

‘Militant
follows fights
of workers
worldwide’

BY MAGGIE TROWE
As *Militant* supporters took part in labor actions and social protests and knocked on doors in working-class neighborhoods last week, 290 people subscribed for the first time or renewed their subscriptions. The international drive to expand the readership of the socialist newsweekly is still ahead of schedule, but we need

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Contribute to
SWP Party-Building Fund
— See page 4

Sign up 2,400
subscribers!
Sept. 6 - Oct. 28 (week 4)

Country	quota	sold	%
UNITED STATES			
Chicago*	170	130	76%
Washington*	110	82	75%
San Francisco*	165	107	65%
New York*	210	133	63%
Atlanta*	155	95	61%
Philadelphia*	120	69	58%
Boston	60	34	57%
Houston*	115	65	57%
Brooklyn*	210	116	55%
Nebraska*	164	85	52%
Lincoln*	11	9	82%
Omaha*	153	76	50%
Seattle*	130	60	46%
Los Angeles	105	48	46%
Miami	105	44	42%
Twin Cities	125	50	40%
Total U.S.	1944	1118	58%
PRISONERS	20	21	105%
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	120	82	68%
Manchester*	95	72	76%
UK Total	215	154	72%
CANADA			
Calgary	50	34	68%
Montreal	60	36	60%
Canada Total	110	70	64%
NEW ZEALAND	70	28	40%
AUSTRALIA	70	39	56%
Total sold	1430	60%	
Should be	1371	57%	

* Raised quota

Low on arms,
Kurds battle
Islamic State
in Syria

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS
For the last three weeks, reactionary Islamic State units totaling some 10,000 combatants, with superior arms, including tanks and anti-aircraft weapons, have forced their way to the outskirts of the Kurdish city of Kobani in northern Syria. The city sits on the Turkish border, where the government of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has deployed troops and tanks.

Washington has turned a deaf ear to Kurdish requests for anti-tank weapons to defend Kobani and is not coordinating operations with the reported 3,000 Kurdish fighters there. U.S. warplanes, however, have started bombing raids in the area.

Washington and Ankara brand the Kurds fighting in Kobani as “terrorist,” because of ties to the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) of Turkey, a group so labeled by the U.S. and Turkish government. PKK forces have been fighting for autonomy and Kurdish rights in Turkey and in 2013 signed a cease-fire with Ankara.

The Kurds — an oppressed nation—
Continued on page 9

Steelworkers in Ill. fight
Honeywell union busting
Build Oct. 11 solidarity rally in Metropolis



USWA Local 7-669

Honeywell locked out workers at uranium conversion plant in Metropolis, Illinois, after union rejected bosses’ contract demands. Above, protest at company offices in Washington Sept. 25.

BY JOHN HAWKINS
CHICAGO — Members of United Steelworkers Local 7-669 — locked-out at Honeywell’s uranium conversion facility in Metropolis, Illinois, since Aug. 1 — are reaching out for solidarity.

The company locked out about 150 workers on the day of their contract expiration, 11 days into talks. Ne-

gotiations resumed Oct. 2-3 without reaching an agreement.

The recently expired contract was ratified in August 2011, after a hard-fought union struggle against a company lockout that lasted 14 months. Honeywell prepared for the lockout, lining up an army of scabs well ahead of time. But not one member of Local 7-669 crossed the picket line. Union—
Continued on page 4

Protests in Savannah, Ga., demand:
Arrest cop who killed Charles Smith



Police officials in Savannah, Georgia, claim Charles Smith had gun and was trying to escape while handcuffed in squad car when officer David Jannot shot him dead. Above, press conference demanding Jannot’s arrest. Seated is Smith’s mother Penny Nelson.

BY DAVE FERGUSON
SAVANNAH, Ga. — Hundreds of people, mostly young workers, turned out at the funeral here Sept. 27 for Charles Smith, a 29-year-old Black man fatally shot by police officer David Jannot nine days earlier. Many

vowed that the protests demanding the officer’s arrest will continue.

