

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Korean War: US rulers aimed to crush fight for sovereignty, against capitalism
— PAGES 8-9

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 77/NO. 35 OCTOBER 7, 2013

US warships deployed off Syria amid 'peace' talk

BY SUSAN LAMONT

Contrary to the picture being pumped out by the big-business media, U.S. imperialist threats of military intervention in Syria have not faded away. The underlying conflicts are no closer to resolution and the threat remains real — all obscured

NO TO U.S. THREATS! BACK FIGHTS OF SYRIAN WORKERS!
— editorial, p. 12

behind the thin veil of so-called peace talks between Washington and Moscow.

There are currently five U.S. destroyers positioned near Syria — each capable of launching 90 Tomahawk cruise missiles — along with the USS San Antonio amphibious landing vessel capable of landing 6,000 troops.

Reports in the bourgeois press drew attention to the Navy's Aug. 28 announcement on deployment of the USS Stout to Syria, ostensibly in response to the Aug. 21 sarin gas attack that killed 1,400 in a Damascus suburb. But naval records show the guid-

Continued on page 2

Wash. berry pickers fight for dignity, wages, union

BY CLAY DENNISON

BURLINGTON, Wash. — More than 300 farmworkers and supporters marched from town past fields of unpicked berries on the flatlands along the Skagit River to the offices of Sakuma Brothers Farms Sept. 14, the third day of a one-week strike, their most recent action in a fight for higher wages, improved conditions and union recognition. Signs and chants also demanded reinstatement of Ramón Torres, president of Familias Unidas por la Justicia (Families United for Justice), the berry pickers' union.

Many passing drivers in cars and trucks honked and waved.

The strikers work in blueberry, strawberry and blackberry fields owned by Sakuma Brothers Inc., which also owns a processing plant and fruit market here, as well as a nursery in California.

Pickers struck twice in July, temporarily winning wage raises and some improvements in living conditions in company-owned housing. Strikers returned to work Sept. 18, Torres told the *Militant*, without winning his reinstatement.

After negotiations with Sakuma
Continued on page 7

Garment workers fill streets in Bangladesh

Demand double minimum wage, job safety



Reuters/Andrew Biraj

Garment workers in front of Brothers Fashion in Dhaka, Bangladesh, Sept. 23 call on workers to join protest strike demanding \$103 monthly minimum wage and safety protections.

BY EMMA JOHNSON

In their largest protest so far, 50,000 garment workers in Bangladesh took to the streets Sept. 21 in Dhaka, the capital, demanding a more than doubling of the minimum wage and safer workplaces.

The demonstration takes place as workers in the industry are stepping up efforts to organize unions in face of fierce resistance and harassment

from the bosses.

"We are pressed with our backs against the wall, so we need to raise our voice strongly," Nazma Akter, president of United Garment Workers Federation, said in a phone interview Sept. 23 from Dhaka. The federation of 52 garment workers groups organized the demonstration.

"The economy moves on the backs
Continued on page 12

Meeting in Indonesia discusses women and Cuban Revolution



Militant/Baskaran Appu

Participants in Aug. 29 event launching *Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution* in Indonesia discuss transformation of women's status in Cuba from the opening of revolution in 1953. Meeting took place at Kalyanamitra women's center in Jakarta.

BY PATRICK BROWN

JAKARTA, Indonesia — The transformation of the status of women in Cuba over the course of more than six decades of revolutionary struggle was the focus of a public meeting here Aug. 29. The featured speakers were Enna Viant, Cuba's ambassador to

Indonesia, and Mary-Alice Waters, president of the New York-based socialist publishing house Pathfinder Press.

Many of the 30-plus people who attended were women who work or volunteer for organizations seeking to

Continued on page 6

Socialist workers win volunteers, support to open hall in Omaha

BY JACQUIE HENDERSON AND REBECCA WILLIAMSON

OMAHA, Neb. — "I hear you are looking for a hall where people can come get these books and discuss what's happening in the world," said DeAntwon Harris, a 23-year-old industrial laundry worker and *Militant* subscriber, as he browsed through a copy of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*. "That would be great, and if it ends up being

over here near where I live, that's even better."

Harris was talking with socialist workers Carl Tyler, Jacquie Henderson and Jacob Perasso at his home in south Omaha, Sept. 17. Socialists in the area have been broadening door-to-

Continued on page 3

Communist League candidates in Canada
Campaign door to door, win ballot spot, protest discrimination
Coverage on page 4

London rally demands 'Free the Cuban Five'

BY PAMELA HOLMES

LONDON — Some 200 people rallied outside the U.S. Embassy here Sept. 17 to demand freedom for the Cuban Five — Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Fernando González, René González and Antonio Guerrero.

"When I heard about the Five, I just had to show my face," Ben Heyes, 27, a construction worker, told the *Mili-*

Continued on page 11

Also Inside:

Workers in Greece protest killing of anti-fascist rapper 2

Quebec: 10,000 rally against anti-immigrant 'secularism' 4

Calif. port drivers sign up for truckers' association 5

'Direction of Soviet Union depends on int'l class struggle' 10

Workers in Greece protest killing of anti-fascist rapper

BY GEORGES MEHRABIAN

ATHENS, Greece — Close to 20,000 people gathered here Sept. 18 to protest the killing of Pavlos Fyssas in the early morning hours that day. Fyssas, a 34-year-old anti-fascist hip-hop singer and metal worker, was allegedly stabbed to death by a member of Golden Dawn, an ultrarightist party, after he and his friends were chased by a gang of about 20 of the party’s thugs. Golden Dawn has 18 representatives in parliament.

Eyewitness accounts in the press say that during the attack nearby police disregarded requests by individuals to intervene and ignored a crowd of some 40 Golden Dawn supporters on the street. By the time one policewoman finally did respond Fyssas had been stabbed.

Thousands streamed to the area in the working-class neighborhood of Keratsini where Fyssas was killed. They planned to march to the local police station and then to Golden Dawn’s local office, but were met by tear gas and charging riot police en route to the station.

Other protests took place in cities across the country.

“I feel horror and revulsion at what happened to Fyssas,” said Martha Pissanou, a 25-year-old lab technician who lives a few blocks away and attended the protest with her father, a factory worker. “I am here because we have to show that we do not support the actions of these fascist thugs. Golden Dawn is growing in this area, which is a working-class area and is poor and has been hit hard by the crisis. The group now have three offices around here and recruit young people on the basis of hatred

and nationalism. But, you have to talk to these youth and explain to them that this is a big trap.”

Golden Dawn has been organizing weekly food distribution to “poor Greeks” and has been subsidizing goons from demoralized, lumpen elements. Giorgos Roupakias, who was arrested for the murder, was one such element on their payroll.

“Golden Dawn thugs in uniform have been organizing weekly marches through the neighborhood. You hear the sound of their boots on weekend mornings. We need mass mobilizations to isolate them,” continued Pissanou.

“Violence by Golden Dawn is nothing new,” said Moisis Litsis, a former journalist and striker at *Elefthrotypia* newspaper. He was at the protest with his wife and son. “They used to focus attacks on immigrant workers, Pakistanis and others. Many Greeks would feel sympathy for the victims but did not feel directly threatened. During the last week Golden Dawn members have been involved in beating up eight members of the Communist Youth of Greece (KNE) in nearby Perama.”

“Golden Dawn has been very active in this area and in nearby Perama, which is a shipyard zone,” Giorgos Pissanos, a 19-year-old student at the Athens Polytechnic University, told the *Militant*. “The group has used threats and violence against immigrant shipyard workers to force them to work for less and operates in collusion with the bosses in the area. The Communist Youth organization it targeted is closely linked to the PAME union federation,



Militant/Georges Mehrabian

Some 20,000 people gather Sept. 18 at site in Athens, Greece, where hip-hop artist and metal worker Pavlos Fyssas was fatally stabbed by ultrarightist Golden Dawn thug as cops looked on.

which organizes many of the shipyards. Let’s not forget that Pavlos and his father are both metal workers and members of the metal workers union in Perama. I see Golden Dawn’s attack as also an attack on the union movement.”

As the riot police attacked the protesters, many became trapped within smaller streets, where residents opened up their homes to provide shelter.

On Sept. 19 another demonstration of thousands took place near the area where Fyssas was killed.

Under increasing pressure, Greek Prime Minister Antonis Samaras in a

televised address that day said the government was “determined not to allow the descendants of the Nazis to poison our social life, to commit crimes, to terrorize and to undermine the foundations of the country that gave birth to democracy.”

Suddenly, for the first time in years, Public Order Minister Nikos Dendias moved towards the prosecution of 32 cases of violent attacks by Golden Dawn members or supporters that had been inactive for months and years.

Shipyard workers protested Sept. 21 in Piraeus.

US warships off Syria coast

Continued from front page
ed missile destroyer departed for the area from Norfolk, Va., Aug. 18, according to GlobalResearch. And the USS Ramage left Norfolk for the Syrian coast Aug. 13, joining three other destroyers in the Mediterranean. The deployment of the USS San Antonio is more recent. The vessel, along with hundreds of Marines and several attack helicopters, joined the five destroyers “in place for possible missile strikes on Syria,” an anonymous defense official told GlobalResearch Sept. 1. French, British and Russian naval forces have also been deployed to the region.

Meanwhile, the Assad regime continues to unleash murderous assaults on workers and farmers in an effort to deal body blows to both the bourgeois

opposition and workers and farmers resisting his rule. In the two-and-a-half-year-long civil war, some 100,000 Syrians have been killed, with 6 million now made refugees, including 2 million forced to flee the country.

On Sept. 21, for example, Syrian army forces assaulted the village of Sheikh Hadid, a Sunni Muslim village near Hama, killing 15, including two children, reported Reuters.

While the majority of the U.S. ruling class appears to have accepted the “diplomatic” course of the Barack Obama administration toward Syria for now, opposition and concern in U.S. ruling circles with how the situation has been handled runs deep. After first announcing his intention to carry out a military strike — al-

Continued on page 11

THE MILITANT

Support workers’ struggles worldwide

The ‘Militant’ covers the struggles of workers in the U.S. and worldwide resisting boss and government attacks on wages, working conditions and unions. Learning lessons from these struggles helps strengthen workers’ fighting capacity for coming battles to take political power.



Egyptian sailors who won strike for back pay in Australia with Maritime union officials.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

NEW READERS

☐ \$5 for 12 issues

RENEWAL

☐ \$10 for 12 weeks

☐ \$20 for 6 months

☐ \$35 for 1 year

NAME

ADDRESS

CITYSTATEZIP

PHONEE-MAIL

UNION/SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION

CLIP AND MAIL TO THE MILITANT,
306 W. 37TH ST., 10TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10018.

12 weeks of the *Militant* outside the U.S.: Australia and the Pacific, A\$8 • United Kingdom, £3 • Canada, Can\$7 • Caribbean and Latin America, US\$10 • Continental Europe, £10 • France, 12 euros • New Zealand, NZ\$7 • All other areas, US\$16 (Send payment to addresses listed in business information box)

The Militant

Vol. 77/No. 35
Closing news date: September 25, 2013
Editor: Doug Nelson
Associate editor: John Studer
Editorial volunteers: Tom Baumann, Röger Calero, Naomi Craine, Seth Galinsky, Eleanor García, Emma Johnson, Jacob Perasso, Brian Williams, Rebecca Williamson.

