

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

'In US prisons, just going to trial earns you respect' — René González
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 77/NO. 28 JULY 22, 2013

Actions in Texas and N. Carolina defend women's right to choose

BY SUSAN LAMONT

"We are going to stay here as long as needed," said Marianna Anaya, 23, of Rise Up Texas, speaking with the *Militant* by phone from outside the state capitol in Austin, Texas. Hundreds of supporters of women's right to choose abortion have been protesting a new anti-woman law under debate in the state legislature there that would further restrict access to abortion.

"We had many more pro-choice people here yesterday than the 'blue shirts,'" said Anaya, referring to the blue T-shirts worn by backers of the bill, who also rallied at the capitol July 8.

The new Texas law would ban abortions after 20 weeks of pregnancy, require that the procedure be performed at ambulatory surgical centers, that doctors who perform them have admitting privileges at a nearby hospital, and that drug-induced abortions be administered in a surgical center. Only five out of the 42 abortion clinics in Texas would meet the onerous building requirements.

Some 5,000 supporters of women's right to abortion rallied at the state capitol July 1, demanding that the legislature vote down the bill.

On July 9 more than 500 protested the bill in Houston. "I was moved to come out today by the actions in Austin," Sara England, a University of Houston student, told the *Militant*.

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Millions celebrate ouster of Islamist gov't in Egypt

Workers defend space to organize, fight



July 5 mobilization in Cairo's Tahrir Square marks fall of Muslim Brotherhood government of Mohammed Morsi. Zinab al-Saghier, front, lost eye during recent clash with Morsi supporters.

BY SETH GALINSKY

Millions of people across Egypt are celebrating the ouster of President Mohammed Morsi and his Muslim Brotherhood-led government, having succeeded in defending the political space opened by the overthrow of the Hosni Mubarak dictatorship less than two and a half years ago.

In the midst of massive protests, the military high command ousted Morsi on July 3, arresting him and other leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood, and shutting down much of the group's media. They suspended the new Islamist constitution — pushed through by the Morsi government at the end of last year — that had become a source of contention with both

workers and competing factions of the capitalist class.

The Muslim Brotherhood, the largest capitalist party in the country, organized large actions to defend Morsi's government. Clashes took place between Morsi supporters and opponents in Cairo, Alexandria and other parts of the country. Residents of Cairo's Manial neighborhood told the Arab news service *Al Arabiya* that they saw Brotherhood supporters armed with automatic weapons, machetes and sticks.

When military helicopters flew

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Senate passes anti-worker immigration 'reform' bill

BY SETH GALINSKY

The immigration "reform" bill passed June 27 by the Democratic-controlled Senate would tighten government regulation over labor and borders, increase the criminalization of workers without "proper papers" and expand guest worker programs aimed at helping bosses continue to drive down the wages of all working people — immigrant and native-born. The carrot is a more than 10-year road to a possible green card for those who came to the U.S. before Dec. 31, 2011, and meet other onerous requirements.

The bill will now go to the House of Representatives, where, if anything, its anti-worker provisions will be strengthened and its carrot whittled down.

Just days before it was voted on,

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Only 47% of adults in US work full time

Employment to population ratio



"Only 58.7 percent of the adult population of 245 million was working at all last month."

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Four years into the so-called recovery from the 2007-2009 recession, only 47 percent of the adult population have full-time jobs, according to government figures. And those facing increasingly longer periods of unemployment are finding it more difficult to get work. Only 58.7 percent of the adult population of 245 million was working at all last month.

For June the official unemployment rate was 7.6 percent — unchanged from the previous month — with

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Calif. prisoners launch hunger strike against solitary confinement, abuses

BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

NORWALK, Calif. — Some 30,000 inmates at more than two dozen prisons throughout California refused meals Monday morning July 8, initiating a mass hunger strike to protest barbaric treatment and press their demands. Solidarity rallies took place across the state the same day.

Some 2,300 inmates also refused to show up for prison work or classes, according to the *Los Angeles Times*.

In California alone, more than 10,000 workers behind bars are held in solitary confinement, with dozens for more than 20 years.

Prisoners in Pelican Bay's Special Housing Units (SHUs) initiated the first round of hunger strike protests two years ago, which grew to involve more than 11,000 inmates. Protest organizers announced they would resume the strike July 8 because prison officials had re-

fused to comply with promises to meet prisoners' demands — which included an end to group punishment, abolition of a snitch system that arbitrarily puts inmates accused of gang affiliation in long-term isolation until they finger others, release of those in SHU isolation for more than 10 years, adequate food, a weekly phone call and other demands.

"My son, Gabriel Reyes, has been locked in a tiny, windowless cell for 15 years at Pelican Bay," said Connie Pedroza, who took part in a July 8 protest of some 150 outside City Hall here with her daughter, grandson, niece and nephew. "My son was part of the first strike in 2011. He is fighting again this time, and we stand with him. The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation will not rob him of his humanity."

Another round of solidarity rallies is planned for July 13.

To new readers: Welcome! Help win more subscribers!

Dear readers,

The *Militant* is extending a warm welcome to the 2,784 people who subscribed to the socialist newsweekly during the spring circulation drive.

A large proportion subscribed when *Militant* readers — including Socialist Workers Party candidates and campaign supporters — knocked on their door to talk and introduce them to the paper, along with books on revolutionary working-class politics.

Through the eight-week campaign,

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Immigration ‘reform’ bill

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119 pages of amendments were added to the more than 1,000-page bill. Among the measures: adding 20,000 immigration cops to double the number of Border Patrol Agents at the U.S.-Mexico border, 700 miles of additional fencing there and establishing 24/7 aerial drone surveillance.

But most pro-immigrant groups, as well as the AFL-CIO union federation, continue to back the bill. “The border security amendments ... were a bitter pill to swallow,” America’s Voice Education Fund Executive Director Frank Sharry said in a statement, “but on balance we believe this bill is a big win for our community.”

The bipartisan bill passed with 68 votes in favor, including 14 Republicans, and 32 against, all Republicans.

Under the bill’s “road to citizenship,” undocumented workers could become eligible for permanent residency after registering with the government, paying at least \$2,000 in fines and fees, passing background checks, and making it through at least 10 years under a new “provisional status.” A felony conviction or three misdemeanors would disqualify one from provisional status. Among the other things that could lead to its termination is being out of work for more than 60 days.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that only 6.3 million out of the estimated 11 million undocumented workers in the U.S. would qualify for provisional status.

Central to the “reform” is stepping up the crackdown on workers without papers. Within two years all businesses with more than 5,000 work-

ers would be required to use the government’s online E-Verify system to check on the immigration status of all new hires, including requiring a digital photo. Within five years it would be mandatory for all businesses with one exception: “casual, sporadic, irregular, or intermittent” employment.

Combined with E-Verify, the bill requires that all future Social Security cards be “identity theft-resistant.”

The Senate bill mandates tripling the number of “illegal entry” and “illegal reentry” prosecutions in the main border-crossing region and increasing the jail time.

Expansion of ‘guest’ workers

As part of exerting greater control over the flow of immigrant labor — key to the bosses pushing down the wages of all working people — the bill expands “guest worker” programs. It roughly doubles the number of guest workers allowed in agriculture. Many of these workers are given visas only if they have a contract with a farm boss. If they are fired before the contract expires they are subject to immediate deportation.

The bill, for the first time, would allow foreign workers to come into the U.S. for up to three years — as many as 200,000 per year — for construction, meatpacking, hotels and other industries. As part of the deal between the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and officials of the AFL-CIO that helped pave the way for the bill’s approval, foreign construction workers would be limited to 15,000 a year.

This would not be the first time that the U.S. government has clamped down on workers without papers

Maoris protest New Zealand gov’t seizing their land



Militant/Patrick Brown

ROTORUA, New Zealand — “It’s the 21st century and they’re still confiscating Maori land,” said Morris Meha, one of 250 people who marched in this central North Island city June 24. Marchers were heading for a meeting of the Rotorua District Council’s Standing Committee for Te Arawa — the local iwi (tribe) — to protest plans for a new highway through Maori-owned land on the outskirts of the city.