City officials were quick to meet with Smith’s family members and other protesters, apparently seeking to head off a repeat of the scene that
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Nebraskans for
Peace discuss
farmers, labor,
climate change

BY MAGGIE TROWE
LINCOLN, Neb. — More than 100 people from across the state came together for the Nebraskans for Peace annual conference here Oct. 4 to discuss, debate and get involved in social
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Hong Kong protesters demand political rights 9

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Autoworkers in Indiana push back two-tier wages

San Francisco ferry captains strike to block insurance hike

Book by Chinese-Cuban generals reviewed in Iran

Below is a review by the Iran Book News Agency of Our History is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution by Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui, Moisés Sío Wong, and Mary-Alice Waters. The book was published in Iran by Talaye Porsoo, which translated the Pathfinder Press book of the same title into Farsi from English. The semiofficial news agency published the review July 2 under the headline, “The Story of Three Young Cubans in ‘Our History is Still Being Written.’” Translation of the review is by the Militant.

Our History is Still Being Written is the title of the story of three Chinese-Cuban youth who participated in various revolutionary actions and in the process of these struggles, helped prepare the path toward socialist revolution in the Americas.

In this book we read the story of the three young Chinese-Cubans who joined the Cuban Revolution from three different social backgrounds. For 50 years after the triumph of the 1959 Cuban Revolution they have participated in revolutionary operations from Cuba to Angola in Africa and from Nicaragua to Venezuela. In this process all three became generals of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba. In this book they discuss the historical immigration of Chinese to Cuba and the social and political forces that formed the Cuban nation.

According to the publisher: “Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui and Moisés Sío Wong, all served in international mis-

sions, including voluntary military missions in Angola from 1975 until 1988. In those 13 years, Cuba responded positively to Angola’s request for help. At that time Angola was just gaining its independence from Portugal. The goal of Cuban volunteers in Angola was to defeat the armed forces of the apartheid regime of South Africa. The apartheid regime, which had the support of imperialism, had attacked Angola to prevent it from gaining its independence. Finally in March 1988, in the famous battle of Cuito Cuanavale, the armed forces of South Africa suffered a major defeat at the hands of the Cuban and African forces.”

The book consists of three sections: “The Difference is a Socialist Revolution: Chinese in Cuba”; “Strengthening the Revolution”; and “The Special Period and Beyond.” In addition, the book has an appendix titled, “Cuito Cuanavale: A Victory for the Whole of Africa.”

In the introduction to the book, by Mary Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press and editor of the Marxist magazine *New International*, we read:

Our History Is Still Being Written adds one more chapter to the chronicle of the Cuban Revolution as told by those who were — and more than fifty years later remain — on the front lines of that epic battle.

Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui and Moisés Sío Wong, three young rebels of Chinese-Cuban ancestry, became combatants in the clandestine struggle and 1956-1958 revolutionary war



Iran Book News Agency reviewed Farsi edition of *Our History is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*, shown above on IBNA website.

that brought down the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista and opened the door to the socialist revolution in the Americas. ... Through their stories the economic, social, and political forces that gave birth to the Cuban nation and still shape our epoch unfold.

The introduction continues:

The lucrative trafficking in tens upon tens of thousands of Chinese peasants — their impressment, their death-ship transport to Cuba, their indentured labor on sugar plantations supplementing the dwindling supply of African slaves, and above all their resistance, struggles, and unblemished record of combat in Cuba’s 1868-98 independence wars against Spain — all that is sketched here in broad outlines. It is a story largely unknown outside Cuba.

Our History is Still Being Written, which was published concurrently in English and Spanish, was put together and written over a four-year period. This book is the result of several interviews, some collective and some individual, that took place in February of 2002 and 2004, and was completed in February and August of 2005.

An appendix to the book reprints a summary of a December 1988 speech by Fidel Castro, then president of Cuba, and speeches by Nelson Mandela and Fidel Castro in Matanzas, Cuba, in July 1991. The importance of the Cuban-Angolan forces’ victory over the apart-

heid army of South Africa in March 1988 in the battle of Cuito Cuanavale has been explained here in quite an interesting way.

In the speech by Nelson Mandela in the appendix, we read:

The Cuban people hold a special place in the hearts of the people of Africa. The Cuban internationalists have made a contribution to African independence, freedom, and justice, unparalleled for its principled and selfless character. From its earliest days the Cuban Revolution has itself been a source of inspiration to all freedom-loving people.