Published weekly except for one week in January, one week in July, one week in August and two weeks in September.

Business manager: Lea Sherman
The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018. **Telephone:** (212) 244-4899 **Fax:** (212) 244-4947
E-mail: themilitant@mac.com
Website: www.themilitant.com

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: United States: For one year send \$35 to above address.
Latin America, Caribbean: For one year

send \$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.
Africa, Asia, and the Middle East: For one year send \$85 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.
Canada: For one year send Canadian \$45 to the Militant, 7107 St. Denis #204, Montreal, Quebec H2S 2S5.
United Kingdom: Send £26 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London, First Floor, 120 Bethnal Green Road (Entrance in Brick Lane), London, E2 6DG, England.
Republic of Ireland and Continental Europe: Send £85 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London at above address.
France: Send 76 euros for one year to Diffusion du Militant, P.O. Box 175, 23 rue Lecourbe, 75015 Paris.
New Zealand: Send NZ\$50 for one year to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland 1140, New Zealand.
Australia: Send A\$50 for one year to P.O. Box 164 Campsie, NSW 2194, Australia.
Pacific Islands: Send NZ\$50 for one year to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland 1140, New Zealand.

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.

Socialists in Omaha

Continued from front page

door efforts to win *Militant* readers, including re-knocking on the doors of those whose subscriptions have recently lapsed. In the process, they've been talking about plans to rapidly set up a hall and establish a branch of the Socialist Workers Party here. And they've been spreading the word through events like the Labor Day parade and Mexican Independence Day celebrations.

"We are looking to rent a place where workers from all over the area can come discuss how working people like us — here in the U.S. and around the world — can organize to defend ourselves against the bosses, who are taking out the crisis of capitalism on our backs," Perasso told Harris.

"We will use the hall to organize Militant Labor Forums and other public events," Perasso said. "It will also be a place where books like this will be available to study, where workers can get copies of the *Militant* to read and circulate. And from where we will launch a Socialist Workers Party ticket and campaign with candidates who will bring a working-class voice to the 2014 elections."

Raising funds and finalizing a location that is comfortable and accessible for workers from all over the city is a top priority for socialist workers here. "This workers' center will be 100 percent financed by working people like you," said Perasso.

"This book is about our real history," Tyler, a longtime Omaha resident and warehouse worker, told Harris, pointing to *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by SWP National Secretary Jack Barnes. "It's about the dictator-

ship of capital and the road forward for the working class," he said.

"The problem is capitalism," Tyler said. "The harder you work, the more money the capitalists make, but you never get ahead. And now if you go to school, you end up not only a wage slave, but a slave to debt too," said Tyler.

"That's my life," Harris responded. "It seems going to school just put me further behind."

"And they try to set us all against each other," said Tyler. "Look at the three of us here. We are all different ages and backgrounds. Workers need to get rid of mistrusts and find ways to unite in struggle."

"That's why we campaign on the need for workers to fight for a massive public works program to put millions to work at union wages as a way to strengthen the solidarity and confidence of workers," said Perasso. "They say the bridges are falling apart, but there is no money to rebuild them. The same goes for hospitals, housing and other things workers need, like child care centers. At the same time, millions of us are competing for fewer jobs."

"I'm not for us going over to Syria," said Harris, pointing to the *Militant's* coverage on the imperialist war threats against Syria and the grinding



Militant/Jacque Henderson

Militant subscriber DeAntwon Harris browses through *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* during visit to his home in Omaha, Neb., Sept. 17 by socialist workers Carl Tyler (center) and Jacob Perasso.

civil war there.

The U.S. rulers threatening Syria are the enemies of working people both there and here at home, said Perasso. The "we" is the working class worldwide against the capitalist exploiters. In Syria, fellow workers face the repressive and brutal government of Bashar al-Assad.

Harris renewed his *Militant* subscription and asked the three to come back after payday so that he can get *Workers Power*.

"Get that headquarters. We need it," Gustavo García, a worker with decades of experience in Omaha packinghouses, told David Alvarez and Jacque Henderson when they visited him at his home. "Workers will come

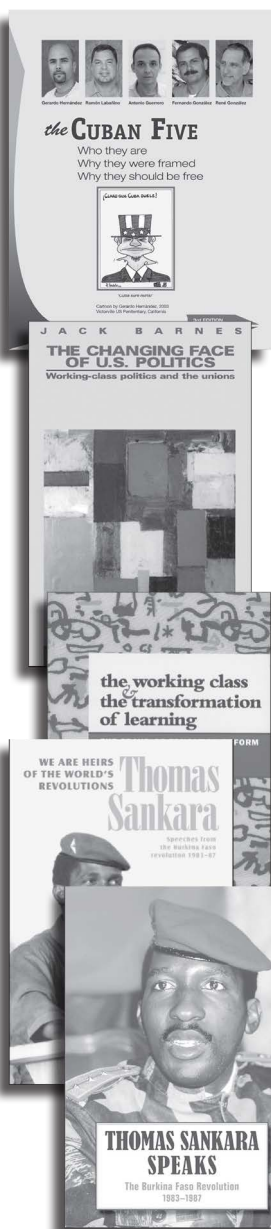
wherever it's at in the city because we need it. We will be there." He gave \$20 toward the effort. García also offered to help with any work to set up the hall and said he thought some of his friends might want to help with construction, plumbing and other needs.

Evelina León, 29, has joined other *Militant* supporters visiting working people on their doorsteps and looking for a hall.

"Workers need it for ourselves," she said. "We need to be united to make a change, participating together. I like to sell the paper and books. There's a lot I learn going door to door. All of us look at how the situation is and you can see the party helping and explaining."

If you would like to make a contribution to this effort, please send it to SWP, P.O. Box 7908, Omaha, NE 68107. Several thousand dollars are needed to secure a hall and purchase basic equipment, furniture and books to get set up.

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)

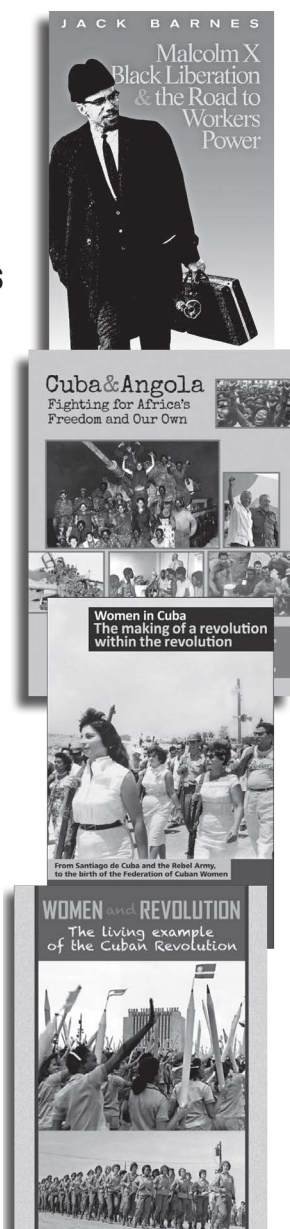
We Are Heirs of the World's Revolutions

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 10**



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 LABOR FORUMS—

IOWA

Des Moines
Organize! Unionize! Workers Need to Build and Strengthen Unions. Officialdom's Course Hamstrings the Power of Our Unions. Speaker: Ellen Brickley, Socialist Workers Party candidate for city council. Fri., Oct. 4, 7:30 p.m. 3707 Douglas Ave. Tel.: (515) 707-1779.

TEXAS

Houston
How Can Workers Rebuild a Fighting Labor Movement? Speaker: Cindy Jaquith, Socialist Workers Party candidate for city council. Fri., Oct. 4, 7:30 p.m. 4800 W. 34th St., Suite C-50L. Tel.: (713) 476-0733.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland
Join Communist League Election Campaign: Fight for Jobs for All and to Raise the Minimum Wage. Speakers: Annalucia Vermunt, Communist League candidate for Auckland mayor; Baskaran Appu, Communist League candidate for city council, Manakau Ward. Sun., Oct. 6, 7 p.m. Donation: \$5 waged, \$2 unwaged. 4/125 Grafton Road. Tel.: (09) 369-1223.

Communist candidates campaign, petition door to door in Montreal

BY JOHN STEELE

MONTREAL — “We raise the need to build a mass working-class movement that is independent of all the capitalist parties and politicians on the federal, provincial and municipal levels — whether Conservative, Liberal, New Democratic, Parti Québécois or “independent” — to fight for a massive government-funded public works program to put millions to work at union-scale pay,” Joe Young, 66, factory worker and Communist League candidate for mayor here, told the *Militant* Sept. 14. “We also find that many workers agree when we say we need to fight for a qualitative increase in the minimum wage.”

Communist League candidates in the Nov. 3 municipal election — Young and Katherine LeRougetel, 55, a food processing worker who is running for mayor of the borough of Verdun — are campaigning door to door in working-class neighborhoods across the city. They are on the ballot after turning in more than the required number of signatures.

“I work for minimum wage, raising it is important,” home companion and caregiver Joselita Yung told LeRougetel after meeting the candidate at her door. “What can I do to contribute to this movement?”

Yung subscribed to the *Militant* and along with her husband signed the petition to help put the candidates on the ballot.

The Communist League candidates are challenging an array of capitalist politicians, who all say they are campaigning for “change” or to make Montreal a “winning city,” in the wake of the resignation of both the previous mayor and his temporary replacement amid widespread charges of corruption.

Dubbed front-runners by the bourgeois media are former Liberal federal cabinet minister Denis Coderre; economist and management consultant Marcel Côté, running for Coalition Montréal; and Richard Bergeron, leader of the Project Montreal party, billed as an urban affairs expert.

Campaign supporters organized a special door-to-door effort over the Sept. 14-15 weekend to gather signatures and introduce workers to the *Militant* and revolutionary literature from Pathfinder books on the struggles of workers and farmers around the world. Margaret Trowe, an auto parts worker and Socialist Workers Party candidate for the at-large city council seat in the Nov. 5 election in Des Moines, Iowa, joined in.

Much of the door-to-door discussions



Militant/Margaret Trowe

Socialist campaign supporter Annette Kouri (right) collects signature from young worker outside her home Sept. 14 to place Communist League candidates on ballot in Montreal.

centered on the discriminatory and anti-working-class Charter of Quebec Values, put forward by Quebec’s Parti Québécois government as part of a campaign against immigrant workers, especially those of Muslim faith.

A highlight of the weekend was a panel discussion at the Militant Labor Forum that day attended by 22 people. LeRougetel chaired the event. The panelists were Young, Trowe and electrical-mechanics student François Bradette, who recently joined the Communist League after months of door-to-door campaigning with *Mili-*

tant supporters.

“As we go door to door we raise the need to build a mass revolutionary working-class movement that can take power out of the hands of the propertied ruling families and establish a government of workers and farmers,” Young said. “Along this road we need to build working-class unity through our struggles today.

“At the demonstration against the charter I explained to participants that it is an attack on the working class which aims to divide us and weaken our ability to organize and fight to defend ourselves against the impact of the growing capitalist economic crisis,” Young said.

“All questions in politics — racial questions, the environment, women’s rights, war and peace — are class questions,” said Trowe in her remarks. “Campaigning door to door, exchanging views with workers from this angle makes us sharper. We develop our views about the road forward for our class in discussion and action with other workers.