The protest, organized by the Positive Rotorua Environmental Society, was made up mainly of members of three Te Arawa subtribes whose lands would be taken for the road.

The group stepped up its fight in April when the New Zealand Transport Agency announced the route for a new highway would cut through a geothermal area alongside the city’s lake and require demolition of 12 houses.

“We still use the hot pools to bathe and for cooking,” Karleena Wineera told the *Militant*. Native birds and other wildlife would be affected, and the road would cut through an urupa (cemetery), she said.

—FELICITY COGGAN

while expanding the number of workers here “legally” but with few rights. In 1954, when the U.S. economy was in a recession following the Korean War, President Dwight Eisenhower launched Operation Wetback, which deported some 1 million workers without papers. At the same time he expanded the *bracero* program, which brought in hundreds of thousands of Mexicans to work in the fields.

In 1986, during an economic expansion, President Ronald Reagan signed the Immigration Reform and Control Act, which granted green cards to some 3 million undocumented workers while increasing federal penalties for entering the country without papers. The same year U.S. immigration cops deported 1.6 million workers without papers, one of the highest numbers in U.S. history.

Passage of the anti-worker law this year is not assured. Republican

Speaker of the House of Representatives John Boehner said the House plans to write its own bill. While supporting the general thrust of the Senate’s bill, many in the Republican-controlled House are opposed to the “road to citizenship,” unless even more arduous conditions are imposed.

‘Militant’ publishing break

This is a three-week issue of the paper, as we will be attending the Active Workers Educational Conference. The next issue of the *Militant* will be mailed out on August 1.

THE MILITANT

Back Kurdish people’s fight for their rights

The Kurds, an oppressed nationality living in parts of Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria, are carving out space in their fight for land and language rights. Their struggles are in the interest of all working people in the region and worldwide. The ‘Militant’ covers these developments.



Oren Ziv/Activestills.org

March in Istanbul June 29 protests police killing of 18-year-old Kurdish youth.

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Submissions to the *Militant* may be published in the newspaper in print and digital format. By submitting, authors represent that their submissions are original and consent to publication in this manner.

Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant*’s views. These are expressed in editorials.

Welcome to our readers

Continued from front page
hundreds bought books at reduced prices with a subscription, including well over 150 copies of *The Cuban Five: Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should Be Free*. The book has proved to be not only a powerful weapon for broadening support for the international campaign to free these five Cuban revolutionaries, but a way to discuss with thinking workers why we should defend and emulate Cuba's socialist revolution.

"I enjoy reading the *Militant*," said new subscriber and warehouse worker Marlon Grosvenor when *Militant* supporter Bev Bernardo called him in Montreal to check that he was receiving the paper OK. "I especially like the overseas coverage. The world has a lot of issues and the paper shows what people are doing about some of them." When told about the books on special, he decided to get *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* a few days later.

The book offers are still valid and I urge subscribers to take advantage of them.

The spring 2013 subscription campaign fanned out in cities, towns and rural areas across the United States, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. As part of talking with a broad cross-section of working people door to door, *Militant* supporters built solidarity with those standing up to the bosses' attacks, joining and bringing others to labor actions and picket lines.

Last week the *Militant* reported 12 subscribers were won among workers behind bars, just three shy of the goal. This week I am delighted to report that the figure is much higher. Five subscriptions came in the mail shortly after the

chart was printed. Readers in prison fighting for their quota were slowed down only by the snail's pace of mail through the prisons and post office. This puts the prisoners' effort at 113 percent — the top of the chart! The welcome news comes just as tens of thousands of workers behind bars have joined a hunger strike in prisons across California, taking a stand for working-class dignity.

Contributions from readers to the Militant Prisoners' Fund, and what money inmates can put together, make it possible to bring the paper's revolutionary perspective to readers behind bars. And we know from comments they send us — both praises and criticisms — that these inmates use the paper to advance political discussions and working-class perspectives with fellow prisoners.

The effort to expand the working-class readership of the paper does not end with the spring campaign. In a real sense, it is just getting started. Join the effort. Introduce the paper to friends, relatives and fellow workers. You can call distributors in your area (see directory on page 8) or contact us at (212) 244-4899 or themilitant@mac.com.

And be sure to renew your subscription before it runs out!

In solidarity,
Louis Martin
Circulation director

'Working people need our own political party'



Militant/Sara Lobman

"I was in Tahrir Square in Egypt two years ago, right after the massive mobilizations that toppled the Mubarak government," Dan Fein, center, told Chris Bishop, far right, a driver for an animal care company, when they met outside the John Lovejoy Elliott Houses in Manhattan July 7. "Now millions have come into the streets again forcing the unpopular Morsi government out. Working people in Egypt face the same question we do: how to fight for political power."

"Working people are the foundation of society," Bishop said. "We need to do what you said in all countries."

"Yes," said Fein. "The challenge is building a revolutionary party. If working people had such a party in Egypt today, it wouldn't be the military stepping in. It would be the working class in its own name."

"Here the Democrats and Republicans represent the capitalist class. Working people need our own political organizations, independent of the bosses," Fein said.

—SARA LOBMAN

Militant Fighting Fund goes over the top!

BY LEA SHERMAN

Thank you to all our readers who contributed to the annual 2013 Militant Fighting Fund.

We raised \$121,752 — more than \$3,000 over the goal!

For the last eight weeks supporters of the working-class paper reached out to

other readers to exceed the \$118,000 international goal. This effort has been an integral part of the spring subscription campaign to expand readership of the socialist newsweekly worldwide.

Nearly all areas made their local quotas, some going substantially over. Based on reports from a dozen areas,

supporters of the *Militant* won more than 200 first-time contributors during the course of the drive.

"In New York, we took the goal of getting 50 new contributors. We ended up receiving contributions from 51 individuals who had never donated to the fund before, for a total of \$575 towards

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Special offers with 'Militant' subscription



The Cuban Five
Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should Be Free
from pages of the 'Militant'
\$3 with subscription (regular \$5)

The Changing Face of U.S. Politics
Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions
by Jack Barnes
\$10 with subscription (regular \$24)

The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning
The Fraud of Education Reform Under Capitalism
by Jack Barnes
\$2 with subscription (regular \$3)

We Are Heirs of the World's Revolutions
by Thomas Sankara
Speeches from the Burkina Faso Revolution 1983-87
\$5 with subscription (regular \$10)

Thomas Sankara Speaks
The Burkina Faso Revolution 1983-1987
\$10 with subscription (regular \$24)

See distributors
on page 8



Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power
by Jack Barnes
\$10 with subscription (regular \$20)

Cuba and Angola
Fighting for Africa's Freedom and Our Own
by Nelson Mandela, Fidel Castro, Raúl Castro; Cuban generals and combatants; Gabriel García Márquez
\$6 with subscription (regular \$12)

Women in Cuba
The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution
by Vilma Espín, Asela de los Santos, Yolanda Ferrer
\$10 with subscription (regular \$20)

Women and Revolution
The Living Example of the Cuban Revolution
by Asela de los Santos, Mary-Alice Waters and others
\$3 with subscription (regular \$7)

Militant Fighting Fund			
May 4 - July 2 (Final chart)			
Country	Quota	Paid	%
UNITED STATES			
Seattle	\$8,500	\$9,426	111%
Des Moines	\$2,600	\$2,769	107%
Houston	\$4,000	\$4,201	105%
Omaha	\$600	\$621	104%
New York	\$20,000	\$20,608	103%
Miami	\$3,000	\$3,080	103%
Twin Cities	\$5,500	\$5,614	102%
Los Angeles	\$8,500	\$8,675	102%
Lincoln	\$200	\$203	102%
Atlanta	\$9,000	\$9,067	101%
San Francisco	\$13,500	\$13,505	100%
Philadelphia	\$4,300	\$4,301	100%
Boston	\$3,500	\$3,500	100%
Chicago	\$9,500	\$9,035	95%
Washington	\$7,800	\$7,204	92%
Other		\$1,250	
Total US	\$100,500	\$103,059	103%
CANADA*	\$7,500	\$7,500	100%
NEW ZEALAND	\$5,500	\$5,510	100%
AUSTRALIA*	\$1,950	\$2,000	103%
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	\$2,000	\$2,515	126%
Manchester	\$600	\$770	128%
Total UK	\$2,600	\$3,285	126%
FRANCE	\$350	\$398	114%
Total	\$118,400	\$121,752	103%
Should be	\$118,000	\$118,000	100%
*Raised Quota			

Railway disaster in Quebec highlights bosses' profit drive

BY JOHN STEELE

MONTREAL — In the early morning of July 6 a runaway train transporting oil derailed and crashed in downtown Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, causing a massive deadly explosion. As of July 9, 13 have been reported dead with dozens still missing. Whatever the exact cause, the incident has shown a spotlight on the dangers posed by transport bosses' relentless "productivity" drive.