We admire the sacrifices of the Cuban people in maintaining their independence and sovereignty in the face of a vicious imperialist-orchestrated campaign to destroy the impressive gains made in the Cuban Revolution. ... We admire the achievements of the Cuban Revolution in the sphere of social welfare.

This first edition of *Our History is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution* by Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui and Moisés Sío Wong, was translated by Naser Yekta. It has 289 pages and was printed with a run of 1,000 copies. It is priced at 13,000 to-mans [\$4.30] and is published by Talaye Porsoo Publications.

THE MILITANT

Support workers resisting bosses’ attacks

Nursing home workers in New Jersey are fighting for higher pay and against the bosses’ selective lockout of union militants who led a three-day strike in September. The ‘Militant’ covers and connects workers’ struggles around the world, from California to Cambodia.



Militant/Sara Lobman
Sept. 17 New Jersey health workers rally.

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

'Militant' helps to follow the world

Continued from front page

to pick up the pace and average 324 subscriptions per week for the next three weeks to complete the drive in full and on time.

Atlanta *Militant* supporters raised their quota by five subscriptions and Omaha by three, bringing the total pledged to 2,429.

Katy LeRougetel and Francois Brardette drove from Calgary, Alberta, to Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Oct. 5 to join the picket line of members of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 615. The city locked the workers out Sept. 20 in a fight over wages and pensions. When transit worker Michelle Jabour saw the *Militant* headline on the attempt by Bombardier to impose two tiers of pensions on workers at its Ontario rail car plant, she said, "Please tell me the

workers won." She and five others subscribed to the *Militant*.

In Calgary Joe Young and Félix Vincent Ardea met Clarice Blacksmith when they knocked on her door. She talked about the Sept. 27 march protesting police brutality against First Nation people and demanding an investigation into the July killing of Colton Crowshoe, a Native youth. "The paper's truthful," Blacksmith said. "Nobody has the guts to speak the truth today."

Militant supporters from Seattle drove to Portland, Oregon, and Vancouver, Washington, to find out how workers view the recent agreement signed by grain bosses in the region with the International Longshore and Warehouse Union.

"I remember this paper from the Longview lockout," one Portland dockworker said, referring to the 2011 union battle against the EGT grain company in Longview, Washington. "It is excellent."

"We stayed out after sundown because we found people who wanted to talk about their own union or the Ebola crisis or whatever was on their mind," said Mark Downs, a retired longshoreman who was part of the team to Portland. Six people subscribed by the end of the day. Two of them bought a copy of *Teamster Rebellion* by Farrell Dobbs at half price with

the subscription. (See ad below for special book offers for subscribers.)

"I wasn't sure what to expect when you first walked up the driveway, but I'm really glad you came by," waitress Jennifer Dacus told Mike Fitzsimmons in Houston Oct. 5. Fitzsimmons is the Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of Texas. "The minimum wage for tipped employees hasn't changed in years, and our hours have been cut so the company doesn't have to provide health insurance."

"I like the *Militant* because it carries the most complete information about what's going on in the world and how other workers are going through the same experiences as the farmworkers of the San Joaquin Valley,"

Primitivo Santiago Gutiérrez told Gerardo Sánchez as he renewed his *Militant* subscription in Madera, California, Oct. 4. Gutiérrez said he was impressed by reading "how Cuba, a poor country, can send doctors to Africa, while the United States, a very developed country, won't."

"The *Militant* is the only paper where you can find out about strikes," said Richard Hargesheimer during the Nebraskans for Peace conference in Lincoln, Nebraska, Oct. 4. Hargesheimer



Militant/Ilona Gersh

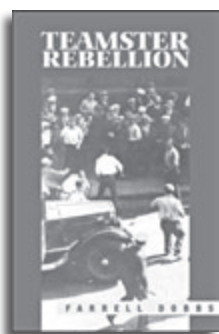
"The *Militant* helps us understand that we are not the only ones struggling," Brian Kreger, right, on strike against Al Piemonte Chevrolet in East Dundee, Illinois, told Dan Fein.



Militant/Eric Simpson

Primitivo Santiago Gutiérrez, left, talks to Gerardo Sánchez in his kitchen in Madera, California, Oct. 4. "I'm impressed how Cuba, a poor country, can send doctors to Africa," he said.