“Going door to door in Des Moines last week we explained that fighting against our own government is the main way workers in the U.S. can help the Syrian workers fight for political space against the Assad regime,” she said.

“Our campaign statement for jobs, a higher minimum wage, against discrimination of immigrants, along a course toward strengthening and unifying the working class points toward a fight for a workers and farmers government as the best way for workers here to show solidarity with the struggle of workers and farmers in Syria to push back the murderous assault they face. And it helps us mobilize unconditional opposition to U.S. intervention in Syria.”

“We came across all kinds of views today as we campaigned door to door in Verdun,” said Bradette. “The majority we spoke to were against the charter. A woman bought a copy of the *Militant* after we showed her an article we had translated into French. Some expressed anti-communist views or were not interested in the campaign. One truck driver we met told us about the deteriorating conditions at work after he lost his union.”

Following a lively and lengthy discussion, participants attended a well-prepared potluck fundraising dinner.

Four subscriptions and 35 copies of the *Militant* were sold, along with a copy of *The Communist Manifesto*, over the weekend. Eighty-four signatures for Young and 37 for LeRougetel put the totals well over the 200 and 100 required respectively.

Quebec: 10,000 rally against anti-immigrant ‘secularism’

BY MICHEL PRAIRIE

MONTREAL — Using a proposed Charter of Quebec Values as its battering ram, Quebec’s Parti Québécois minority government has launched an assault on immigrant workers, especially those of Muslim faith, in a cold-blooded attempt to divide working people in this province and across the country along national, language and religious lines. The PQ’s campaign has run into broader opposition than party leaders expected.

Democratic Institutions Minister Bernard Drainville unveiled the charter Sept. 10, saying the PQ will introduce the bill in Quebec’s National Assembly this fall. “The time has come to rally around our common values,” Drainville said at the news conference. “They define who we are.” Under the pretext of defending the separation of church and state and equality between men and women, the PQ in-

tends to prohibit government employees from wearing Muslim, Sikh and Jewish headwear or visible crucifixes at work.

More than 700,000 workers are employed in the public health, education and other civil services, close to a fifth of Quebec’s workforce. Drainville said he intends to press private bosses to emulate the charter’s measures.

The charter would deny access to state services to anyone seeking them while having his or her face covered.

Other bourgeois politicians, including leaders of the ruling Conservatives and the New Democratic and Liberal parties in English-speaking Canada, denounced the charter as an example of the so-called reactionary character of Québécois national aspirations. The Québécois people are an oppressed nationality in Canada based on their language, French. They represent some 80 percent of Quebec’s

population.

The three opposition parties in Quebec’s National Assembly — the Liberal Party of Quebec, Québec Solidaire and Coalition Avenir Québec — also raised questions about the charter.

But the most significant opposition has come from two fronts the PQ clearly didn’t expect — the ranks of the Quebec nationalist movement itself and in the street.

In less than five days, more than 12,000 people signed online a “Manifesto for an inclusive Quebec” that rejects the reactionary restrictions. Signers include many well-known Québécois artists, journalists and university professors.

Quebec’s three main trade union federations — the Quebec Federation of Labor, the Confederation of National Trade Unions and the Quebec Trade Unions Federation — held off taking a stand, saying they will organize a discussion among their ranks.

Maria Mourani resigned Sept. 13 from the Bloc Québécois, the PQ’s sister party in Ottawa, after she was expelled from the party’s caucus for denouncing the charter as “ethnic nationalism.” Of Lebanese origin, she was one of only five BQ members in Parliament.

Some 10,000 people — the overwhelming majority Muslim immigrants from North Africa — protested the charter in Montreal Sept. 14, responding to a call by a newly formed Quebec Collective Against Islamophobia.

“It divides society. It’s against human rights and discriminatory,” Abderrazak Raji, a programmer, told the *Militant*.

“For people in positions of authority,” said Stéphanie Mitchell, a student and office worker, wearing a religious

Continued on page 7



Militant/Félix Vincent Ardea

Joe Young, left, Communist League candidate for mayor of Montreal, participates in Sept. 14 demonstration of 10,000 against Charter of Quebec Values law proposed by Parti Québécois government. Law promotes division among working people along national and religious lines.

ON THE PICKET LINE

Solidarity rally backs Wash. Machinists on strike 6 months

AUBURN, Wash. — Members of Machinists Local 79 hosted a barbecue and solidarity rally outside the Belshaw Adamatic plant here for 62 workers on strike since March 25 against the bakery and doughnut equipment manufacturer in a contract dispute over wages, pensions, health care benefits and speedup.

“For the first time in several months, the company initiated negotiations,” Cliff LaPlant, the chief shop steward at Belshaw Adamatic, told the *Militant* when he attended and spoke at a strike rally of berry pickers fighting for a contract in Burlington, Sept. 14.

“The original stance of the company was to fire most of the workers and hire replacements to take their place. We told them our stance was for any settlement, 62 went out and 62 have to go back.

“In the negotiations, which started Sept. 5, Belshaw Adamatic agreed that all the strikers would be brought back with a negotiated agreement,” said LaPlant. Even though this was an improvement, on Sept. 11 the local voted 48-5 to reject the company’s latest offer.

“Our main concern was the question of job security,” LaPlant said. “We did not want to go back into the plant and then be subject to layoffs. We proposed to them a work-share agreement where we would accept a reduction of hours for workers but no layoffs. They did not agree to this.”

The company did not return calls requesting comment.

— Edwin Fruit

Calif. owner-operators sign up for Port Truckers Association

OAKLAND, Calif. — Truckers who are leading an effort to organize port drivers here announced Sept. 13 that during the first couple weeks of the effort, more than 400 drivers have signed up to form the Port Truckers Association. The announcement was made during a meeting of about 80 truckers at Shoreline Park where the next steps were discussed and decided.

The move to organize the owner-operator truckers began in earnest following a two-day protest Aug. 19-20 when drivers picketed the new “mega-terminal” of SSA Marine and other terminals at the port here, forcing a partial shutdown of the Port of Oakland, the fifth busiest container port in the U.S.

Dockworkers represented by the International Longshore and Warehouse Union honored the drivers’ picket line.

The truckers demand compensation for excessive delays when picking up or dropping off freight, as well as for

mandatory and costly emission standards upgrades on their trucks. They also seek an extension of an impending deadline for having rig models no older than 2007.

In response to the truckers’ protests and organizing efforts, Port of Oakland officials are holding weekly meetings to discuss 13 issues — including transport rates, emission fees and regulations, payment for long waits to load and unload, restrooms and “respect.” In addition to truckers’ and port representatives, participants include representatives from trucking companies, port terminal management and the ILWU.

Owner-operator drivers told the *Militant* that the rates they are paid have not gone up for more than a decade, while the costs of owning, maintaining and operating a truck have increased dramatically.

At a lunch truck nearby, Walter Solano, who works directly for a trucking company, told the *Militant* he backed the protests of the owner-operators. “They show we have power!” he said.

— Joel Britton

Colombia coal miners end strike after gov’t back-to-work order

Workers at Drummond Co.’s open pit coal mines and port in northern Colombia ended a 52-day strike after they were ordered back to work by the Ministry of Labor Sept. 14. Workers were demanding a 9 percent wage increase, better



Militant/Clay Dennison

Members of Machinists Local 79 on strike since March 25 against Belshaw Adamatic in Auburn, Wash., on picket line Sept. 13. Local voted 48-5 to reject company’s latest offer.

sick pay and improved job safety and job security.

“The labor inspectors appeared and ordered us to remove the seals and go back to work,” Alberto Solano Cordero, a machine operator and leader of the Sintraminergética trade union, said by phone from Cesar department Sept. 20. The union, the company and the Ministry of Labor seal the entrances to work areas during strikes, Cordero said, “to make sure no one enters or leaves.”

Alabama-based Drummond is the second-largest coal company in Colombia and employs 5,000 workers directly and as many as 7,000 more through contractors.

Sintraminergética, which is affiliated to the CUT trade union federation, is the largest union in the mine. Officials of

two smaller unions, Agretritrene and Sintradrummond, collaborated with the company and the government to pressure workers to vote for arbitration, Solano said.

“Supervisors visited younger workers at home and told them that if they didn’t vote they would lose their jobs,” Solano said. “When strikers returned to their jobs, Drummond already cut back the size of food portions provided for meals.”

The Sintraminergética union has faced a long history of violent attacks and threats. In 2001 three union leaders at Drummond were murdered by rightist paramilitaries that union officials say were tied to the company. This year shots were fired at union delegate Rubén Morón Guerrero while he was in a taxi May 28, on the eve of negotiations.

“During the negotiations we were bombarded with text messages demanding we accept the company’s proposals or we would be killed,” Solano said.

Sintraminergética Secretary General Ever Causado told the *Militant* from Barranquilla Sept. 20 that the union is appealing the order forcing Drummond employees back to work. “What’s at stake here is the right to strike,” he said.

The same day some 10,000 construction workers at Colombia’s largest oil refinery went on strike, demanding a 43 percent wage increase.

— Seth Galinsky



Some 10,000 construction workers at Colombia’s largest oil refinery walk off the job Sept. 20.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



October 7, 1988

HARTFORD, Conn — Nearly 1,500 demonstrators, mostly from New England and New York, marched through the streets Sept. 24 in support of the Puerto Rico/Hartford 15.

Chanting “U.S. justice is a lie,” they stopped in front of the federal courthouse to express outrage at the way jury selection is being loaded against five of the defendants whose trial began two and a half weeks ago. The protesters demanded that all charges against the 15 be dropped.

The case began Aug. 30, 1985, when hundreds of FBI agents invaded the homes of independence supporters in Puerto Rico, arresting them on charges of conspiracy in a 1983 Wells Fargo robbery here in Hartford. Brought to the United States to stand trial, most of the defendants were refused bail for more than a year, despite the fact that they had been convicted of nothing. Two defendants were locked up for more than two and a half years.



October 7, 1963

SELMA, Ala., Sept. 27 – Nearly 300 young Negroes have been arrested here in voter-registration and anti-segregation demonstrations in the past week. Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee Chairman John Lewis was arrested Sept. 25 along with 28 Selma University students who were peacefully demonstrating their belief that every man should have the vote.

The students were arrested while picketing the courthouse with signs reading, “One Man, One Vote,” and “Voter-Registration Without Intimidation.”

County Sheriff James Clark said he was ready to lock up Negro demonstrators “until they fill the jails.” Negroes may not walk the streets, hold mass meetings, or picket peacefully without being under constant surveillance by local, county, and state law officers. In addition, the sheriff has deputized a posse of more than 300 white civilians, authorized to carry arms and make arrests.



October 8, 1938

HOUSTON, Texas – The 58th annual convention of the American Federation of Labor being held here this week reflects the cross-currents in this organization arising under the impact of the social crisis gripping America.

For the first time in years, the executive council took cognizance of the A. F. of L. unemployed members in a supplementary report which said that 1,400,000 of the unionists were out of work.

Growth of the Teamsters union during the past year was shown in the council’s report that over 309,000 truck drivers were paying per capita tax into the federation.

The added power of the Teamsters union was revealed in the fence-straddling position the council report took on the question of unity with the C.I.O. The truck drivers and the railroad brotherhoods represent the largest group within the federation favorable to a more friendly attitude towards the C.I.O.