Some 30 buildings were wiped out and more than 1,500 of the town's 6,000 residents have been evacuated from the area, which is 157 miles east of Montreal, close to the Maine border.

Oil spilling into the Chaudière River could affect water consumption as far as Quebec City, 115 miles north, and the St. Lawrence River eastward from there.

The 72 oil tanker car train, owned by Montreal, Maine and Atlantic Railway whose parent company is Rail World Inc., was initially secured and braked by its lone engineer at Nantes, about seven miles uphill from Lac-Mégantic. As per company regulations, the engineer left the locomotive running to get sleep at a nearby hotel.

At about 11:30 p.m. firefighters were called by MMA employees to put out a small fire in one of the five locomotives. They left when told by MMA that the train was OK and secured. Around 1 a.m. the unmanned train began to roll towards the town, gathering speed until it jumped the tracks.

MMA has a high accident rate, far higher than even the U.S. average, the *Wall Street Journal* reported July 8.

In 1991 the U.S. National Transportation and Safety Board stated in a report that the DOT-111 oil tanker cars that made up the 72 car train are "not adequate to resist the shock of a derailment." It took 20 years for the Canadian federal government to demand that transporters use tanker cars with thicker

steel walls when they renew their fleets, but Ottawa has permitted the companies to keep the old models in service.

For many years rail unions in North America have pointed to the bosses' cutbacks in the size of train staffs as a safety issue for rail workers and communities through which freight trains pass each day.

In 2012 Ottawa gave MMA permission to use one-person crews, which allow the company to run more frequent trains with higher profit margins.



Parts of runaway train that crashed and exploded July 6 in downtown Lac-Mégantic, Quebec.

Only 47% of US adults have full-time jobs

Continued from front page

195,000 jobs added. Described by some capitalist commentators as a sign the economy is improving, a closer look at the figures shows there's been no recovery for working people.

Every month government statisticians remove "discouraged" workers — those who, according to government statistics, have given up looking for work — from its jobless figures. While the official jobless rate has declined slightly over the last few years, the proportion of the population with a job has also shrunk.

In June, the number of "discouraged" workers rose by 247,000 over the previous month — more than the so-called added jobs.

Increasing numbers of workers seeking full-time work are being forced to accept part-time hours. In June, these figures rose by 322,000 to 8.23 million workers, according to the Labor Department.

"All of the net addition to June jobs — repeat all — were part time," said a July 8 *Investor's Business Daily* editorial. "Fulltime employment shrank by 240,000. Year to date, only 130,000 full-time jobs have been added to our

economy. The rest of the jobs — 557,000 — have been part time."

And companies from Walmart to General Motors employ nearly 17 million temporary and contract workers, freelancers and consultants — some 12 percent of everyone with a job.

Growing numbers of employers, especially in retail and food services, have been cutting workers' hours or hiring new workers at less than 30 hours a week to avoid providing health care coverage for employees under the Affordable

Care Act, known as ObamaCare.

The law requires employers with more than 50 workers to provide health insurance for full-time employees or pay a \$2,000 penalty per worker. While the Obama administration recently postponed implementing this regulation until 2015, more bosses are offering just part-time work. Lowe's home improvement store chain, for example, plans to hire 9,000 "permanent part-time employees" this year, reported the *Wall Street Journal*.

Active Workers Educational Conference begins July 19

BY LOUIS MARTIN

"I'm excited about going to the conference. I want to meet with other workers who are politically motivated and learn more about the world," Glen Gales told the *Militant* July 10, explaining his decision to participate in the Active Workers Educational Conference organized by the Socialist Workers Party July 19-20 in Oberlin, Ohio. Gales has worked as a Red Cap at Amtrak for 33 years in Washington, D.C.

"A coworker introduced me to the *Militant* a while back and I've been reading it ever since. That's where I really found out about the Cuban Five," he said. Gales helped organize local sup-

port for the "5 days for the Cuban 5" held in Washington, D.C., May 30-June 5, and attended the June 1 rally for the freedom of the Five in front of the White House. "The Five didn't get a fair trial. I'm against people being set up and I hate it when people are incarcerated for false reasons."

The conference will feature talks by SWP leaders, classes and a closing panel on the political work participants will carry out together coming out of the gathering.

For more information, call *Militant* distributors in your area (see directory on page 8) or contact us at (212) 244-4899 or themilitant@mac.com.

Militant Fighting Fund over top!

Continued from page 3

our goal. These contributions put us over the top!" wrote Tamar Rosenfeld, who helped organize the effort in the New York-New Jersey area.

"I like the *Militant* because it keeps you informed of what's happening," said longshoreman Jamal Dowling, one of 18 new contributors in the Miami area. "Even if you're not struggling, other people are and it's good to be informed."

First-time contributors in Miami gave a total of \$466, according to Dean Hazlewood, who led the local

fundraising effort.

Unlike the big-business press, which collects revenue from capitalist advertising, the *Militant* depends on contributions from supporters of the paper, published in the interests of the working people. These contributions help pay for basic operating expenses and reporting trips to cover political developments of interest to the working class and its allies worldwide.

Congratulations to all who took part in this successful international campaign!

Help get the SWP on the ballot in New York

Supporters of the citywide Socialist Workers Party candidates in New York City will be taking to the streets July 22-August 4 to gather 7,500 signatures, double the requirement, to put Dan Fein for Mayor, John Studer for Comptroller and Deborah Liatos for Public Advocate on the ballot. **Join us!**

Saturdays July 27 & August 3 Meet at 9 a.m.

Sundays July 28 & August 4 Meet at 1 p.m.

Hear the candidates!

Saturday evening, August 3

307 W. 36th St., 10th Floor, Manhattan (use north elevators)

For more information contact the SWP campaign in New York

Phone: (212) 736-2540; E-mail: newyorkswp@mac.com

Protests defend women's rights

Continued from front page

"It will be a real burden on women, especially in rural areas across the state, if this bill is passed and clinics close."

Gov. Rick Perry convened the legislature July 8 to push the bill through, after an initial attempt failed on technical grounds June 25. It was passed again by the House July 10.

In North Carolina, some 2,000 people rallied July 8 at the state capitol in Raleigh against efforts to pass a bill to require clinics that perform abortions to meet safety standards designed for ambulatory surgical centers.

"We still don't know exactly what the regulations for clinics would be if this bill passes," said Janet Colm, CEO of Central North Carolina Planned Parenthood, in a July 9 phone interview. "Planned Parenthood operates four clinics in North Carolina and we are determined to keep them open, no matter what." There are 12 other abortion clinics in the state.

In Wisconsin, federal Judge William Conley issued a temporary restraining

order barring implementation of a provision in a new law restricting abortions that requires doctors working at abortion clinics have admitting privileges at a hospital within 30 miles of the clinic. The American Civil Liberties Union and Planned Parenthood Federation of America filed suit July 5 to block the provision. According to the legal complaint, two of the state's four abortion clinics would be forced to close, leaving much of the state with no abortion provider.