Special book offers for 'Militant' subscribers

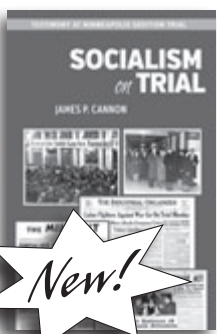


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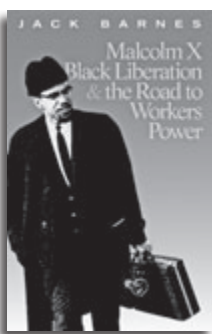
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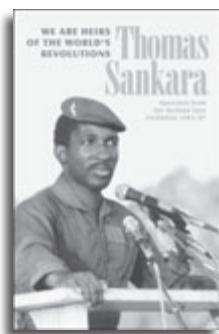
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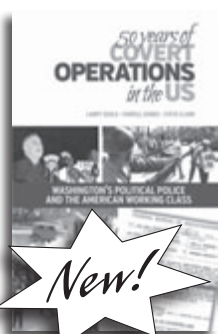
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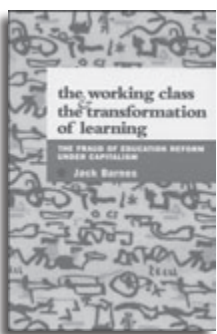
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Illinois Steelworkers

Continued from front page

ists stayed strong, won international solidarity and in the end beat back most of the bosses’ concession demands.

On Sept. 25, eight weeks into the current lockout, nine members of USW Local 7-669 traveled to the company’s corporate office in Washington, D.C., to deliver 3,200 signatures on petitions demanding Honeywell end the lockout and bring union members back to work. Standing with Local 7-669 in solidarity were about a dozen unionists from other Steelworkers locals, as well as the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, and the Washington, D.C., Central Labor Council.

“Nobody from the company came down to accept the petitions, so we left them with the security guards,” Stephen Lech, president of Local 7-669, said in a phone interview. “At the United Steelworkers Convention in August, we also got out the word to about 3,000 other union members.”

Letters of solidarity with the locked-out workers have begun to come in from around the world. “A lot of the groundwork for this was laid during the last lockout,” said Lech. “Right off the bat we knew who our allies were and who to turn to. First of all, we let French nuclear workers know that material they’d be receiving from Honeywell would be struck work. We got in contact with IndustriALL and the international council of Honeywell workers. A lot of the

messages came from those initial contacts.

“The company is still adopting an arrogant stance,” said Lech. “They’re going after basic rights like leafleting at the plant gate. We’re not interested in giving up such rights.

“The two main issues remain health care and subcontracting,” Lech continued. “They want union members to pay \$8,000 more than we currently pay in out-of-pocket medical expenses. And they want to be able to contract out another 100 jobs, which would leave only 44 workers organized by the United Steelworkers.

“We’re demanding that they staff permanent jobs with permanent workers. What they’ve been doing since the end of the previous lockout is unilaterally replacing union members who retire or quit with contractors. They claim that they have the right to do that because nobody was laid off, but that is not what we agreed to in the last contract.”

Union members are preparing for the possibility of another long fight. Local 7-669 has established a food bank and is issuing cards to local members good at local stores for purchase of groceries. The local is covering the cost of health insurance for 104 people.

“Anyone who wants to support us can visit the union’s website — usw7-669.com,” Lech said. “There they can sign the petition and make a donation either by check or via PayPal. We also invite all who support us to come to Metropolis for a march and rally at noon, Saturday, Oct. 11.”

Cuban doctors start arriving in Africa to fight Ebola



The first 165 of 461 Cuban doctors and nurses selected by their revolutionary government for the honor of combating the Ebola epidemic in West Africa arrive and unload supplies Oct. 2 in Freetown, Sierra Leone, where they will stay at least six months. Along with them were the advance teams for the next group of volunteers who will go to Liberia and Guinea-Conakry.

“Money and materials are important, but those two things alone cannot stop Ebola virus transmission,” Dr. Margaret Chan, director-general of the World Health Organization, told the press when Cuba first announced the mission. “Human resources are clearly our most important need. We need most especially compassionate doctors and nurses, who will know how to comfort patients despite the barriers of wearing PPE [personal protective equipment] and working under very demanding conditions.”