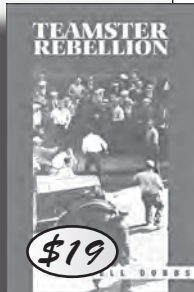
Teamster Rebellion by Farrell Dobbs

The 1934 strikes that built the industrial union movement in Minneapolis and helped pave the way for the CIO, as recounted by a central leader of that battle.

First in a four-volume series. The other books are *Teamster Power*, *Teamster Politics* and *Teamster Bureaucracy*.

Also in Spanish, Swedish, Farsi, French.

PathfinderPress.com



Women in Cuba

Continued from front page

advance women's status in Indonesia. They listened, with rapt attention, to the speakers' accounts of the revolutionary struggle that began July 26, 1953 — a struggle that was marked from the start by the demonstrative involvement of women — and to the record of social and economic gains for both women and men that became possible as a result of the revolution's socialist course.

The event, conducted in Bahasa Indonesia and English and ably by Kendaru, was the Indonesian launch of *Women in Cuba: The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution*. The book, published by Pathfinder Press in 2012 and edited by Waters, features interviews with Vilma Espín (1930-2007), a legendary leader of the revolutionary struggle and founding president of the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC); her contemporary and close comrade-in-arms Asela de los Santos; and Yolanda Ferrer, long-time general secretary of the FMC, who retired last year.

The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution is the “interesting book that we will be discussing today,” said chairperson Listyowati in opening the meeting. She is the executive director of Kalyanamitra, a well-known women's center in Indonesia that was founded in 1985 as the popular struggle against the weakening Suharto dictatorship made it possible for an organization fighting violence against women to function. The meeting took place at its center in east Jakarta.

“We often discuss the Indonesian women's movement here,” Listyowati continued. “Today we would like to discuss women in Cuba, what they have achieved and how this differs from Indonesia.”

She noted, “Some of you here may have attended the Cuban Five cartoon exhibition at the Kontras office; we thank you if you did.” Two days earlier, Kalyanamitra and Kontras (Commission for Missing Persons and Victims of Violence, also founded during Suharto's military-based regime) had sponsored the first broad public showing in Indonesia of political drawings by Gerardo Hernández, one of the five Cuban revolutionaries framed up by Washington and handed draconian sentences in U.S. prisons. Waters had spoken at the event, which was held at the Kontras headquarters in Jakarta. (See article in *Militant* issue no. 33.)

Viant began her presentation with

a review of the position of women in Cuba before the revolution. “For the vast majority of the female population,” she said, “there was no chance of employment, education, access to health services or social security.”

Only 13.5 percent of women worked outside the home in 1953, many of them as domestics who received no pay, only “room and board,” such as it was. The FMC was founded to change these social conditions, and its formation in 1960 was a “landmark day,” Viant said.

The ambassador paid tribute to the “collective wisdom” of those who inspired or founded the federation: among them Espín and de los Santos, who had “fought in the Sierra Maestra mountains as part of the Rebel Army led by Fidel Castro and Raúl Castro,” and other central leaders of the revolution.

“Around the new organization coalesced women breaking social and gender barriers,” said Viant. The FMC was “deeply involved in many important tasks,” in the early days, including the massive literacy campaign of 1961. In that one year, 250,000 volunteers — many of them women in their teens — taught more than 700,000 Cubans, the majority of whom were women, to read and write.

Origins of women's oppression

The Jakarta meeting was the product of several years of collaboration between Kalyanamitra and Pathfinder, Waters explained in her opening remarks. “We first learned of Kalyanamitra and its work in 2009 when we received a letter asking for permission to translate and publish an Indonesian-language edition of one of Pathfinder's titles, Evelyn Reed's *Woman's Evolution: From Matriarchal Clan to Patriarchal Family*. Of course, we said yes!”

First published in 1975, *Woman's Evolution* has become a classic in the arsenal of women's liberation that has been translated into at least seven other languages. It explains why and how “the second-class status of women was born a few thousand years ago — a micro-second in human history — as class-divided societies emerged,” said Waters. “That is when a handful of men — in bloody battle — appropriated as their



Top, Kalyanamitra; bottom, Militant/Baskaran Appu

Top, from left, Cuban Ambassador Enna Viant; translator Kendaru; Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press; and Listyowati, executive director of Kalyanamitra at Aug. 29 meeting at women's center in Jakarta, Indonesia. **Bottom**, participants in discussion period, from left, Nurdiansah, Nani Ekawaty and Dewi Tjakrawinata.

own the social surplus made possible by the collective labor of all, and women, much like cattle, were reduced to a form of private property,” she added.

“The oppression of women is above all an economic question, a class question,” Waters said. “It has taken different concrete forms in different societies over the millennia, but women's inequality today is built into the foundations of capitalism.

“Equality between men and women will be possible only when capitalist exploitation is overturned and women's private work in the home is socialized,” Waters said. “And that has been the course of struggle followed by working people in the Cuban Revolution, the course that has made possible the economic and social transformation of Cuban society and women's social status within it.

“This didn't happen automatically,” Waters added. It was only possible because of the continued struggle by women and men, and the caliber of the leadership — Fidel Castro, above all,” Waters said.

The FMC was formed not around a “preconceived structure or agenda,” Waters noted. “The impetus came from below, from women demanding to be involved in the revolutionary struggle.” That spirit marked not just the literacy brigades, but other early campaigns, like the schools that brought more than 20,000 young rural women to Havana to learn basic skills and those that trained thousands of domestic workers for new jobs.

In three decades, women in Cuba “conquered more than their sisters in advanced capitalist countries conquered in nearly a century,” Waters said. Marriage and divorce are simple matters of civil registration. Attitudes toward homosexuality and other matters of sexual orientation have changed radically in the last quarter century.

“Today it is not only in areas such as education and health that women are to be found in leadership positions,” Waters said. “They are also directors of several sugar mills and a quarter of the scientific research centers.

“And they are part of the industrial

working class as never before, working as oil riggers, railroad engineers, crane operators, in nickel mines and other nontraditional occupations.”

But none of this, Waters stressed, “would have been possible without a socialist revolution and that is what has fueled the undying determination of the U.S. rulers to destroy it.”

Pointing to the frame-up and imprisonment of the Cuban Five, Waters noted, “That is why they are being held hostage — to punish the Cuban people. Fighting for their freedom, and the broader defense of the revolution, are inseparable from what we are discussing today.”

Indicators of progress

As the lively discussion warmed up, Ambassador Viant listed additional indicators of the conquests of the Cuban Revolution. Today, women comprise 47 percent of the labor force, she said. Two-thirds of all technicians and more than half of all scientists are female, along with 70 percent or more of those working in the education and health sectors. Women have been elected to 49 percent of the 614 seats in the National Assembly of People's Power.

When Viant noted that a Cuban woman is entitled to a full year's maternity leave — including 18 weeks at full pay and the rest at 60 percent — and is guaranteed the job on her return, the audience gasped in approval. Their interest was further heightened when Viant said a couple can share the leave time. By comparison, women in Indonesia are entitled to only three months' unpaid leave.

Waters' report that abortion was decriminalized in the early years of the revolution and is available free of charge, like all other medical procedures, was also greeted with murmurs of approval. In Indonesia the procedure is illegal in many cases, and many die from botched abortions.

Participants were also impressed by the ambassador's comment that average life expectancy in Cuba is 78 years — on a par with advanced capitalist countries. The comparative figure in

Continued on page 7



Militant/Baskaran Appu

Table selling Pathfinder books and *Militant* was stripped bare by meeting participants who bought *The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution* and wide range of other titles.

Berry pickers strike in Wash.

Continued from front page

Farms broke down in August, the workers began campaigning for a boycott of Sakuma products, both fresh berries and those used in Haagen-Dazs ice cream. Some store managers have pulled Sakuma produce following informational pickets, according to strike supporters.

In the midst of the dispute, the company brought in “guest workers” from Mexico, the first time they’ve ever done so. Under an expanding government program, these workers are given temporary visas with a precarious status. If they quit or are fired they are subject to deportation. Sakuma Farms is housing them separately from the other workers at the operation.

Some 150 blueberry pickers won a \$1 per box increase after a one-hour sit-down strike Sept. 10; 200 blackberry pickers won a 75 cents increase per box the following day after a similar action.

One day later Sakuma management fired Torres. Farmworkers say bosses took the action after Torres spoke out against the company’s moves to impose new productivity requirements.

In response to the firing, some 300 berry pickers, the majority of the field workers, walked off the job demanding Torres’ reinstatement, a contract, better wages, and a guarantee against company reprisals for union activity.

The Sept. 14 march stopped first

at the Sakuma market in town where they found the parking lot locked during normal business hours. They then marched to the processing plant, where a delegation of members of Familias Unidas tried to deliver a petition with more than 300 signatures asking Sakuma Farms to negotiate with the workers’ union. But a half-dozen security guards prevented them from reaching the office.

At the rally outside the processing plant, a number of participants gave messages of solidarity, including Cliff LaPlant, chief shop steward of Machinists Local 79, on strike against Belshaw Adamatic in Auburn; Sydney Coe, a member of Teamsters Local 117 in Kent; Elena Perez from United Food and Commercial Workers Local 21 in Seattle; and Lois Danks from Stop the Checkpoints in Port Angeles.

“We get only one meal break in the day,” said Maximilo, who has picked berries at Sakuma Farms the last four years, working seven days a week during the harvest. “Ten hours a day with a day off each week would be good. Our conditions are bad, but we will change them in this struggle.”

“During the strawberry harvest we go to work at 5 or 5:30 a.m. and finish as late as 4 p.m.,” Maura Vasques said. “But then we have to arrange the boxes and take them to the packing plant. And



Militant/Clay Dennison

Farmworkers march in Burlington, Wash., Sept. 14 to offices of Sakuma Brothers Farms, demanding contract with higher wages, better conditions and rehiring fired union leader.

nobody gets paid overtime.”

On Sept. 16 representatives of Sakuma Farms management showed up at Labor Camp Two at 6:30 a.m. and threatened to fire workers and evict them from the company cabins if they did not return to work. “So the workers asked for their damage deposit checks,” said Torres. “The bosses said they didn’t have them. The workers didn’t leave.”

Since then, the company has posted security agents at camp entrances and

began patrolling one of the camps at night in violation of an August agreement with the workers, according to Rosalinda Guillen, who works with Familias Unidas.

On Sept. 17 some 60 farmworkers and supporters picketed in front of the company’s processing plant.

“Before, people were afraid to fight and afraid of being kicked out of the camp,” Gustavo Santiago, 18, told the *Militant* at the picket line. “We are stronger now. Tell everyone don’t buy Sakuma Farm products!”

“I don’t like what the boss is doing and how he treats us,” said Octavia Santiago, 20, who has picked for seven years. “We are here struggling to gain justice and to get better living conditions. We want Sakuma to see us here and know this.”

Sakuma Brothers Farms has not returned calls requesting comment.

Messages and financial contributions can be sent to Familias Unidas por la Justicia at P.O. Box 1206, Burlington, WA 98233.

Mary Martin contributed to this article.

Indonesia event on women and Cuban Revolution

Continued from page 6

Indonesia is 69.

One of the first questions asked in the discussion period was: what had Waters meant by the socialization of private labor in the home, and why did she consider it so important?