On June 28 a federal judge blocked implementation of a similar law in Alabama.

One of the most stringent anti-abortion bills in the country was signed into law at the end of June by Ohio Gov. John Kasich. "Clinics must have an agreement with a local hospital to transfer patients there in case of an emergency, but public hospitals are barred from entering into those agreements," the *Washington Post* reported July 1. Some clinics have been granted exemptions, but the health department director has the unilateral power to revoke them.

ON THE PICKET LINE

Transit union officials suspend strike in Bay Area for 30 days

SAN FRANCISCO — Officials of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1555 and Service Employees International Union Local 1021 agreed to a 30-day suspension of their strike, which had effectively shut down the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit System for four days starting July 1. The suspension came at the request of California Labor Secretary Marty Morgenstern and state mediators.

BART management remains intransigent in its plan to increase deductions from workers' paychecks for health care and pensions, which would be only partially offset by a proposed 8 percent raise over three years.

—Eric Simpson

Mental health workers strike 5 days in California for contract

LONG BEACH, Calif. — Some 200 mental health workers struck the Telecare La Casa Mental Health Rehabilitation Center here June 26-30. Demands include a contract and safer conditions for workers and patients.

On June 29 more than 100 members and supporters of the Service Employees International Union-United Healthcare Workers West demonstrated at a local park.

"The company is deaf to our demands for training," said Neilanie Besana, 24, a nurse and SEIU member. "We are not trained to respond when patients have a breakdown. One nurse and two mental health workers is not enough for 30 to 44 patients in a unit."

Workers at Telecare, who joined the SEIU a year ago, say contract negotiations are stalled. They report the starting wage is \$9 per hour and that wages have been frozen for three to four years.

—Arlene Rubinstein

Quebec construction unions end strike in face of gov't order

MONTREAL — About 77,000 commercial, industrial and institutional construction workers returned to work July 2 under strikebreaking legislation adopted by the Quebec National Assembly the day before.

The law was approved after negotiations collapsed between the Union Alliance, a coalition of five unions organizing construction workers, and the Quebec Construction Association, the organization representing the Quebec construction bosses in the industrial and commercial sector.

The law extends the union contract for one year and makes any strike or lockout illegal during that time. The workers will receive a 2 percent increase in wages for the year. The unions and

construction bosses have until June 30, 2014, to reach a negotiated settlement for a new contract. The law stipulates fines of \$100 a day for workers and \$125,000 a day for unions and employers' associations for violations of the order.

The two-week province-wide strike that began June 17 shut down billions of dollars in construction projects. It initially involved 175,000 workers throughout the province. The 100,000 workers involved in residential and in engineering and road construction returned to work five days after union officials reached a tentative deal with the bosses that include wage increases of 8.6 percent over a four-year contract.

"We aren't going back with a smile on our lips," plumber Chrystian Tessier told the *Militant* as he returned to work at the \$2.1 billion University of Montreal Hospital Center here. "Now we don't have the right to strike for a year. Maybe we will get results later."

None of the workers' demands underlying the strike have been resolved.

—John Steele

U.K. teachers protest abolition of pay rates, pension cuts

MANCHESTER, England — More than 1,000 teachers rallied here June 27 during a one-day strike that closed hundreds of schools across northwest



Militant/Oliver Jones

More than 1,000 teachers march in Manchester, England, June 27 during one-day strike to protest pension cuts and abolition of pay rates and collective bargaining on national level.

England. Members of the National Union of Teachers and National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers were protesting the abolition of national pay rates and national collective bargaining, as well as pension cuts.

"Why do they have to hit teachers all the time?" said Katie Redford, a language teacher at Parrs Wood, Didsbury. "Pay has been frozen for several years."

The new measures "will cause increased competition between teachers," said Miriam Hopkinson, a teacher of deaf students in Bury.

Claire Morreal, a teacher from nearby Salford, said, "If we don't take action now, things can be even worse in 10 years."

Rallies also took place in Liverpool, Chester and Preston.

—Paul Davies and Oliver Jones

Protests condemn worker's death at Ga. auto parts plant

BY JANICE LYNN

ATLANTA — Some 60 people took part in a protest vigil and rally here June 26 for an auto parts worker who died after working in extreme heat at the Sewon America factory in LaGrange, about 65 miles south of Atlanta. A second vigil was held in LaGrange on June 29.

Teresa Pickard, 42, died on May 29 after working on the "project weld line."

"The air conditioning on the assembly line is not working properly and workers are soaked in sweat," an anonymous Sewon employee told the *LaGrange Citizen*. He said Pickard complained of chest pains several times before she was sent to the break room, where management keeps the air conditioning turned

off to discourage workers from staying there.

Sewon America produces stamped chassis and other components for the Kia auto plant nearby and the Hyundai auto plant in Alabama. The company released a statement denying that Pickard's death was work related and that it would have no further communication with the media.

Results of an autopsy could take six to eight weeks. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration is conducting an investigation, which it says could take up to six months. In 2010 OSHA levied \$135,900 in fines against the company for a number of safety violations, including failure to provide workers with appropriate hand protection,

protect workers from arc welding flash burns, provide lockout/tagout procedures and provide machine guarding. In 2010 a worker there fell 50 feet to his death.

"Local people are now talking about the need for union organization to protect workers against the dangerous conditions," Scott Smith, publisher of the *LaGrange Citizen*, told participants at the rally here.

Other speakers included Pickard's cousin, Michael James, and representatives from the AFL-CIO, NAACP and the Georgia Student Justice Alliance.

Smith reported that Sewon officials threatened to fire workers if they attended the vigils and that company photographers would be taking pictures.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



July 22, 1988

FENTON, Mo. — Thousands of auto workers stopped production at two Chrysler Corp. assembly plants here in a series of walkouts in late June. The workers were protesting the intolerable conditions in the plants during a heat wave that caused temperatures inside to rise to well over 100 degrees. One worker died, and scores of others became ill before the workers' actions forced the company to back down on overtime demands and make other relief provisions.

The protests began June 21 in the paint shop of Plant 1, where the temperature reached 115 degrees. Company officials intended to run the line as usual, with nine hours of production and no additional relief time or other measures. The paint-shop workers walked out of the plant an hour and a half after start-up, and the rest of the workers followed soon after.



July 22, 1963

The five-day European Conference of Non-governmental Aid to Algeria, held last month in Algiers, was important in more ways than one. Of primary significance was its bringing together leading figures from various tendencies of the European left who obtained an accurate picture of the needs of the Algerian people in its heroic efforts to rebuild the country.

In his speech to the closing sessions of the conference, [President] Ben Bella outlined the staggering problems facing the Algerian people after seven and a half years of struggle against French imperialism.

"Algeria had 2,000,000 Algerians, who had been in what were called 're-groupment camps,' and 500,000 refugees who came back from Tunisia and Morocco with absolutely nothing, scarcely clothed, lacking especially anything with which to work in their fields."



July 23, 1938

AKRON, Ohio — A campaign to provide supplementary relief for W.P.A. and industrial employees was begun here this week by the Akron C.I.O. council and Goodyear Local, United Rubber Workers of America.

By mobilizing the labor movement behind this fight, union leaders seek to revitalize the unions and to alleviate the suffering of thousands of families living on sub-existence levels.

Over 110,000 of the 225,000 inhabitants of Akron are on one kind of relief or another, and thousands of rubber workers are working less than two days a week, thereby making a system of supplementary relief indispensable for the sheer existence of the people.

The campaign is not being made as a substitute for jobs, or adequate wages. Union leaders see it as a good supplementary move to fight against the effects of the social crisis.

Corrections

The article "Deaths in Plant Fires in Louisiana Highlight Bosses' Drive for Profit" in issue no. 25 incorrectly described Abel Bocanegra as a worker at Eagle Ford in Louisiana. Eagle Ford Shale is a hydrocarbon-producing formation in Texas. Bocanegra used to work in the Eagle Ford Shale Play south of San Antonio. The interview in the article took place not by phone but in person, where both the author and Bocanegra were then working near Houston.