Havana’s contribution to the fight against Ebola is consistent with its internationalist foreign policy since Cuba’s 1959 socialist revolution. Cuba is putting more health workers on the ground in West Africa to combat Ebola than the combined total from all other foreign countries in the world.

The 461 health workers were chosen from more than 15,000 Cubans who volunteered. The group that went to Sierra Leone had completed a rigorous training program that began Sept. 15.

The Vice Director of Cuba’s Pedro Kouri Institute of Tropical Medicine, Angel Luis Guerra, said that “all the volunteers will go to places where there is Ebola and will offer treatment in community camps or treatment centers.”

As of Oct. 1, more than 3,431 Africans have died from the disease. Many deaths are not reported. Prevention “is the key measure” to roll back the epidemic, Jorge Pérez, director of the institute, told the Cuba Debate website.

— SETH GALINSKY

Protests to continue against killing by cop in Savannah, Ga.

Continued from front page

unfolded in Ferguson, Missouri, following the fatal shooting of Michael Brown in August. In Ferguson, millions across the country and beyond saw several days of popular protests in which demonstrators took the moral high ground in face of a massive police response and anti-working-class contempt from city officials.

“Now that we have buried my brother we can get back to the protests,” Smith’s sister, Janie Smith, told the *Militant*. She said the killing

has united the neighborhood. “People have continued to march and protest even though we have not always been able to be there,” she said.

Police released a video showing Charles Smith being arrested by three city cops while making a purchase at the U.S. Foods convenience store. He is wrestled to the floor, his pants are down and hands cuffed behind his back. He is searched in the store and again outside before being placed in the back of a police car driven by officer Jannot. Two blocks later, out of

view of the convenience store camera, cops claim that Smith, still in handcuffs, brought his arms to the front of his body, kicked out the window of the squad car and was shot while attempting to flee. The Georgia Bureau of Investigation has said a gun was found under Smith’s body.

“That story is an insult,” said Demarius Jackson, 28, a welder, as he left the funeral. “No one can watch the video and believe that lie. If they have a gun, why don’t they say what kind of gun it is. This isn’t the first

time a gun has been put on somebody by the cops.”

“It was wrong. The cops were looking to kill him,” Fortasha Jenkins, Smith’s cousin, told the *Militant* as she left the church.

The media has played up reports about Smith’s run-ins with the law.

“That’s what they always do,” commented Brenda Sears, who works as a restaurant cook. “That’s just assassination of that young man’s character. He didn’t deserve to be shot down like an animal.”

Among those who spoke at the funeral was the owner of the convenience store. Introducing himself only as John, he said, “I knew Mr. D, as Smith was known in the neighborhood, and he was a good person, respectful, and I never had any trouble from him.” Speaking to the *Militant* as he left the church, the store owner stressed that reports that he had called the cops about Smith were false.

About 100 people gathered near the scene of the shooting on Augusta Street in the west Savannah neighborhood following the funeral where an impromptu rally got started.

“Now that Mr. D has been buried they hope we will go away. But we are going to keep marching until this cop is arrested, prosecuted and put in jail,” said Alicia Blakely, one of the organizers of the protests. She announced a series of marches and meetings for the week.

Lisa Potash contributed to this article.

Party-Building Fund Week 3			
Area	Quota	Collected	%
Boston	\$3,500	\$1,200	34%
Atlanta	\$8,600	\$2,854	33%
San Francisco	\$14,000	\$3,950	28%
Omaha*	\$3,200	\$649	20%
Washington, DC	\$7,800	\$1,565	20%
Chicago*	\$10,000	\$1,700	17%
Seattle	\$7,600	\$1,075	14%
Miami	\$2,800	\$360	13%
Los Angeles	\$8,000	\$895	11%
Twin Cities	\$5,000	\$420	8%
Houston	\$3,300	\$270	8%
Brooklyn	\$10,000	\$690	7%
New York	\$10,000	\$670	7%
Philadelphia	\$4,200	\$0	0%
Other			
Total	\$98,000	\$16,298	16%
Should Be	\$100,000	\$37,500	38%
* raised goal			

Contributions start coming in for SWP Party-Building Fund drive

BY TED LEONARD

More than \$11,000 came in for the Fall SWP Party-Building Fund this week, a big step toward getting the fund drive on schedule!