Waters said she had paraphrased a statement by Frederick Engels, the founder with Karl Marx of the modern working-class movement — a statement cited in the introduction to *The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution*. In 1885 Engels wrote, “True equality between men and women can become a reality only when the exploitation of both by capital has been abolished, and private work in the home has been transformed into a public industry.”

Waters went on, “I don’t have to explain to this gathering that no matter what kind of jobs we have or what else we do outside the home, women always face a double day of labor. Until that is eliminated — and not by ‘sharing’ it with a companion or hiring someone else to do it for you — there can be no true equality between men and women.

Employers reap the benefits of this inequality and the lower value of women’s labor power because of it. That inequality will not be overcome in capitalist society.”

However, said Waters, “with political and economic power in our hands, working people *can* organize together to change these things. We saw this in Cuba on the question of child care, on which women themselves took the lead.” The child care centers constructed by the FMC in its very early days provided quality health care and early education and helped free up women to work, study and broaden their participation in the revolution.

A young man asked about Internet accounts of decades-long official persecution of homosexuals in Cuba, including allegations of concentration camps for gays in the 1960s.

“These kinds of reports are typical of the slanders against the Cuban Revolution,” Waters said. “At the time the revolution triumphed in the early 1960s, homophobia was ingrained in social attitudes. But Cuba was not unique or unusual in that respect,” she added. “The same was true in advanced capitalist countries. The important thing to look at is what has changed.”

The accusation that there were concentration camps for gays is false, Waters said. It is a distorted reference to the Military Units to Aid Production established in the mid-1960s. At that time, when “the revolution was under ferocious attack” by Washington, universal military service was established for all young men. Those who refused to bear arms on religious or other grounds, or were classified as unfit for military duty, served in these largely agricultural production units as a way to contribute to national defense. Because of the prejudices against homosexuals, men who were openly gay were assigned to these units — a policy that former Cuban

President Fidel Castro described in 2010 as a “great injustice.” On Castro’s initiative, the units were shut down in 1968 after three years of existence.

“Attitudes to sexual orientation have changed,” the ambassador added. “We are very open regarding this issue.” Both speakers noted the important role of the Cuban National Center for Sex Education, formed in 1989 under the leadership of Vilma Espín and now headed by Mariela Castro, the daughter of Espín and Cuban President Raúl Castro.

In response to a comment from one audience member that neither speaker had mentioned religion, Viant observed to appreciative laughter that this wasn’t the subject of the meeting and, in any case, it would be out of order for her to discuss religion in Indonesia.

She added that she would be happy to answer questions about religion in Cuba — a “secular country” where freedom of worship prevails.

The two-and-a-half-hour meeting did not exhaust the interest of participants. Many stayed to continue the discussion informally for another hour. The table displaying a range of Pathfinder books for sale was stripped bare, as participants bought multiple copies of *The Making of a Revolution Within the Revolution* and many other titles.

Prominent newsweekly *Tempo* ran a report on the meeting in its Aug. 30 edition headlined “Lessons from Cuba: Women’s Equality.” The reporter noted the country’s generous maternity leave provisions, and the significant number of female parliamentarians as well as medical professionals who “receive the same salaries as men.” The online journals *Sayangi* and *Wartafeminis* (*Feminist News*) also reported on the meeting.

Baskaran Appu and Linda Harris contributed to this article.

Quebec charter

Continued from page 4

symbol “could be more of a problem. But for teachers, day care workers, even customs officials at the border — I don’t see what’s the problem.” Supporters of Joseph Young, Communist League candidate for Montreal mayor, met Mitchell campaigning door to door in her neighborhood Sept. 14.

“All that should have been stopped 15, 25 years ago,” said Norman Godin, a retired mechanic, who backs the charter. “There have been too many accommodations” to immigrants’ religious and cultural practices.

“It’s not the government’s business to decide how we dress. There’s no problem with a woman wearing a veil at work,” Haitian-born Davidson Destin   told a supporter of the Communist League campaign at work at the Plat du Chef food processing plant.

Before Drainville’s announcement of the planks of the charter, 57 percent of Quebecois told pollsters they supported the idea. After the announcement, support fell to 43 percent, with 42 percent opposed. The rejection is highest among English speakers and those whose first language is neither French nor English.

Myriam Marceau contributed to this article.

Special Offer — \$10

With subscription to the Militant

Cover price: \$20

Order from **Pathfinderpress.com**
or from distributors listed on page 10

Korean War: US rulers aimed to crush fight for sovereignty

Washington's aggression continues 60 years later — US troops and weapons out of Korea's soil, skies

BY STEVE CLARK

This series marks the 60th anniversary of the Korean people's victory over Washington's 1950-53 war to conquer that country. The first two parts have told the story of Korea's partition in 1945 at the hands of Washington and Moscow and of the brutal landlord-capitalist regime imposed by the U.S. armed forces on the southern half.

"Acts of resistance to the occupying forces or any acts which may disturb public peace and safety will be severely punished," warned Gen. Douglas MacArthur in his Sept. 7, 1945, proclamation establishing the interim U.S. military government in South Korea. And that's what workers and peasants faced,

PART III

as more than 100,000 Koreans were killed over the next half decade (and many more beaten, tortured, or jailed), as the U.S. occupiers and their local collaborators suppressed strikes, land seizures and uprisings.

Meanwhile, north of Korea's 38th parallel, a Central People's Committee was established in February 1946, with Kim Il Sung, a leader of the liberation movement against Tokyo's colonial boot since the 1930s, as chairman. The new workers and peasants government recognized peasant land seizures and organized a sweeping agrarian reform; expropriated the landlords and capitalists, both Japanese and Korean; and carried out other social measures in the interests of working people.

On Sept. 9, 1948, in response to the imposition of the Syngman Rhee regime in Seoul through U.S.-rigged elections, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was established in Pyongyang.

Korean War

When war erupted between the two governments on June 25, 1950, the U.S. rulers backed to the hilt the Rhee

regime's efforts to reimpose the dictatorship of capital in the north. At the time, many in the U.S. ruling class also hoped their troops could march beyond the Yalu River and strike a fatal blow to the Chinese Revolution, which had triumphed in 1949.

Within two days, Washington arranged United Nations Security Council cover to deploy armed forces from the United States and U.S. allies in what President Harry Truman labeled a U.N. "police action" to "suppress a bandit raid on the Republic of Korea."

On direct orders from Premier Joseph Stalin, Soviet Ambassador Jacob Malik didn't show up for the Security Council vote, where he would have been able to veto the U.S. resolution. Moscow's pretext was that it was boycotting the Security Council to protest Washington's decision to block the People's Republic of China from U.N. membership. But the real reason — to avert a showdown with Washington — was laid bare less than a week later when the Soviet Union's turn as Security Council chair came around and Malik's "principled boycott" abruptly ended.

Over the next three years, some 2 million U.S. soldiers were sent as cannon fodder to Korea, along with more than 160,000 troops from 15 other countries, with the largest numbers from the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and Turkey.

The DPRK's Korean People's Army rapidly liberated 90 percent of the peninsula, down to a small southeastern corner of the country that became known as the "Pusan perimeter," from the name of the coastal city it encircled. When a U.S. regiment arrived by ship in Pusan in mid-July, Korean dockworkers were on strike and refused to offload their weapons. The U.S. troops either unloaded the equipment themselves or forced Korean longshoremen to do so at gunpoint.

Rhee and his chief cronies fled Seoul as soon as the fighting began, with the top officer corps trailing behind two days later. By the day after that, June 28, less than a quarter of South Korean troops could be accounted for, and most of their heavy weapons and equipment had been abandoned, destroyed, or captured.

Unburying the truth

The tenor of much of the war coverage in the U.S. capitalist press is illustrated by a couple of July 1950 dispatches by Hanson Baldwin, the Pulitzer Prize-winning military editor for the *New York Times*. Calling the DPRK troops "invading locusts," Baldwin wrote, "We are facing an army of barbarians in Korea, but they are barbarians as trained, as relentless, as reckless of life, and as skilled in the tactics of the kind of war they fight as the hordes of



Within weeks of war's outbreak, troops of Democratic People's Republic of Korea held 90 percent of peninsula. **Above**, residents of Seoul celebrate liberation of city by North Korean troops (**right**), just days after fighting started in June 1950. "Invading locusts" is how *New York Times* correspondent referred to troops freeing southern half of their country from U.S.-imposed tyranny, calling Koreans a "simple, primitive, and barbaric people."

Genghis Khan."

Acknowledging outrage among Koreans at the "women and children slain by American bombs" in the war's first weeks, Baldwin added that the U.S. armed forces must show that "we do not come merely to bring devastation" but instead convince "these simple, primitive, and barbaric people ... that we — not the Communists — are their friends."

When CBS radio correspondent Edward R. Murrow posed the question in a taped broadcast how Koreans in "villages to which we have put the torch" during the flight to Pusan might view "the attraction of Communism," top network executives refused to air it.

Aside from the pages of the *Militant*, one of the few places factual information could be found in those years, much of the truth about what had happened in Korea only began to come out under the impact of the fight for national reunification by the Vietnamese people in the 1960s and 1970s, and the worldwide movement against the U.S. war there.

These revelations were also spurred by a new rise of struggles in South Korea against the U.S.-backed tyranny, above all the 1980 Kwangju rebellion in which thousands of armed workers took over the city. Hundreds were killed in Kwangju by Seoul's police and troops, aided by U.S. forces there, but a few years later the reverberations of that battle and others across South Korea brought down the dictatorship of Chun Doo-hwan.

The 60th anniversary of the Korean War has spurred the publication of several new books telling more of the truth about its roots and consequences. One is *The Korean War: A History* (Modern Library, 2010) by Bruce Cumings, who has written other valuable accounts over the past 30 years. This summer has seen the release of *Brothers at War: The Unending Conflict in Korea* (Norton, 2013) by Sheila Miyoshi Jager. Another useful book (especially regarding conditions facing U.S. and other "U.N." troops), published on the 50th anniversary, is:

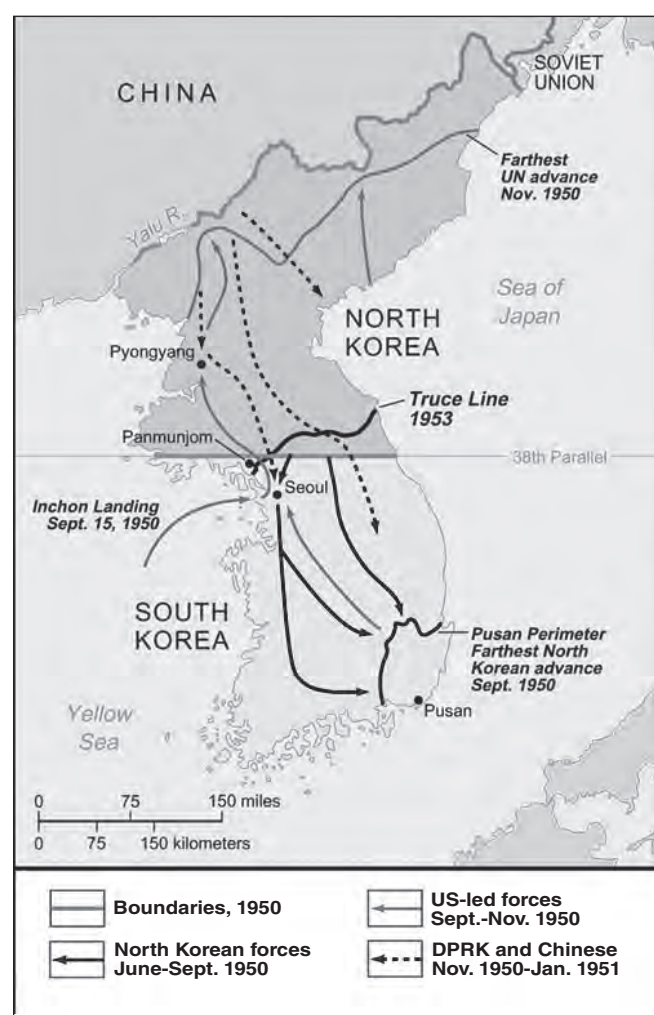
MacArthur's War: Korea and the Undoing of an American Hero (Simon & Schuster, 2000) by Stanley Weintraub, who was a GI in Korea during those years. Much of the information in these articles comes from these books, as well as from the pages of the *Militant* since 1945.