Alain Hollie, who was quoted in "Bay Area Strike Shuts Down Rail Transit System," in issue no. 27, is a man, not a woman.

Socialist Workers adopt course to advance program of party

BY JOHN STUDER

The June 22-24 meeting of the Socialist Workers Party's National Committee adopted a course of action to advance the party's program in face of today's deepening capitalist crisis and the openness communist workers are finding among working people to discussing a working-class alternative to capitalist rule.

The leadership committee's decisions focused on fighting to free the Cuban Five alongside other supporters of this international defense effort and as an integral component of the party's working-class activity, as well as using SWP election campaigns to chart an independent political course for workers and their allies against the capitalist government and parties, the Democrats and Republicans. In each case, the party's efforts are built on a foundation of door-to-door sales of the *Militant* and books published by Pathfinder Press in working-class neighborhoods from big cities to small towns across the country.

The five Cuban revolutionaries framed up by Washington — Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González and René González — are our comrades, SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes told the meeting. None of us can know how long it may take to win their freedom, he said, but we do know they conduct themselves as revolutionary combatants behind bars, as participants in the class struggle here in the U.S., among fellow workers railroaded to prison.

Participants in the meeting reported that while most workers they talk with haven't yet heard about this fight, it resonates with many, particularly among the millions with family or friends who've been run through the U.S. "justice" system of stop-and-frisk, plea-bargain frame-ups, jacked-up sentences, solitary confinement and other indignities.

Party members are stepping up efforts to introduce fellow workers to the defense campaign, going house to house, apartment to apartment with the *Militant* and revolutionary literature, including the book *The Cuban Five: Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should Be Free*. In New York, *Militant* supporters sold 55 copies of the book during the just concluded subscription drive.

In her report to the National Committee, SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters pointed to expanding opportunities to join with others in initiating and building defense activities —

from exhibits of cartoons and paintings by Gerardo Hernández and Antonio Guerrero to public meetings to educate and mobilize support for the fight. This includes joining efforts to build the campaign worldwide, from the upcoming VII Continental Meeting of Solidarity with Cuba in Caracas, Venezuela, July 24-27, to the 18th World Festival of Youth and Students in Ecuador, December 7-13.

Lessons of other defense fights

Barnes pointed to lessons from previous defense fights, including the campaign for Mark Curtis, a packing-house worker and SWP member in Des Moines, Iowa, sentenced in 1988 to 25 years in prison on trumped-up charges of rape and burglary. At the time of his arrest, Curtis was engaged in a fight to defend immigrant workers in the plant where he worked.

"There is no way on earth," Barnes told a defense rally for Curtis on the eve of his trial, that the packinghouse bosses, cops and city officials "will succeed in their goal. They will not prevent him from continuing to be the same person he is today, fighting for the same things, believing the same deeply held convictions, saying them openly to the entire world."

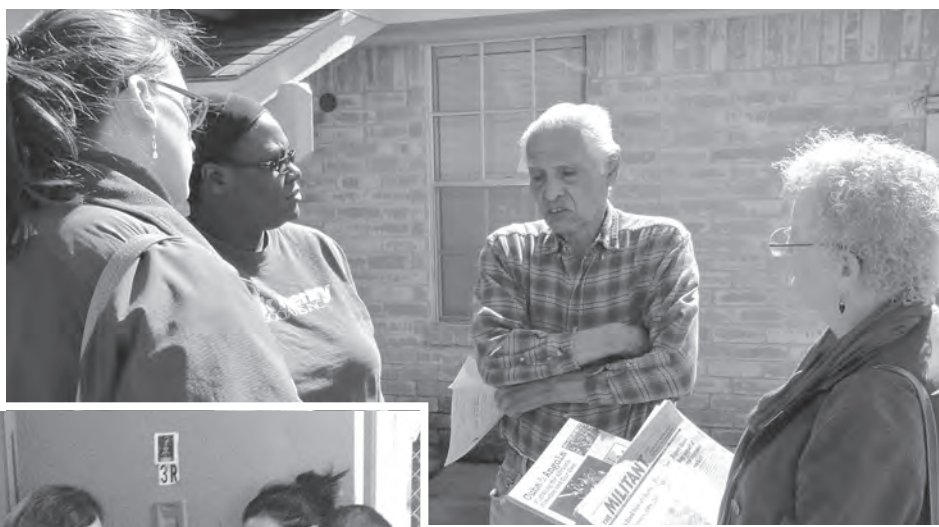
The Cuban Five conduct themselves in the same exemplary fashion.

These working-class fighters, Barnes said at the SWP leadership meeting, are examples of the caliber of revolutionaries needed to build a workers party here in the U.S. that can emulate Cuban workers and farmers, who overthrew the U.S.-backed Fulgencio Batista dictatorship in 1959 and transformed themselves by the millions as they wrested political power and wielded their new revolutionary government to transform all of society in the interests of the toiling majority.

SWP election campaigns

One way the Socialist Workers Party is advancing the effort to free the Five is through its election campaigns, which champion their defense and the selfless, steadfast and dignified example they set for working people.

SWP candidates and their supporters — from Seattle to New York, from Miami to Des Moines — are explaining the deepening capitalist crisis of production and trade and the bosses' efforts to shore up their profits on the backs of working people here and the world over. They present a revolutionary working-



Militant photos by Dan Fein (left) and Michael Fitzsimmons (above)

Using SWP election campaigns and building defense for Cuban Five on foundation of door-to-door propaganda in working class are at center of party's work today. **Left**, Deborah Liatos, SWP candidate for New York City Public Advocate, sells subscription and *The Cuban Five* to Glenni Taveras in Far Rockaway, Queens, N.Y. **Above**, Jacquie Henderson, candidate earlier this year for Texas Senate, and supporters Amanda Ulman and Katina Matthews meet with subscriber Abel Gonzales.



class *political* alternative to combat these mounting assaults on our class.

The workings of capitalism take a grinding toll on the conditions — and the very dignity — of workers in the U.S. The percentage who have a job has fallen. Millions have been pushed into lower paying, part-time or temporary work, face attacks on health care and retirement, as well as speedup leading to more injuries and deaths on the job.

Party candidates and supporters join and urge solidarity with workers' resistance to attacks by the bosses, from coal miners fighting Patriot Coal's effort to break their union and slash health care for working miners and retirees alike, to school bus workers in New York who face the loss of job protection at the hands of the city. They support social protests in the interests of the working class, from fights against cop brutality to actions in defense of women's right to choose abortion, like those in recent weeks in Texas.

SWP election campaigns champion the massive popular outpourings in Brazil against fare hikes and for other demands that were mounting as the party leadership was meeting; the overthrow of the widely hated Morsi government in Egypt a few weeks later; and the massive actions in Turkey for political space to practice politics. They call for withdrawal of all U.S. troops and military forces from Afghanistan, Korea, Guantánamo and elsewhere in the world.

When SWP candidates knock on doors and take time to talk with working people about what our class faces and what we need to do about it, Barnes said, it's not uncommon for workers to comment that this is the first time a candidate has ever come to their home and taken an interest in what they had to say.

This stands in stark contrast to the "canvassing" carried out by interns and volunteers fielded by the bosses' candidates, such as New York Democratic mayoral candidate Christine Quinn, who instructs them to knock on 100 doors an hour!

The SWP runs its campaigns to set an example of independent political action for the labor movement to break from the bosses' parties, the Democrats and Republicans, and chart a course toward the revolutionary fight for workers power.

SWP candidates raise the need for workers to fight for a massive government-funded public works program to create millions of jobs for those thrown

out of work and to build things working people need — schools, hospitals, day care centers and basic infrastructure.