John Hawkins, fund director in Chicago, said supporters of the party there raised their quota by \$1,000, and plan to expand the number of contributors by an additional 10 people.

Hawkins wrote that as of this week \$7,500 has been pledged and more than \$3,200 collected, “with less than half of the those who contributed last year spoken to so far.”

The increase from Chicago and \$300 raise from Omaha brings area quotas to the fund to \$98,000, a good addition toward meeting the \$100,000 national goal.

Janet Post, organizer of the fund in the Philadelphia area, reported that some long-time readers of the *Militant* have made bigger pledges this year in response to the rise in labor skirmishes and social struggles, and the opportunities this provides to build the party. “We do see more action being taken by workers,” John Sislo, a postal worker, told Post, pointing to a protest last week around the privatization of public schools in York, Penn.

This past week’s results are a solid step toward the \$100,000 goal. Contributions can be sent to the SWP office nearest you (see directory on page 8) or directly to the SWP National Office at 306 W. 37th St., 13th floor, New York, NY 10018.

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

EDITED BY MAGGIE TROWE

Autoworkers in Indiana push back two-tier wages

HAMMOND, Ind. — More than 700 members of United Auto Workers Local 2335 walked off the job at the Lear Corp. plant here Sept. 13 after working without a contract since Aug. 4, demanding a single pay scale for all permanent workers and a wage increase. The next day Lear agreed to the key demands and workers approved the new contract.

Wages for 200 assembly workers hired after 2009 will increase to \$21.58 by the end of the four-year agreement, the same pay as long-time employees.

“We gained a little economically, but really it was about unity,” Arthur Irving, who is in the lower wage-tier, told the *Militant*. “We were never going to get what the first tier got if things had stayed the way they were.” After two and a half years, Irving was making \$14 per hour.

“Temporary” and subcontracted workers received pay increases as well.

“The company still has some jobs contracted out. Preassembly inspection and stocking is done by temporary workers who work for CSG,” said Lear worker Trahern McGree.

UAW officials agreed to reclassify 120 of the lower-tier workers as subassembly workers, who will be moved to a nearby factory. They will be paid a top rate of \$15.25 by the end of the contract. New hires there will start at \$12 an hour.

UAW Local 2335 President Jaime Luna told *Automotive News* that the wages of another group of 170 temporary workers would rise from \$8.50 to \$11 per hour immediately.

All 300 subassembly workers will have first dibs on transferring to the higher-wage seat-assembly plant when jobs open, the UAW said.

“Unfortunately we are not in the union,” CSG worker Gavin Terrelong told the *Militant*. “But I think it was good that they went out and got rid of the two-tier set-up. It divided the workforce and weakened the union.”

Next year the UAW will begin negotiations with the Big Three — Chrysler, General Motors and Ford — where 25 percent of nearly 130,000 workers make just over half the \$28 an hour wage of workers in the first tier. The UAW conceded to the two-tier scale in 2007.

— Alyson Kennedy

San Francisco ferry captains strike to block insurance cost hike

LARKSPUR, Calif. — No ferries ran from here or Sausalito to San Francisco Sept. 26 when 16 ferry captains struck

the Golden Gate Ferry. The ferries carry some 9,000 commuters daily. The special ferry service to the Giants baseball game didn’t run either, canceling 1,400 trips.

The captains are members of the Marine Engineers Beneficial Association, which is part of the Golden Gate Bridge Labor Coalition, 13 unions that are negotiating with the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District. They have been working without a contract since July 1. Mechanics, members of the International Association of Machinists, struck for a day 10 days earlier in a spirited protest that did not affect traffic. The captains’ strike took the fight up a notch.

“Like many of my co-workers, going on strike tomorrow is the last thing we want to do,” captain Rob Barley said at a press conference announcing the strike. “However, the district, in its continuing failure to negotiate with us in good faith, has left us with little choice.”

A key issue is the attempt by the Golden Gate Bridge District to downgrade health insurance coverage and charge workers higher premiums. The district also insists on adding a “bronze plan” to health care options, which could cost a worker up to \$12,000 per year out-of-pocket.

The captains want higher pay for a new program to train deckhands to be captains, according to the labor coalition.

Teamsters, electricians, ironworkers, ticket agents and machinists joined the captains and the deckhands on the picket line, and many drivers passing by honked their horns.