In addition, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Korea — established in 2005 by the South Korean government to investigate atrocities before, during, and after the war, and dissolved five years later for doing its job too well — uncovered evidence of the murder of between 100,000 and 200,000 people by South Korean authorities between 1945 and 1953, as well as 138 massacres by U.S. forces during the war.

The commission was spurred in large part by the widely reported exposure in 1999 of a July 1950 massacre by U.S. troops of some 400 civilians in the village of No Gun Ri, one of many such atrocities by South Korean and U.S. forces covered up for half a century by the bourgeois press in the United States and elsewhere. Among the documented



Rally in city of Kwangju during nine-day popular rebellion against South Korean military dictatorship of Chun Doo-hwan. Workers took over city before uprising was crushed with



ignty, against capitalist rule

s and waters! For a Pacific free of nuclear weapons!



cases committed by South Korean forces during their flight from Seoul in July 1950 was the slaughter and mass burial of some 4,000 people in the city of Taejon, site of one of the most hard-fought battles during the opening weeks of the war.

Invasion at Inchon

In September 1950, as South Korean and U.S. forces were facing defeat, some 80,000 U.S. Marines invaded at Inchon Harbor near Seoul. Over the next several weeks, the armed forces of the DPRK organized a retreat north from the Pusan perimeter.

But General MacArthur's bombastic promise to U.S. troops that they would be "home by Thanksgiving," and then "home by Christmas," was a sham. As U.S. soldiers

approached the Yalu River, separating Korea from China, some 260,000 Chinese troops crossed the border to aid the DPRK's forces in pushing back the invasion. What's more, MacArthur — who himself never spent a single night in Korea during the war, flying back to the comforts of Tokyo after each visit — hadn't equipped U.S. soldiers for the bitter-cold Korean winter. Many suffered from frostbite, and their weapons and other equipment wouldn't function.

In early 1951, at a low point in the morale of U.S. forces, Gen. Matthew Ridgway took over operational command and managed to hold on to a line at roughly the 38th parallel. The murderous U.S. bombardment of North Korea described in the first article in this series — leveling Pyongyang and scores of other cities, towns, and villages — had not broken the will of the Korean people.

Nor had the Truman administration's threats, in face of the aid being given to Korean liberation forces by Chinese troops, to unleash nuclear weapons. "We will take whatever steps are necessary to

meet the military situation," Truman said at a Nov. 30, 1950, press conference — including attacks on China itself and "active consideration" of using the atomic bomb.

So in July 1951 the U.S. government agreed to begin cease-fire talks with the DPRK. As the war became increasingly unpopular among working people in the U.S. over the next two years, the new Republican administration of Dwight Eisenhower finally signed an armistice at the Korean village of Panmunjom near the 38th parallel on July 27, 1953.

By most estimates, more than 4 million people were killed in the U.S.-organized war, including at least 2 million civilians. The big majority of deaths were of Koreans — *some 10 percent of the peninsula's prewar population* — with hundreds of thousands of Chinese killed or wounded as well.

More than 40,000 soldiers from the U.S. and other allied countries were killed; some 115,000 wounded; and more than 7,500 U.S. troops still listed as missing in action. Proportionally, the highest rates of deaths and wounded were among troops of the so-called U.N. forces sent as cannon fodder by allied governments to help give cover to Washington's war. Of the first 300-man unit of troops from Turkey to see combat, only 45 survived; altogether the casualty rate for Turkish troops (deaths and injuries) was 20 percent. Rates between 13 and 32 percent were also suffered by troops from Belgium, Ethiopia, France, Colombia, Greece, Luxembourg and the Netherlands.

How the 'Militant' campaigned

The *Militant* campaigned to halt the imperialist war in Korea. As the socialist weekly had done in covering struggles by Korean working people over the half decade prior to the war, it scoured the bourgeois press for whatever facts slipped through and ran accounts by GIs or merchant seamen who had ended up in Korea.

Among the well over 200 articles, editorials, and statements by Socialist Workers Party candidates during the first year and a half of the conflict alone, some of the headlines read: "SWP Candidate Hits Intervention in Korea," "Jim Crow in Korea," "The Real Role of the UN," "War Reporters Describe U.S. Atrocities in Korea," "Labor Should Demand: 'No War with China!'," "U.S. Army Censor Holds Reporter 'Incommunicado'," "Millions in Korea Flee U.S. Bombs," "Rhee's Soldiers Massacre Entire So. Korea Village," and "Korea War a Year Old — Stop the Slaughter Now — Acheson Compelled To Admit 'Police Action' Is Real War."

In 1950 and 1951 the working-class newsweekly featured three letters from Socialist Workers Party National Secretary James P. Cannon to President Harry Truman and members of the U.S. Congress.

"This is more than a fight for unification and national liberation," Cannon wrote in the first letter, dated July 31, 1950, just a few days after U.S. troops entered the combat. "It is a civil war. On the one side are the Korean workers, peasants and student youth. On the other are the Korean landlords, usurers, capitalists and their police and political agents. The impoverished and exploited working masses have risen up to drive out the native parasites as well as their foreign protectors. ...

"Your undeclared war on Korea, Mr. President, is a war of enslavement. That



To this day U.S. rulers refuse to sign peace treaty with Pyongyang and maintain 28,500 U.S. troops in South. Washington imposes harsh trade and financial sanctions on DPRK and carries out military provocations. **Above**, Ohio Class submarine armed with nuclear warheads 6,000 times more powerful than U.S. government unleashed against people of Hiroshima in 1945. Nine such subs prowl the Pacific, aimed above all at DPRK and China. **Left**, U.S. and South Korean Marines conduct landing drills near Seoul, April 2013, during annual Foal Eagle joint military exercises.



is how the Korean people themselves view it — and no one knows the facts better than they do. They've suffered imperialist domination and degradation for half a century," Cannon wrote, "and they can recognize its face even when masked with a UN flag. ...

"I call upon you to halt the unjust war on Korea. Withdraw all American armed forces so that the Korean people can have full freedom to work out their destiny in their own way."

Cannon's second letter was written on Dec. 4, 1950, after Chinese troops had come to the aid of Korea and amid Truman's nuclear saber-rattling. "Your reckless adventure in Korea has brought this country into a clash with the 500 millions of China and threatens an 'entirely new war,'" Cannon wrote. "Your proposed solution, Mr. President, is a threat to repeat the atrocities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by using the atom bomb in Korea. ... Stop the war NOW!"

Three years later, after the July 1953 cease-fire, the *Militant* hailed the Korean people's defeat of Washington's war aims and drew lessons from imperialism's bloody assault. "Giant armies have been pitted for three years in ferocious combat against each other; unsurpassed concentrations of firepower have been used; casualties have run into the millions and property destruction has been almost total," said an article in the Aug. 17 issue.

The cease-fire in Korea, the *Militant*

said, registered "the fact that the United States, the foremost capitalist power and chief military spearhead of world imperialism, for the first time in its history has come out of a war without a victory."

U.S. refuses to sign peace treaty

Over the six decades since the 1953 armistice in the Korean War, the U.S. government has nonetheless maintained an official state of war on the peninsula, refusing to this day to sign a peace treaty with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Among other things, Washington maintains 28,500 troops in South Korea and conducts provocative joint military exercises with Seoul every year.

As part of Washington's efforts to isolate and strangle the people of North Korea, this year alone it has taken the initiative to slap the DPRK with two new sets of economic and financial sanctions, adopted Jan. 22 and March 7 by the U.N. Security Council. These sanctions tighten restrictions on the DPRK's banking transactions and access to trade credits, as well as expanding the list of banned imports. The measures also imposed mandatory interdictions — aka piracy — of North Korean ships and aircraft suspected of transporting such proscribed goods.

Since mid-July Panamanian authorities, at Washington's bidding, have detained a North Korean cargo ship sail-

Continued on page 12



Rebellion in May 1980 against U.S. troops in South Korea. Thousands of armed people took to the streets with help from U.S. forces.

1950-51 letters from SWP leader James P. Cannon to President Truman demanded Washington end its war of conquest against the Korean people

Reprinted from the 'Militant' in:

'Notebook of an Agitator'

From the Wobblies to the Fight Against the Korean War and McCarthyism

by James P. Cannon



www.pathfinderpress.com



'Direction of Soviet Union depends on int'l class struggle'

Below is an excerpt from *The Revolution Betrayed: What Is The Soviet Union and Where Is It Going?* by Leon Trotsky, a central leader of the 1917 Russian Revolution. It is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for October. In 1917 the workers and peasants of Russia wrested political power from the capitalists, landlords and feudal aristocracy. Yet by the late 1920s a privileged bureaucratic social layer led by Josef Stalin had usurped power and consolidated a murderous counter-revolution, pushing the toilers out of politics. In the selection reprinted here Trotsky refutes the ruling bureaucracy's assertion that socialism had been achieved in the Soviet Union. Copyright © 1937 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY LEON TROTSKY

Capitalism prepared the conditions and forces for a social revolution: technique, science and the proletariat. The communist structure cannot, however, immediately replace the bourgeois society. The material and cultural inheritance from the past is wholly inadequate for that. In its first steps the workers' state cannot yet permit everyone to work "according to his abilities"—that is, as much as he can and wishes to—nor can it reward everyone "according to his



Women demonstrate in Russia, 1917, part of toilers who carried out first proletarian revolution in history. In *Revolution Betrayed*, written in 1936, Leon Trotsky exposes Stalinist bureaucracy's false claims, and interests that lie behind them, that Soviet Union had "achieved socialism."

needs," regardless of the work he does. In order to increase the productive forces, it is necessary to resort to the customary norms of wage payment—that is, to the distribution of life's goods in proportion to the quantity and quality of individual labor.