They join with others to fight for a big increase in the minimum wage. For workers, wages are determined from the bottom up. The lower the bosses can keep them, the more they drag down all wages. For the labor movement to campaign for this demand alongside determined efforts to organize all workers — without regard to whether they have "proper papers" — would strike a blow against the bosses' superexploitation of immigrant labor as a bludgeon against all workers.

Axis of door-to-door propaganda

Both central efforts decided by the SWP National Committee — defense of the Cuban Five and advancing SWP election campaigns — are rooted in the proletarian propaganda axis of the party today, expanding the circulation of the *Militant* newspaper by going door to door in working-class neighborhoods.

This is how workers who help get the *Militant* around talk politics with thousands of working people each week, find out what they are involved in and what we can join together to fight for.

This weekly rhythm of door-to-door efforts to win new subscribers to the *Militant* aims to expand the paper's regular readership and sales of revolutionary books from Pathfinder Press. It provides a vehicle for SWP candidates to discuss the road forward for the working class. It broadens the number of those the party fights shoulder to shoulder with in the defense campaign for the Cuban Five. And it helps lay the basis, as the class struggle heats up in years to come, for the construction of a revolutionary workers party that can successfully fight for political power.

The SWP National Committee meeting took place as members and other supporters of the *Militant* were entering the last week of the paper's spring subscription effort. The course adopted by the party leadership to advance the reach of its program among workers helped bring the drive to a successful conclusion.

Coming up next is the Active Workers Educational Conference July 19-20 in Oberlin, Ohio, where members of the SWP, Communist Leagues in other countries and workers helping to expand the circulation of the *Militant* will come together to discuss how to take these working-class perspectives forward.



Above: Bill Hackwell. Right: Militant/Ron Poulsen
SWP's National Committee discussed responding to growing opportunities to join with others in defense activities for the Cuban Five. **Above**, June 1 ecumenical-cultural event at Saint Stephen's Church in Washington, D.C., part of "5 Days for the 5." **Right**, exhibit of cartoons by Gerardo Hernández in Sydney, Australia, last year.



‘In US prison system, just going to trial earns you respect’

René González, one of Cuban Five, talks about his arrest, frame-up and 13 years in US jails

Reprinted here is one section of an extensive interview with René González by Enrique Ojito and Arelys García that was printed in the June 15 issue of *Escambray*, a weekly newspaper in Cuba’s Sancti Spiritus province. González is one of five Cuban revolutionaries framed up and jailed by the U.S. government for their work to defend the Cuban people as well as supporters of the revolution in the U.S. and elsewhere from armed attacks and provocations by counterrevolutionary organizations based in the U.S.

The Cuban Five, as they are known around the world, were arrested by the FBI in 1998. A campaign for their release is being waged internationally. Today, all but González remain in prison, with sentences ranging from 17 years and nine months to a double life term plus 15 years. Paroled in October 2011, González won his fight to return to Cuba May 3, about halfway through his term of “supervised release.”

González begins the interview by talking about his early years in Chicago, where he was born in 1956. His parents were active in the Fair Play for Cuba Committee there and participated in street demonstrations opposing the U.S.-organized Bay of Pigs invasion in April 1961. They returned to Cuba six months later.

González covers a number of topics: “stealing” a Cuban crop-duster plane in 1990 and flying to Florida, where he was welcomed as a hero by counter-revolutionaries; leaving family behind and comrades who thought he had be-

trayed the revolution; being reunited six years later in Miami with his wife Olga and their oldest daughter, Irmita; the 13 years he spent in U.S. prisons; and more.

In one section, González outlines the operations and plans of several Cuban-American paramilitary groups he infiltrated, including how they sought to exploit the economic hardships endured by the people of Cuba in the 1990s following the collapse of most of the island’s foreign trade resulting from the disintegration of the Soviet bloc regimes. Among the major objectives of the rightists, González explains, was to provoke a military confrontation between Havana and Washington.

The excerpt below centers on González’s time in prison; more will be printed in a future issue of the paper. Translation from Spanish is by the *Militant*. The full interview in Spanish is available at the *Escambray* website (www.escambray.cu). English translations have been prepared and posted online by the International Committee for the Freedom of the Cuban 5 and the National Committee to Free the Cuban Five.



How did your Sept. 12, 1998, arrest, take place?

In the United States, “arrest” is a euphemism for assault. They storm your home in a show of force to paralyze you; that’s the first step to try to soften you up. They [the FBI] started beating on the door; in other cases they used a battering ram. We lived down a very narrow hall and the door was made of iron. It seems they couldn’t physically knock it down. They banged on it violently and when I opened, they entered with pistols drawn. They shoved it open, threw me to the floor as they threatened me with the pistol, and immediately cuffed me.

When Olguita came out of the bedroom they threw her against the wall. Then they stood me up, asked me if I was René González, if I belonged to Brothers to the Rescue. That Saturday they took me away to prison.

How would you describe the first days in prison?

The first days are terrible. Besides, our case was different from the common practice in which they take you to an intake area, give you clothing, explain how the prison works and let you make



René González worked to raise political awareness of fellow inmates. Roddy Rodríguez, right, with other Cuban prisoners in Marianna, Fla., prison, next to T-shirt he painted. Through relationship with González, Rodríguez changed his view of Cuban Revolution and Fidel Castro.

a phone call.

We were given special treatment; in military terms they call it “shock and awe” — they violently arrest you and take you to the FBI to see whether or not you’re the kind of person who will plead guilty, who will cooperate. They immediately put you in the “hole,” alone, to make you start thinking about what lies ahead for you. Those are days when you can’t sleep; they didn’t even give us a sheet, nothing.

At that moment the die is cast. If you didn’t decide to give in then, you’re not going to do it later. From that point on we decided we were not going to give in, and that was that. That’s what I had to confront.

Those were difficult days, right up to Monday. It was all well-staged. They keep you alone with your thoughts on Saturday and Sunday, without shaving or brushing your teeth. On Monday they dress you up like a clown and take you down to the courtroom. They make you walk down an aisle and there’s this mob of people, full of hatred, looking at you shackled, unkempt, with a cadaverous look, and at the same time you’re worrying about your family.

I was lucky. When they brought me out of the elevator and made me face that room full of people, and I was looking for my family, I suddenly heard a shout: “Daddy!!!” I looked around and saw Irmita giving me a big thumbs-up. From that moment on I took a deep breath and told myself: this breath will last me until this is over, and it’s still with me.

What did you hold onto, to keep from selling out, as some other members of the Cuban network did?

Basically, human dignity; I believe in the value of dignity. The trial showed there are some who don’t believe in it, but human values do exist. We all assert them, but under conditions like those, you see who believes in them and who doesn’t. The Five believed in them. If human values exist, I don’t see why a human being must give in to brute force — political convictions aside.

Just because these people have the power to mistreat me, to lock me up, I’m going to give in? No one taught me there is any value to that. In addition,

there’s the mission you were carrying out, the understanding of your cause, your awareness of what you were doing — knowing you are right, knowing you were defending human lives, knowing you are being tried unjustly.

All this adds up. And on top of that is the way they act. You see them lying to the judge, blackmailing witnesses, deceiving the court, defying the judge’s orders, lying to the jury, coaching people to lie. As you see the depths to which they will go, you say: just how low can they get? At that point you tell yourself: I can’t give in to these people.

You were locked up in Pennsylvania, South Carolina and Florida. How do you win respect in such a hostile environment?

In the case of the U.S. prison system, just going to trial earns you a lot of respect — almost no one goes to trial. People are afraid to go to trial; the system is rigged in such a way that in a trial you will lose. Your lawyers will talk you out of it and persuade you to cooperate with the prosecutor, and cooperating always ends up meaning you have to finger somebody. What’s involved? When you went to trial, you stood up to the government.

People respect you a lot for that. Besides, they know you won’t finger them.

Your attitude is important, too. If you treat people well, they generally treat you well. You must associate with people.