“The union has been fighting for many years to keep a decent health plan,” deckhand Mike Carnduff, a member of the Inland Boatman’s Union, said on the picket line. “We had what they called a Cadillac plan, but now they are asking us to pay more. We are holding the line here because once they take something away it’s hard to get it back.”

A dozen bus drivers in Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1575 called in sick the same day, causing delays and cancellations in service across the Golden Gate Bridge. Ray Messier, the local’s president, denied there was an organized “sick-out.” No drivers crossed the picket line into the Larkspur ferry terminal, however, Messier told the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Instead they dropped off riders a short distance away to show solidarity with the captains.

— Eric Simpson



Militant/Eric Simpson

Golden Gate Ferry workers in San Francisco are fighting government attempts to jack up cost of health insurance. Above, ferry captains picket Larkspur terminal during one-day strike.

Nurses at Pennsylvania hospital fight long hours, short staffing

UPLAND, Penn. — Several hundred nurses, retirees and other union members rallied here Sept. 22 outside Crozer-Chester Hospital, during a 48-hour strike Sept. 21-23 against long hours, short staffing and equipment and supply shortages.

The nurses, organized by the Pennsylvania Association of Staff Nurses and Allied Professionals, have been working without a contract since June 8.

“We need staff and equipment: fix the equipment that’s broken,” said Don Webb, an emergency room staffer. “And auxiliary help from technicians and paramedics.” Andrew Gaffney, a union representative, said no union members had crossed the picket line.

Strikers said they work 12-hour shifts that often extend to 13 or 14 hours without a break, and that they sometimes chip in for cab fare home for patients who are released since the company no longer provides it.

The hospital hired U.S. Nursing Corporation, a strikebreaking outfit from Colorado, to take the jobs of the union members for five days, locking out the nurses until Sept. 26.

— George Chalmers

Protest demands CNN honor ruling to reinstate fired workers

NEW YORK — Forty-five members and supporters of the National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians/Communications Workers of America held a lively picket at the entrance to CNN Studios at rush hour here Sept. 26. They were demanding CNN reinstate 113 workers fired by the media giant 10 years ago in a union-busting move.

In December 2003, CNN terminated its longstanding contract with Team Video Services, a firm that had employed NABET/CWA-represented workers in Washington, D.C., and New York City. The CWA called the move a “phony reorganization scheme to get rid of unionized workers.”

The National Labor Relations Board Sept. 15 ordered CNN to return the workers to their jobs within 14 days and pay them back wages, as well as compensate nearly 200 others who continued to work for the company without the benefit of union representation. CNN has appealed the decision. Some of the unionists are no longer alive.

“I came to show solidarity with these workers,” said Sarrah Nasser, a worker at AT&T and a shop steward of CWA Local 1101. “This fight sets an example. Ten years back pay is the

biggest payment ordered by the NLRB ever.”

Carrie Biggs-Adams, a NABET staff representative from Washington, D.C., announced at the rally that 25 workers had picketed CNN’s offices there earlier in the day, and that picketing would continue in Washington every Wednesday for the duration of the fight.

— Jacob Perasso

British Columbia teachers end three-month strike

VANCOUVER, British Columbia — After their longest strike ever, British Columbia teachers voted 86 percent Sept. 18 to accept a contract approved by their negotiators. The biggest issue in the strike — class size and composition (the number of special needs students in each class) — has been in dispute for 12 years and remains unresolved. The 41,000 teachers began their strike in mid-June, ending the last school year two weeks early and delaying the start of the new one by three weeks.

In 2002 the provincial government unilaterally removed class size and composition from collective bargaining. The teachers’ union challenged the decision, but despite two court rulings in the teachers’ favor, the government has refused to accede.

The teachers will receive a wage increase of 7.25 percent over the six years of the agreement, less than the rate of inflation.

About \$400 million will be allocated for hiring more teachers. Tara Ehrcke, a past president of the Greater Victoria Teachers’ Association, told the *Vancouver Sun* this would translate into just five or 10 more teachers in her district with its 20,000 students and 1,000 teachers.