Marx named this first stage of the new society "the lowest stage of communism," in distinction from the highest, where together with the last phantoms of want material inequality will disappear. In this sense socialism and communism are frequently contrasted as the lower and higher stages of the new society. "We have not yet, of course, *complete* communism" reads the present official Soviet doctrine, "but we have already achieved socialism—that is, the *lowest* stage of communism." In proof of this, they adduce the dominance of the state trusts in industry, the collective farms in agriculture, the state and co-operative enterprises in commerce. At first glance this gives a complete correspondence with the *a priori*—and therefore hypothetical—scheme of Marx. But it is exactly for the Marxist that this question is not exhausted by a consideration of forms of property regardless of the achieved productivity of labor. By the lowest stage of communism Marx meant, at any rate, a society which from the very beginning stands higher in its economic development than the most advanced capitalism. Theoretically such a conception is flawless, for taken

on a world scale communism, even in its first incipient stage, means a higher level of development than that of bourgeois society. Moreover, Marx expected that the Frenchman would begin the social revolution, the German continue it, the Englishman finish it; and as to the Russian, Marx left him far in the rear. But this conceptual order was upset by the facts. Whoever tries now mechanically to apply the universal historic conception of Marx to the particular case of the Soviet Union at the given stage of its development, will be entangled at once in hopeless contradictions.

Russia was not the strongest, but the weakest link in the chain of capitalism. The present Soviet Union does not stand above the world level of economy, but is only trying to catch up to the capitalist countries. If Marx called that society which was to be formed upon the basis of a socialization of the productive forces of the most advanced capitalism of its epoch, the lowest stage of communism, then this designation obviously does not apply to the Soviet Union, which is still today considerably poorer in technique, culture and the good things of life than the capitalist countries. It would be truer, therefore, to name the present Soviet regime in all its contradictoriness, not a socialist regime, but a *preparatory* regime *transitional* from capitalism to socialism. ...

A majority of the vulgar defenders of the Soviet Union as it is are in-

clined to reason approximately thus: Even though you concede that the present Soviet regime is not yet socialistic, a further development of the productive forces on the present foundations must sooner or later lead to the complete triumph of socialism. Hence only the factor of time is uncertain. And is it worth while making a fuss about that? However triumphant such an argument seems at first glance, it is in fact extremely superficial. Time is by no means a secondary factor when historic processes are in question. It is far more dangerous to confuse the present and the future tenses in politics than in grammar. Evolution is far from consisting, as vulgar evolutionists of the Webb type imagine, in a steady accumulation and continual "improvement" of that which exists. It has its transitions of quantity into quality, its crises, leaps and backward lapses. It is exactly because the Soviet Union is as yet far from having attained the first stage of socialism, as a balanced system of production and distribution, that its development does not proceed harmoniously, but in contradictions. Economic contradictions produce social antagonisms, which in turn develop their own logic, not awaiting the further growth of the productive forces. We have just seen how true this was in the case of the kulak [wealthy peasant] who did not wish to "grow" evolutionarily into socialism, and who, to the surprise of the bureaucracy and its ideologues, demanded a new and supplementary revolution. Will the bureaucracy itself, in whose hands the power and wealth are concentrated, wish to grow peacefully into socialism? As to this doubts are certainly permissible. In any case, it would be imprudent to take the word of the bureaucracy for it. It is impossible at present to answer finally and irrevocably the question in what direction the economic contradictions and social antagonisms of Soviet society will develop in the course of the next three, five or ten years. The outcome depends upon a struggle of living social forces—not on a national scale, either, but on an international scale. At every new stage, therefore, a concrete analysis is necessary of actual relations and tendencies in their connection and continual interaction.

IF YOU LIKE THIS PAPER, LOOK US UP

Where to find distributors of the *Militant*, *New International*, and a full display of Pathfinder books.

UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA: Los Angeles: 4025 S. Western Ave. Zip: 90062. Tel: (323) 295-2600. E-mail: laswp@sbcglobal.net
San Francisco: 5482 Mission St. Zip: 94112-1015. Tel: (415) 584-2135. E-mail: swpsf@sbcglobal.net

FLORIDA: Miami: 7100 Biscayne Blvd., Suite 306A. Zip: 33138. Tel: (305) 757-8869. E-mail: swpmiami@att.net

GEORGIA: Atlanta: 777 Cleveland Ave. SW Suite 103. Zip: 30315. Tel: (678) 528-7828. E-mail: swpatlanta@bellsouth.net

ILLINOIS: Chicago: 806 W. Washington Blvd. Suite 202. Zip: 60607. Tel: (312) 455-0111. E-mail: Chicagoswp@att.net

IOWA: Des Moines: 3707 Douglas Ave. Zip: 50310. Tel: (515) 707-1779. E-mail: swpdesmoines@fastmail.fm

MASSACHUSETTS: Boston: 13 Bennington St., 2nd Floor, East Boston. Zip: 02128. Tel: (617) 569-9169. E-mail: swpboston@verizon.net

MINNESOTA: Minneapolis: 416 E. Hennepin Ave., Suite 214. Zip: 55414. Tel: (612) 729-1205. E-mail: tcswp@qwestoffice.net

NEBRASKA, Lincoln: Tel: (402) 217-4906. E-mail: swplincn@windstream.net
Omaha: P.O. Box 7908. Zip: 68107. Tel: (402) 779-7697. E-mail: swpomaha@fastmail.net

NEW YORK: Manhattan: 306 W. 37th St., 10th Floor. Zip: 10018. Tel: (212) 629-6649. E-mail: newyorkswp@mac.com

PENNSYLVANIA: Philadelphia: 3701 Pulaski Ave. Zip: 19140. Tel: (215) 225-1270. E-mail: philaswp@verizon.net

TEXAS: Houston: 4800 W. 34th St., Suite C-50L. Zip: 77092. Tel: (713) 476-0733. E-mail: houstonswp@att.net

WASHINGTON, D.C.: 143 Kennedy St. NW, Suite 15. Zip: 20011. Tel: (202) 536-5080. E-mail: swp.washingtondc@verizon.net

WASHINGTON: Seattle: 5418 Rainier Ave. South. Zip: 98118-2439. Tel: (206) 323-1755. E-mail: seattleswp@qwestoffice.net

AUSTRALIA

Sydney: 1st Flr, 3/281-287 Beamish St., Campsie, NSW 2194. Mailing address: P.O. Box 164, Campsie, NSW 2194. Tel: (02) 9718 9698. E-mail: cl_australia@optusnet.com.au

CANADA

QUEBEC: Montreal: 7107 St. Denis #204 H2S 2S5. Tel: (514) 272-5840. E-mail: clc_can@bellnet.ca

FRANCE

Paris: P.O. 175, 23 rue Lecourbe. Postal code: 75015. Tel: (01) 40-10-28-37. E-mail: milpath.paris@laposte.net

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland: 4/125 Grafton Rd., Grafton. Postal address: P.O. Box 3025, Auckland 1140. Tel: (09) 369-1223. E-mail: clauack@xtra.co.nz

UNITED KINGDOM

ENGLAND: London: First Floor, 120 Bethnal Green Road (Entrance in Brick Lane). Postal code: E2 6DG. Tel: (020) 7613-2466. E-mail: clondon@fastmail.fm
Manchester: Room 301, 3rd floor, Hilton House, 26-28 Hilton St. Postal code: M1 2EH. Tel: (016) 1478-2496. E-mail: clmanchr@gmail.com

October BOOKS OF THE MONTH

PATHFINDER READERS CLUB SPECIALS

25% DISCOUNT

The Revolution Betrayed
by Leon Trotsky
Trotsky, a central leader of the 1917 Russian Revolution, explains how and why a counterrevolutionary bureaucratic caste, led by Josef Stalin, was able to take and hold political power in the Soviet Union. \$20. **Special price: \$15**

The Bolivian Diary of Che Guevara
by Ernesto Che Guevara
\$25. **Special price: \$18.75**

Maurice Bishop Speaks
by Maurice Bishop
\$25. **Special price: \$18.75**

By Any Means Necessary
by Malcolm X
Speeches, interviews and statements from the last year of Malcolm's life, as he was increasingly becoming the voice of a revolutionary leader of the working class internationally. \$16. **Special price: \$12**

The Challenge of the Left Opposition (1928-29)
by Leon Trotsky
\$30. **Special price: \$22.50**

¡Qué lejos hemos llegado los esclavos!
(How Far We Slaves Have Come!)
by Nelson Mandela, Fidel Castro
\$10. **Special price: \$7.50**

Join Pathfinder Readers Club for \$10 and receive discounts all year long

**ORDER ONLINE AT
WWW.PATHFINDERPRESS.COM
OFFER GOOD UNTIL OCTOBER 31**

‘Humor From My Pen’ tour on 2nd year in New Zealand

BY JANET ROTH

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — “This exhibition has been touring New Zealand for the last two years. It is a way we have found, through art, for people in this country to find out more about the Cuban Five,” Cuban Ambassador Maria del Carmen Herrera, said at Massey University’s Albany campus here Sept. 16.

Herrera was referring to “Humor From My Pen,” a collection of political cartoons by Gerardo Hernández, one of five Cuban revolutionaries arrested on frame-up charges in the United States in 1998.

The ambassador was speaking at the opening reception for the Latin American Film Festival on campus. The exhibition, at the university library, ran concurrently with the festival.

The 50 people present were welcomed by Kerry Taylor, head of Massey’s School of Humanities. He acknowledged Leonel Alvarado, the initiator of the event and head of the university’s Spanish-language program.

The next stop for the exhibition is Otago University in Dunedin from Oct. 3 to 24.

US warships deployed off Syria

Continued from page 2

beit a ‘limited’ one — against Assad, Obama backtracked, saying the U.S. military would take no action against Syria without congressional approval and support from Washington’s allies. Secretary of State John Kerry suggested in “off the cuff” comments Sept. 9 that a deal on chemical weapons could avoid it altogether.

All this set up a period of inaction on the part of Washington, putting the initiative in the hands of Moscow for negotiations that provided Damascus with needed time and space, and, in the eyes of the top U.S. ruling capitalist families, made the U.S. government appear irresolute and weak.

In an unprecedented event Sept. 17, two former Obama administration defense secretaries, Robert Gates and Leon Panetta, came together to criticize his Syria policy at a forum at Southern Methodist University in Dallas. “When the president of the United States draws a red line, the credibility of this country is dependent on him backing up his word,” said Panetta, who was also former White House chief of staff under William Clinton. Iran is “paying very close attention,” he added, “and what they are seeing right now is an element of weakness.”

The diplomatic maneuverings between Washington and Moscow over a deal on disposition of Syria’s chemicals weapons unfold as evidence presented by U.N. inspectors point to the Assad government’s responsibility for the Aug. 21 gas attack and against the backdrop of the U.N. General Assembly’s opening session in New York.

On Sept. 24, President Barack



Visitors view cartoons by Gerardo Hernández at Sept. 16 opening of exhibition at Massey University’s Albany campus in Auckland, New Zealand.

London protest demands freedom for Cuban 5

Continued from front page

tant during the rally. Heyes said he was familiar with how the police in the U.K. had framed up soccer fans in 1989 in Liverpool, where he’s from, charging them with involuntary manslaughter after police had caused a stampede at a soccer game. “This is another miscarriage of justice.”

Heyes said he’s been reading *My Life*, an interview with Fidel Castro. “I’ve been particularly moved by what I’ve learned about the Cuban Revolution,” he said.

Called by the Cuba Solidarity Campaign, the protest attracted trade unionists, young people and others, including five workers from the

McVities biscuit factory. It was part of activities around the world — including large actions in Cuba — to mark the 15th anniversary of the arrest of the Five.