Continued on page 9



Vicente Brito

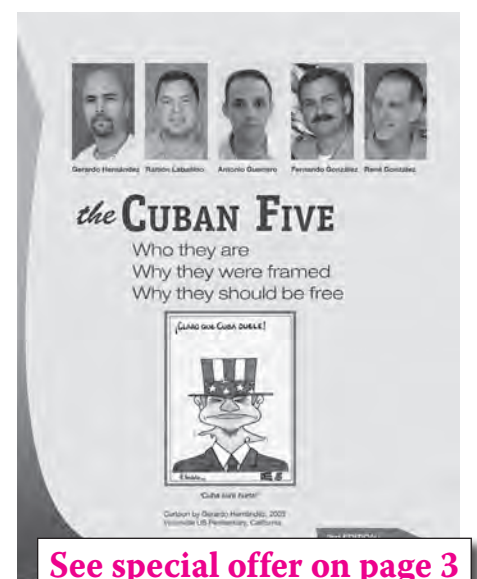
René González during *Escambray* interview.

Who are the Cuban Five?

Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González and René González are Cuban revolutionaries who during the 1990s accepted assignments from the Cuban government to gather information on the activities of Cuban-American counterrevolutionary groups operating in southern Florida. These paramilitary outfits, organizing on U.S. soil with virtual impunity, have a long record of carrying out bombings, assassinations and other deadly attacks, both against targets in Cuba and supporters of the Cuban Revolution in the United States, Puerto Rico and elsewhere.

On Sept. 12, 1998, the five were arrested by the FBI. They were framed up and convicted on a variety of charges, which included acting as unregistered agents of the Cuban government and possession of false identity documents. Without a shred of evidence, three were charged with “conspiracy to gather and transmit national defense information.”

Hernández was also convicted of conspiracy to commit murder based on the pretext that he bore responsibility for the Cuban government’s 1996 shoot-down of two aircraft flown by the counterrevolutionary group Brothers to the Rescue that had invaded Cuban airspace in disregard of Havana’s repeated warnings. He is serving two life terms plus 15 years. His wife, Adriana Pérez, is barred from entering the United States.



See special offer on page 3

In Bolivia, Che sought to lay ground for broad revolutionary movement

Below is an excerpt from Pombo: a Man of Che's guerrilla: With Che Guevara in Bolivia 1966-68, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for July. The book is a diary of this revolutionary campaign kept by Harry Villegas, widely known by his nom de guerre, Pombo. Villegas, currently a brigadier general in Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces, fought at Guevara's side from 1957 on — in the Rebel Army that led the fight to overthrow the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship in 1959, as part of the internationalist mission to aid anti-imperialist forces in the Congo in 1965, and in Bolivia a year later. The excerpt printed here is from Villegas' introduction to his diary. Copyright © 1997 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY HARRY VILLEGAS

It is necessary to make a few comments on the political and historical circumstances that existed at the time the diary was written. On the international level, the years 1966 and 1967 were marked by an escalation of one of the most horrendous crimes humanity has ever witnessed: the aggression against the people of Vietnam, a small but unflinchingly heroic country, by the strongest imperialist power on earth.

This genocide expressed, in all its cruelty, the U.S. government course of using force to impose its criminal inter-



Courtesy Richard Dindo

“Che taught us many lessons, which were passed on to us through his practical activity,” wrote Villegas. “In Cuba he, also, had the possibility of learning, of self-improvement. One of the virtues he acquired from contact with our people was confidence in victory, faith in human beings, and the deepest sense of loyalty.” Top, combatants in Bolivia. Pombo is second from left in beret. Inset, Pombo (right) and Guevara in Bolivia.



ests of domination, plunder, and exploitation wherever in the world these interests were seriously threatened. ...

An entire region has been ravaged by foreign control over its natural resources and products, the exploitation of its workers, and the sharp impoverishment of its economies. Tribute is exacted in ways that violate the sovereignty of the nations of Latin America, pillage their material and spiritual patrimony, deepen their dependence and subjugation to imperialism, and close off possibilities of development and progress.

Together with a handful of heroic Bolivian, Peruvian, and Cuban combatants who accompanied him to Bolivia, Che fought to change this reality of the 1960s—a reality whose cruel mechanisms of plunder have since been deepened and refined. Che's death resounds vividly in his stirring message to revolutionaries around the world:

“Wherever death may surprise us, let it be welcome if our battle cry has reached even one receptive ear, if another hand reaches out to take up our arms, and other men come forward to join in our funeral dirge with the rattling of machine guns and with new cries of battle and victory.” ...

Totally convinced that the political conditions were ripening and that this perspective was realizable, Commander

Che Guevara carried out his plans and initiated actions to open a path toward victory. In his view, victory was certain to the degree that the struggle extended as far as possible throughout Latin America.

Never has such a small group of individuals undertaken an enterprise of such gigantic proportions. That small detachment of heroic combatants was Che's “sling of David.” As our commander in chief pointed out, Che did not outlive his ideas, he enriched them with his blood.

Following the conclusion of his internationalist activity in the Congo, and given the confrontation unfolding in Latin America at the time, Che chose Bolivia as the place from which to initiate his strategic course in Latin America.

One factor behind Che's selection was his analysis of the Bolivian people's combative traditions going all the way back to the fight of the indigenous peoples against the royalists. ...

The diary also reflects the firm conviction and internationalist fervor of our efforts for the national liberation of Latin America, as well as the real possibilities that existed for achieving that objective. The diary reflects our conviction that the struggle we were initiating would increasingly widen those possibilities. The precondition for this was

to overcome the hard and difficult stage in which the guerrilla unit struggled to survive, in order to develop later on along the lines conceived by Che.

We never envisioned a sectarian undertaking. Such a conception would have been impossible not only on a Bolivian scale, but above all on a continental scale. Our idea was to create a broad revolutionary movement that would draw in all honest individuals prepared to struggle for social justice, together with all revolutionary organizations, parties, and sectors of the people. This was the basis on which the ELN (National Liberation Army) was formed, as is made clear by its five public communiqués, containing information and appeals addressed to the Bolivian people.

Examining the events recorded in Che's Bolivian diary and in my own, one can see how relations were established not only with different political forces within Bolivia and their representatives, but also with leaders and representatives of other political organizations of the continent. These contacts and relations would inexorably lead to an expansion of ties with other progressive forces in the region provided that the struggle intensified and succeeded in surviving the initial phase, which imposed severe restrictions on contacts and communications.

My only hope is that the recollections contained in my diary give a true picture of the war in Bolivia. This was a confrontation carried out by a group of men true to their ideas. They fought a professional army equipped by the United States and aided by the CIA—starting with the country's president René Barrientos and extending to phony journalists, officers, soldiers, and peasant infiltrators. The participation of U.S. Rangers and agents from the CIA's station in La Paz and its general headquarters in the United States was, of course, direct and open. ...

Che taught us many lessons, which were passed on to us through his practical activity. In Cuba he, also, had the possibility of learning, of self-improvement. One of the virtues he acquired from contact with our people was confidence in victory, faith in human beings, and the deepest sense of loyalty.

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Egypt: Workers celebrate Islamists ouster

Continued from front page

over Tahrir Square June 30 dropping Egyptian flags, demonstrators cheered the army’s signal they would back the protests against attempts by the Brotherhood to drown them in blood. “We don’t have the weapons the Brotherhood has,” Karam Youssef, owner of a small bookshop in a Cairo sub-urb, told the *Militant* by phone July 7. “We couldn’t defeat them on our own. It would have been chaos.

“There were people from all aspects of society at Tahrir Square — middle-class, working-class, poor people and lots of women,” said Youssef. “Millions of people were in the streets all over the country, more even than during the protests against Mubarak.”

The protests, initiated by Tamarod (Rebel), a group of young people who had collected 22 million signatures demanding Morsi’s resignation, were fueled by the deteriorating Egyptian economy, government attempts to put a lid on growing labor struggles, opposition to the Brotherhood’s attempt to impose their sectarian vision of Sunni Islam on political and social life and anger over violent attacks by Brotherhood thugs.

