to use the bosses' fetishistic language, Barnes said—as well as "back North" from so-called "right-to-work" states in the U.S. South.

Today's economic and social crisis is more truly global than those in the 1920s and 1930s, when the vast majority of toilers in Asia, Africa and Latin America lived on subsistence farming largely outside the world capitalist market. Today working people in China, India and across the colonial world are drawn into capitalist production—in factories, as well as on the land—and are actors in the resistance and class battles beginning to be joined.

What's more, Barnes said, there is mounting evidence of a sharp slowdown of production and trade in China, which in some bourgeois circles has been looked to as an "engine of growth" they hope can pull the entire world out of crisis. That illusion is starting to shatter. Far from being a way out, the massive migration of peasants into cities and factory jobs in China in recent decades, and the rapid accumulation (and export) of capital—have become a powerful new source of class contradictions and struggles both

in China and in the world.

### Declining role of Europe

Hopes among the imperialist ruling families across Europe that the European Union could enable them to compete successfully against U.S. finance capital and pose a challenge in world markets to the dominance of the dollar—and to the economic and industrial base, state power and military prowess that stand behind it—are being dashed. Under the pressure of the world capitalist crisis, the EU, a so-called common market with no prospect of a common state, is foundering on the conflicting class interests of the stronger and weaker exploiting classes that comprise it: those of Germany, France and the United Kingdom, versus those in Greece, Spain, Portugal, Ireland and elsewhere.

That's why wealthy individuals and governments the world over are buying up U.S. Treasury bonds despite the historically low interest rates they pay. In an unstable capitalist world, however, there is no safer place for the exploiting classes to park their capital, certainly nowhere in Europe, including Germany.

The interconnectedness of capitalism means tremblors anywhere shake every corner of the earth.

Never in modern history have any of the imperialist powers in Europe been less ready to fight and win wars to defend their class interests, Barnes noted. Not only are the cabinets in England and France making deep cuts in troops and weaponry, but so is the German government, which since its defeat in World War II has never had substantial armed forces. Even during the 2011 mop-up actions to finish off the Gadhafi regime in Libya, supposedly carried out largely by planes and ships from the U.K. and France, operations depended entirely on U.S. air reconnaissance, refueling, armaments, and covert special forces spotters on the ground.

However strong the production and trade of Germany's imperialist rulers may be relative to all but a handful of their rivals in Europe, devoid of anything even close to commensurate military might, Berlin will never throw strategic weight in world politics, including in Europe.

Increasingly for the imperialist rulers in Washington, Barnes said, the most important military allies today are not in Europe, but in Israel, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Egypt. In Asia, where the U.S. government is shifting military resources to contain China and hold on to its post-World War II domination of the Pacific, Washington is turning for allies to the capitalist rulers in Australia and smaller countries in the region.

Elections in Greece, France and elsewhere in Europe are less and less



Militant photos: Above, Frank Forrester. Inset, Jacquie Henderson  
**Above: volunteers unload food contributions for locked-out American Crystal Sugar workers in Drayton, N.D., Oct. 2, 2011. As resistance mounts, there is growing interest in reading lessons of past workers battles. Inset: Steve Warshell, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Congress in Texas' 18th District, at April 25 rally of Teamsters on strike against Pioneer Flour in San Antonio.**



important in determining what will happen next, Barnes said. They change nothing, since there is nothing any bourgeois government, party or politician can do to reverse the crisis or will do to stop the heaviest blows being dealt to working people.

The trend for now is toward the bourgeois left in Europe's parliamentary politics, as reflected in electoral victories for the Socialist Party in France and the emergence in Greece of Syriza—the self-proclaimed Coalition of the Radical Left—as a big league player. After only a few weeks in office, the new SP president of France, François Hollande, was already taking steps to carry out the capitalist rulers' anti-working-class plans.

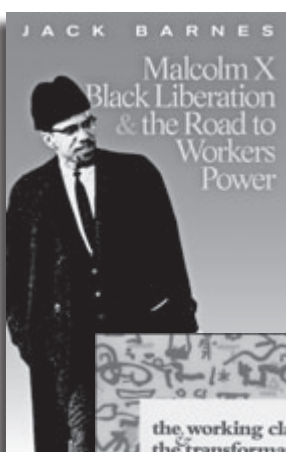
Despite alarmist coverage in the bourgeois media, echoed by many middle class radicals in Europe and the U.S., there is no rising fascist

threat. Given the class-collaborationist misleadership of the labor movement across Europe, and lack of a serious challenge to bourgeois rule anywhere on the continent, no European ruling class sees reason now to turn toward fascist forces to try to smash workers organizations. In fact, Barnes said, large ultrarightist parties such as the National Front in France are working to clean up earlier fascist-like trappings in order to cultivate broader parliamentary appeal.

The weaker ruling classes in Europe keep being preyed upon by the stronger. The crisis of the euro continues, but it is not easy for the rival rulers to unwind and widening fissures are coming down the road. Whatever governments are in power, and whatever bourgeois policies they pursue, the workers go to the wall, either way.

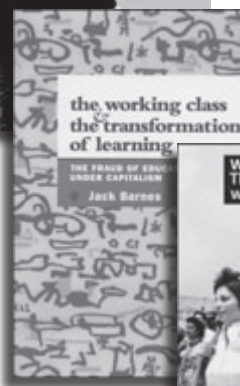
*Continued next week.*

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*Available from distributors on page 8*



John Van Hasselt/Corbis/AP  
**President Nicolas Sarkozy, hoping to stop shutdown vote and Socialist Party leader François Hollande took ant, putting over 3,000 autoworkers on the street.**



# Pro-cop media campaign

Continued from front page

“We have had demonstrations about virtually every other issue in this city, except the level of violence,” Kelly said at an event in Harlem. “Ninety-six percent of our shooting victims are people of color, yet these community leaders are not speaking out about that.”