Celebrating the release of René González, who sent greetings to the protest, Paul Nowak, assistant general secretary of the Trades Union Congress, called for “the immediate and unconditional release” of the four still in prison. Dave Prentis, general secretary of Unison, the public sector workers union, and Bob Crow of the Rail, Maritime and Transport union, also spoke.

Tony Woodley, former general secretary of the Unite union, spoke of the importance of reaching out to unions in the United States.

“A grave injustice has been done,” Steelworkers International Affairs Director Ben Davis told the rally. “We will continue to work through Workers Uniting in solidarity with the Five,” he said. Workers Uniting was established by Unite and United Steelworkers in North America for international union collaboration.

Among the other speakers were Tessa Murphy of Amnesty International; actor Andy de la Tour; Miriam Palacios, representing Cuban residents in the U.K.; and two repre-

sentatives of the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP), Yudith Camps and Yamil Martínez, who are currently on tour in the U.K.

Retired Catholic priest Geoff Bottoms from the Cuba Solidarity Campaign spoke about the International Commission of Inquiry into the Case of the Cuban Five that will be held in London March 7-8, 2014. Bottoms said the commission is intended to be “a springboard for coordinated global action involving people of influence against a monstrous miscarriage of justice.”

Cuba Solidarity Campaign Director Rob Miller announced that Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury, had recently added his endorsement of the Commission. Other endorsers include Jean Ziegler, former member of the U.N. committee on human rights; Mairead Maguire, Nobel Peace Laureate; writers Gunter Grass, John Le Carré, Alice Walker, and Fernando Morais; and hundreds more.

Support for the commission is growing, Miller said, “and the prestigious Law Society in London will welcome high profile guests from Cuba and representatives of the struggle to free the Five from across the globe.”

Who are the Cuban Five?



Fernando González, Gerardo Hernández, Antonio Guerrero, Ramón Labañino and René González are Cuban revolutionaries who during the 1990s accepted assignments from the Cuban government to gather information on the operations and plans of Cuban-American paramilitary groups based in southern Florida. These rightist 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 Brothers to the Rescue aircraft 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.

All but René González remain in prison. He was allowed to return to Cuba in May this year, half-way through a three-year term of supervised release.

Back fights of Syria toilers! No to US war threats!

Under the impact of the worldwide crisis of capitalism, workers and farmers around the globe confront a relentless drive by the propertied rulers to press down our living standards, intensify our labor and deal blows to our political rights. While these attacks and the resistance to them vary widely in substance and scope — from the U.S. to Bangladesh to Syria — it is becoming easier to see that the world’s toilers have the same interests and face a common enemy.

Among the manifestations of the crisis is the intensification of conflicts among capitalist nation-states, increasing tendencies toward trade disputes, “diplomatic” strife and military conflicts. It’s in this context that the propertied ruling families in the U.S. have raised the threat of military action in Syria.

In response to the rulers’ war drive, socialist workers in the U.S. and elsewhere are deepening their door-to-door discussions with working people about the need to fight for a massive government-funded public works program to cut across the division between workers who are employed and the jobless millions, to fight for a big raise in the minimum wage, and to organize unions and bring union power to bear — steps aimed at strengthening the self-confidence, solidarity and fighting capacity of the working class along an independent course toward political power.

As part of this, socialist workers are unmasking presentations in the big-business press that “peace talks” between Washington and Moscow means the threat of U.S. intervention has receded. Increasingly irritated by President Barack Obama’s naive penchant for trying to negotiate away irresolvable and growing conflicts, the propertied rulers of the world’s most dangerous imperialist power are determined to get their way in Syria and stand ready to use their military might when expedient.

The civil war in Syria is taking an enormous toll on working people. Bashar al-Assad’s forces, backed by Russian arms, Hezbollah troops and special forces from Iran, have stepped up bombardment of working-class areas. Within Syria, the biggest obstacle for workers and farmers is the current regime, against which working people have been fighting for political space and an end to tyranny. Fighting workers the world over should stand in solidarity with this struggle.

Imperialist intervention could only be used against the working people of Syria. In any military assault, workers in the U.S. and elsewhere should stand with Syria, regardless of the current regime in power there, in the fight against Washington and its allies. In Syria, class-conscious workers would seek to join in battle to repel the invaders.

Garment workers protest in Bangladesh

Continued from front page
of our labor and we are not backing off,” Akter said. “We need the increase to keep up with inflation. The rent for one room is often \$35 a month and workers have to share.” The minimum wage is \$38 a month. The average is roughly \$15 above that. Workers are demanding a raise to \$103 minimum, while garment bosses offer a 20 percent increase.

Owners of some 300 factories on the northern outskirts of Dhaka had to shut down production on the day of the demonstration after more than 10,000 workers left the plants.

During the ensuing days, thousands of workers continued street actions, clashing with cops who used tear gas to disperse them. A police source told Agence France-Presse Sept. 23 that “up to 200,000 workers” joined the latest demonstrations, forcing the shutdown of hundreds of factories.

Stepped-up union organizing

Only a tiny fraction of Bangladesh’s 5,000 garment factories have unions. To establish one legally requires that 30 percent of a workforce sign up.

According to Alonzo Suson, Bangladesh director of the AFL-CIO-sponsored Solidarity Center, the number of applications has been increasing. So far this year, out of 90 submitted applications 50 unions have been registered and 29 are pending. In 2010 there was one application, in 2011 nine, in 2012 a few more. Most were rejected.

“We have registered eight new unions in the last few months and have three pending,” Amirul Haque Amin, president of the National Garment Workers Federation, said Sept. 21 by phone from Dhaka. “Our members have faced problems in several factories. One typical example: The government approved the registration, members elected a president, management fired him. So now we have to apply again.”

According to Amin, the country’s labor law gives factory owners the right to fire workers without any stated reason, which gives them a green light to get rid of and blacklist union supporters.

“So far we have mainly registered factories from 1,000 up to 3,000 workers, now we need to move on to the bigger ones,” he said.

Harassment, intimidation and brutality from the police and company-hired goons is nothing new to union organizers in Bangladesh. In April 2012 union leader Aminul Islam was tortured and killed in Dhaka. Others have been framed up and imprisoned.

“At Sadia Garments here, a factory of 300, the government registered the union May 16,” Babul Akhter, president of the Bangladesh Garment and Industrial Workers Federation, said by phone from Dhaka.

“After two weeks management escalated their anti-union campaign.”

On June 22 a supervisor attacked the Sadia union’s general secretary, Maksuda Begum, with cutting shears on her back, chest and hands. Management then dragged her away and forced her and the other union committee members to announce their immediate resignation.

“The union is functioning perfectly, everything is now going well,” Nasir Majumder, managing director of Sadia Garments, told the *Wall Street Journal* Sept. 11. He claimed no one was fired for organizing, but conceded that few of the workers who had led the union still worked there. “Workers leave all the time.” He said photographs shown to him by the *Journal* of Begum’s injuries were fake, “art work.”

Amendment of labor law

On July 15, Parliament amended the labor law in response to mass protests and political pressures after more than 1,100 workers were killed when Rana Plaza — a shoddy eight-story building housing five garment shops in Savar, 20 miles from Dhaka — collapsed April 24. One amendment bars the government from turning over names of union organizers to the bosses.

Referring to the Rana Plaza collapse, the European Union in a July 8 statement said that a new labor law strengthening workers’ rights must be in place in Bangladesh by the end of 2013 or the country will lose its duty-free access to EU countries.

President Barack Obama announced June 27 the U.S. decision to suspend duty-free imports from Bangladesh, a move backed by the AFL-CIO.

Participants in the Sept. 21 rally opposed taking away the duty-free status of Bangladesh exports, according to Nazma Akter.

“We are part of an international fight, we put pressure on the companies here to improve the conditions for workers,” Akter said. “Revoking the duty-free status doesn’t help us. We need for workers in Europe and the U.S. to put pressure on the big retailers to increase wages and working conditions here.”

Bangladesh’s 5,000 garment factories generate 80 percent of the country’s export income. It is the second biggest exporter of garments in the world after China. Over the last two decades the garment workforce has grown from 1 million to 4 million, the big majority women from rural areas.

After the recent slaughter of so many Bangladeshi garment workers on the altar of profit, big-business media speculated that U.S. and European garment suppliers would cut business ties with Bangladesh. But the country still has the fastest growing garment production in the world.

US war in Korea

Continued from page 9

ing from Cuba as it prepared to cross the Panama Canal. The government of Panama, saying it acted on a “tip” from U.S. intelligence that the Chong Chon Gang was smuggling drugs, now claims the cargo violates the U.N. arms embargo. The vessel was transporting sugar, as well as Cuban arms for repair in North Korea.

Washington’s pretexts for the two most recent rounds of sanctions were the DPRK’s successful launching of a satellite into orbit last December and a nuclear weapons test in February. The hypocrisy and imperial arrogance of the U.S. rulers are shown by two facts: (1) of the more than 1,000 satellites in orbit as of May 2013, some 43 percent are of U.S. origin — 12 percent openly for military purposes; and (2) of the 2,053 nuclear tests since 1945, 1,032 have been conducted by Washington and three by Pyongyang.

What’s more, Washington openly maintained tactical nuclear weapons on South Korean territory until 1991. And nine U.S. nuclear-armed submarines prowl the Pacific, each one outfitted with missiles (with a range of more than 5,500 miles) and nuclear warheads equal in their heinous payloads to some 6,000 times the imperialist holocaust unleashed against Japanese and Korean residents of Hiroshima in August 1945.

As the Socialist Workers Party National Committee wrote in a recent message to the Central Committee of the Workers’ Party of Korea on the 65th anniversary of the founding of the DPRK, “The people of Korea, Asia, and beyond have no interest in these monstrously destructive weapons and aspire to a world free of them once and for all. ...

“US troops and weapons out of Korea and its skies and waters! For a peninsula and a Pacific free of nuclear weapons!

“Korea is one!”

Corrections

In the article “Protests, Meetings Mark 15 Years Since Arrest of Cuban Five” in issue no. 34, the name of the meeting chair at the University of the District of Columbia Law School was spelled incorrectly. Her name is professor Crisarla Houston. In “US Imposed Capitalist-Landlord Gov’t on SKorea” in the same issue, the sentence that reads, “In May 1948 Washington rigged elections for a National Assembly in North Korea” should have said the elections were in South Korea.

LETTERS

‘For the struggle’

I’m incarcerated and a friend gave me your paper to read and I’m definitely feeling it. Your movement is for the struggle. Moreover, I was told it’s no cost to prisoners to receive your paper which I find hard to believe because it’s way better than *USA Today*.

*A prisoner
Florida*

John Lewis 1963 speech

Thanks for publishing the censored sentences in John Lewis’ speech to the historic 1963 March on Washington, specifically his criticism of President John Kennedy for wanting to derail the movement and Lewis’ call for a march through the South. You suggest, however, that his criticism of the Democratic Party was also censored. The original transcript did include those sentences. Charles Euchner’s book *Nobody Turn Me Around: A People’s History of the 1963 March on Washington* provides valuable details.

*August Nimtz
Minneapolis, Minn.*

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.

‘Militant’ Prisoners’ Fund

The Prisoners’ Fund makes it possible to send prisoners reduced rate subscriptions. To donate, send a check or money order payable to the Militant and earmarked “Prisoners’ Fund” to 306 W. 37th St., 10th Floor, New York, NY 10018.