In the last few weeks before Morsi was ousted, a nationwide fuel shortage caused long waits at gas stations and rolling electricity blackouts affected millions, especially in working-class neighborhoods.

Workers take advantage of space

Working people have been able to take advantage of the space opened up by Mubarak’s overthrow and the ensuing conflicts among competing capitalist factions to begin organizing themselves to defend their interests. The power struggle among the propertied rulers — represented by the army on one hand and the Muslim Brotherhood on the other — only sharpened, while labor battles, political discussions and efforts to organize among the toilers grew.

Protest actions, from sit-ins to strikes and demonstrations, mushroomed from just under 200 a month during Mubarak’s last year to more than 1,000 a month recently. The rulers’ hopes, including among the military high command, that a Brotherhood-led government would have better success than they had in putting an end to these struggles, were dashed.

“Workers still face the same old problems,” Mohamad Ahmad Salem, a spokesperson of the Egyptian Democratic Labor Congress, said by phone from Mahalla, before Morsi’s ouster. “The police are still raiding meetings of workers trying to organize unions and the number of detained workers has increased.”

“The number of workers in unions has at least doubled since Mubarak was overthrown,” Fatma Ramadan, a spokesperson for the Egyptian Federation of Independent Trade Unions, told the *Militant* July 1 from Cairo.

Last December Morsi forced through a new constitution that restricted democratic rights, union organization and freedom of worship. It passed with the participation of less than one-third of eligible voters.

“We didn’t get rid of a military regime to replace it with a fascist theocracy that enforces extremist

regulations in the name of religion,” 12-year-old Ali Ahmed told Egypt’s *El Wady* newspaper at a protest last October.

Capitalist factions jockey for power

After Morsi was arrested and his government dispersed, the military high command appointed Adly Mansour, head of the High Constitutional Court, as interim president. At first the National Salvation Front reported that Mohamed ElBaradei, former director general of the U.N. International Atomic Energy Agency, would be named prime minister. But the Nour party, a Salafist Islamic group that broke with Morsi in the midst of the mass protests, objected.

On July 8, while various factions were still vying for their share of power, more than 50 supporters of the Brotherhood demanding Morsi’s return were killed when soldiers and police opened fire on a sit-in in front of the Republican Guard headquarters, where they believe Morsi is being held.

According to the *Financial Times*, the military has set in motion corruption investigations of Muslim Brotherhood-owned businesses, including those of Khairat al-Shataer, a real estate and textile mogul.

The Egyptian military is itself the largest single employer in the country, owning a wide range of businesses, real estate and factories.

On July 9 Mansour appointed former Finance Minister Hazem El-Beblawi prime minister and ElBaradei as vice president for foreign relations. Mansour issued a “road map” for writing a new constitution and holding parliamentary and presidential elections over the next five to six months.

White House failed to broker deal

For decades Washington has backed the military and a succession of dictatorial regimes in Egypt to promote capitalist stability in the region. After Mubarak’s fall, the Barack Obama administration continued to send some \$1.3 billion a year in aid to the army, while seeking collaborative relations with Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood.

President Obama has released one statement since Morsi’s overthrow, calling on the Egyptian military “to move quickly and responsibly to return full authority back to a democratically elected civilian government” and to “avoid any arbitrary arrests of President Morsy and his supporters.” Many in Egypt view Obama as a supporter of the Brotherhood regime, while Brotherhood supporters feel betrayed. Widespread distrust or hatred for Washington appears to have only increased on all sides.

According to the *New York Times*, the White House tried to broker a deal that would have allowed Morsi to remain president by bringing bourgeois opposition parties into the government. Morsi refused.

Meanwhile, the governments of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait announced plans July 9 to provide a total of \$12 billion to the Egyptian government in hopes of stabilizing and shoring up whatever regime comes together — with the military as the perpetual main pillar of bourgeois rule.

René González

Continued from page 7

ple who have positive and constructive attitudes; avoid things like gambling and getting into debt; don’t get involved with gangs.

The letters help a lot. People notice you get a lot of letters from different countries, and they come and ask you for stamps. The Cuban postage stamps that were issued helped. They would say: “Daaamn! This guy is on a stamp!” Even the guards asked me to autograph them on the sly.

Were there any cellmates or fellow prisoners in general who made an impression on you?

I had many cellmates. I remember one rapper who was with me [in Marianna, Fla.] who became so involved in the case that one day he got a T-shirt and, together with Roddy [Rodolfo Rodríguez], painted the symbol of the Five on it. They went out to the prison yard and he sang a rap for the Five; they almost caused a disturbance.

Roddy is an interesting case: a Cuban with a criminal record going back to when he was a youth, including some violent incidents. When we met — although he was already in the process of changing his thinking — he had a lot of resentment against Cuba. As a result of our relationship he began to change his views about Cuba, about the revolution, about Fidel. He ended up becoming more communist than me. Sometimes I would laugh — “hey brother, give people a break, you can’t argue with everybody.”*

There was a white supermax [super-maximum-security prison] inmate who also had had a very violent past, a very dysfunctional childhood, who had ended up becoming a skinhead and robbing banks. Little by little he had been rethinking things, and as luck would have it, he shared my cell when he was going through this process. He approached me, we discussed a lot, and he ended up becoming politicized. Generally there’s a lot of respect for us from all the prisoners.

Olga became the pillar of the family, mother and father at the same time. However, you never stopped being the one who made the decisions in the family.

Let’s get real, Olguita was the one who made the decisions in the family. I don’t like directing people from afar. I trusted Olguita; my role was to do my job well where I was. I always thought it was important for them to know that I was OK, just as for me it was very important to know they were doing well.

Olguita knew what she had to do, and she did it well. Within that context, my exchanges with the girls, giving advice. ... They have always had a very open relationship with me. I’m not a cranky dad. I think I’m a good father, a good friend.

What did you do to avoid the depression that affects every human being, especially when incarcerated?

That didn’t happen to me. I coined a phrase that people used to laugh about. In the morning when they asked me, “How are you?” I’d say, “I’m always OK.” So people would approach me and say, “I know you’re OK.”

I don’t know; you have to fight to avoid those things. There are days when you wake up more anxious, you do get anxious. There is a certain level of anxiety, and you have to learn to recognize it and tell yourself: relax. There are days when you get up and perhaps you’re a bit more irritable. That’s when you have to tell yourself: don’t go looking for problems.

I took refuge in physical exercise, in reading, in studying. For me it was important not to look at the time. Time won’t kill me, I would say to myself, and it worked. I never ended up depressed.

— LETTERS —

CBTU resolution

Thanks for reporting on the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists’ resolution calling for release of the Cuban Five. But what should readers make of the words in the resolution that “call upon the Cuban government to release all political prisoners, including trade unionists”? What should those who want to make use of the resolution to defend the Five say about that wording? Might this be an opportunity to take on the oft-alleged charge of the enemies and opponents of the Cuban Revolution that civil liberties are nonexistent on the island?

August Nimtz
Twin Cities, Minn.

Editor’s note: The CBTU’s call for

release of the Five has set an example for the labor movement in the U.S. But its call for the Cuban government to release “political prisoners, including trade unionists,” simply echoes lies peddled by Washington and its imperialist allies. Hopefully members of the CBTU who know such charges have no foundation will be able to win a majority to eliminate such

slanders from future resolutions that call for an end to Washington’s economic war on Cuba and freedom for our five comrades.

Struggle in workforce

Your paper has opened my eyes to a struggle in the workforce I never even knew existed! Keep up the fight for all working-class struggles.
A prisoner
Pennsylvania

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

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* The *Militant* printed major excerpts from an interview with Roddy Rodríguez on Edmundo García’s program *La tarde se mueve*, which was broadcast June 13, 2012, on Radio Progreso in Miami. See article “Getting to Know René González, ‘An Experience that Changed My Life’: Fellow Prisoner Roddy Rodríguez Recounts Friendship with 1 of ‘Cuban 5’ Revolutionaries Framed Up by US Gov’t” in May 27, 2013, issue.