Two days earlier the *Daily News* also had Kelly on the front page, quoting him in the headline: “We won’t back down.”

New York cops reported they conducted some 685,000 stop and frisks last year; 87 percent of those stopped were African-American or Latino. Common pretexts for the stops include “furtive movement,” “suspicious bulge” and “clothes commonly used in a crime.”

At the end of June and beginning of July appellate courts in New York overturned two arrests for alleged weapons possession arising from such arbitrary stops, ruling in both cases the cops did not have “reasonable suspicion” to conduct searches.

The *Daily News* went ballistic. A July 16 editorial was titled “Stop-and-frisk case exposes crazy legal thinking.”

The counteroffensive in support of the cops is designed to convince working people to willingly give up their constitutional and democratic rights in order to give the police—themselves the direct source of much violence in working-class neighborhoods—carte blanche to do whatever they want to supposedly protect working people from each other.

Many liberal critics of police “tactics” argue that the problem with stop and frisk is that it undermines trust in the po-

lice and is therefore “ineffective.” They call for reforming the program, to make it more selective and polite.

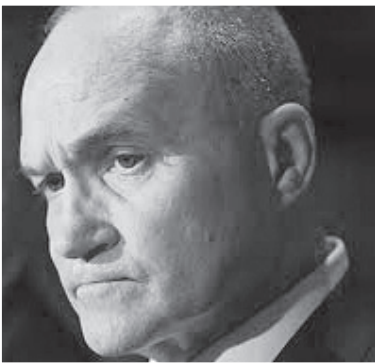
This view promotes dangerous illusions in the police and a lack of confidence in the capacities of workers.

The source of violence within the working class is the dog-eat-dog values and breakdown of human solidarity fostered by the very system the cops serve to protect, capitalism. It’s in the course of standing up to the consequences of the capitalists’ assault on our wages, unions and very dignity that genuine human solidarity is forged and workers transform ourselves, our habits, discipline and character.

Malcolm X, revolutionary leader of the working class, placed great emphasis on the importance of African-Americans standing up to racist oppression to recognize “your own self-worth.”



Above, Militant/Arnold Weissberg  
Protest in Manhattan June 17 against stop and frisk. Inset, Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly, who is trying to convince working people to accept cop harassment.



It’s through collective struggle *against* the capitalist rulers—including their cops—that working people can turn our backs on the rulers’ view of us, as well as its reflections in ourselves and its ef-

fect on our conduct toward each other.

*Róger Calero is the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress in New York’s 13th District.*

## Meeting denounces harassment of Cuban 5

Continued from front page

González. They were arrested in 1998 and convicted in 2001 on various frame-up conspiracy charges.

The five were living and working in Florida where they were monitoring and informing the Cuban government of plans by counterrevolutionary organizations with a long history of violent attacks against the Cuban Revolution and its supporters.

On July 9 prison officials refused to allow Hernández a legal visit from attorney Martin Garbus, a new member of his defense team, Andrés Gómez, president of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, told the meeting.

“This case has been marked from the beginning by violations of due process, beginning with the 17 months before their trial during which [the five] were held in solitary confinement,” said Gómez.

Among other violations of constitutional rights that marked the trial, the five were denied a change of venue from Miami, where residents were bombarded with negative media coverage on the case and intimidating actions organized by Cuban-American counterrevolutionary forces.

According to a statement issued by Cuba’s foreign ministry, when Garbus

arrived for a scheduled visit at the federal prison in Victorville, Calif., he was turned away on the pretext that the paperwork wasn’t at the reception desk.

Two days earlier, according to the statement, “Cuban officers who had been already authorized by the State Department to carry out a consular visit to Gerardo were not able to fulfill it” with a similar excuse.

Hernández “was supposed to review documents with his lawyer,” Gómez noted, and prepare oral arguments to be presented in court in connection with a new stage in the habeas corpus motion he filed two years ago asking for a hearing to present new evidence that came to light after his conviction in 2001.

“This is not the first time events like this one occur,” explained the Cuban statement. “They have taken place systematically during every key moment of Gerardo’s legal process.” In 2010, as he was preparing his habeas corpus motion, “the penitentiary authorities denied Gerardo the possibility to be visited by his lawyer Leonard Weinglass in two occasions, and deliberately delayed the delivery of his legal mail, which prevented his participation in the reviewing,” said the statement.

On July 6 the government’s attorneys asked the court to dismiss Hernández’s

motion for discovery and oral argument in relation to one aspect of his habeas motion—that some of the journalists who wrote false and inflammatory articles about the case during the trial were at the time on the U.S. government payroll. Labañino, Guerrero, and Fernando González have also filed appeals on similar grounds.

In its reply, the government argued that Hernández’s motion is a “fishing expedition” and that the 11th Circuit Court already determined in a 2006 ruling that the five “received a fair trial.”

Garbus was finally able to meet with Hernández, but only as a regular visitor, Gómez said. “He was not allowed to bring in the documents for the case, or even paper and a pen.”

According to attorney Richard Klugh, another member of Hernández’s legal team, Hernández has until Aug. 20 to reply to the government’s response to his motion.

Gómez reported that René González, who has been on “supervised release” since last October, after 13 years of incarceration, filed a new request June 22 to return to Cuba. (See “René González Again Requests Return to Cuba” in July 16 issue.) Judge Joan Lenard refused a similar motion before Gonzalez’s release, claiming it was “premature.”

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