Patrick Martin, an elementary teacher from Vancouver Island, spoke to the *Militant* about “the need for special education teachers. I don’t think anything was gained on that or the main issue of class size and composition.” Reflecting the view of many teachers, Ebru Montagano, a teacher at Bayview Elementary School in Vancouver, told the *Sun* on the day of the vote, “It’s not perfect, but it’s good enough for now.”

— Joe Young and Steve Penner



Militant/John Staggs

Nurses at Crozer-Chester Hospital in Upland, Pennsylvania, held 48-hour strike to protest long hours, short staffing and supply shortages. Above, solidarity rally Sept. 22.

Stalinists whitewashed Nazis' massacre of Jews at Babi Yar

BY JOHN STUDER

Sept. 28 and 29 mark the 73rd anniversary of the cold-blooded murder over two days in 1941 of more than 33,000 Jews at Babi Yar (Granny's Ravine) on the outskirts of Kiev, Ukraine, by Nazi occupying troops and some collaborating Ukrainian police units. Over the next few years another 70,000 to 80,000 were killed and dumped in the ravine. Most were Jews, along with Romas, pro-Soviet partisans and anyone else who resisted or the Nazis thought should die.

Babi Yar was the most infamous Nazi massacre of Jews in Ukraine. In 1933, the Jewish population numbered more than 1.5 million. Most of those who survived, fled the country. Today there are around 67,000 there.

Two days before the killing started, German forces organized to put up some 2,000 posters in Russian, Ukrainian and German ordering all Jews in Kiev and the surrounding area to appear Monday morning near the train station with all documents, money and valuables.

The Nazis spread a rumor that the Jews would be put on American boats and shipped to Palestine. Instead, they were stripped naked, pushed into the ravine in waves, and shot dead. The mass slaughter took two days.

After the defeat of the fascist forces by Soviet troops, officials — in both Moscow and Kiev — refused to erect any memorial to the Holocaust massacre.

Anti-Semitism was an ideological feature not only of Nazism, but of the privileged and reactionary government bureaucracy under Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin.

"The revolutionary wave revived the finest sentiments of human solidarity," Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky wrote in 1937 about the first years of the Russian Revolution. Referring to the counterrevolution led by Joseph Stalin that was consolidated in the late 1920s, Trotsky said that the "reaction has stirred up all that is low, dark and backward. ... The bureaucracy does not even



Protest in 1966 on 25th anniversary of Babi Yar massacre demanding Moscow build monument to Jews killed there. In Soviet Union "no battle has been waged against anti-Semitism during the postwar decades," said Ivan Dzyuba at meeting. "It has often been artificially nourished."

hesitate to resort to chauvinistic tendencies, above all to anti-Semitic ones."

The Stalinist regime's anti-Semitism became more strident in the post-war decades. Jewish intellectuals, artists and others were arrested and killed as part of an "anti-cosmopolitanism" campaign. Conspiracy theories were spun to target Jews, such as the "Doctors' Plot" of 1952-53 in which Jewish doctors were accused of plotting to poison government officials.

Demands that a memorial recognizing the Jewish victims be built at the site of the Babi Yar massacre began in the 1940s. To head off continuing pressure for a memorial, Soviet authorities in 1957 ordered construction of a dam to fill in the ravine, and planned to cover it with a park and a sports stadium.

In October 1959 Viktor Nekrasov, a veteran of the Second World War and Stalin-Prize-winning author of the 1946 *In the Trenches of Stalingrad*, published a protest in *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, the main literature magazine in the Soviet Union, and called for a monument to those killed.

But authorities drove forward with the project and began filling the ravine with waste. In March 1961, the dam collapsed and a wall of sludge and debris swept through workers' neighborhoods. Officials said 150 were killed, but some reports say it could be several thousand.

Shortly after the disaster, Yevgeny Yevtushenko — a well-known poet, opponent of Stalinism and champion of the Cuban Revolution — visited the ravine and wrote "Babi Yar," which began with the words "No monument stands over Babi Yar." He gave public readings of the poem in Moscow and Kiev in August 1961. The poem was published the following month in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* and reprinted all over the world. The day after it was published, the magazine's editor was sacked by Soviet cultural officials.

Composer Dmitri Shostakovich worked with Yevtushenko to write "Babi Yar," his 13th symphony, which included the poem as well as four other works against Stalinism and anti-Semitism by Yevtushenko. Soviet officials tried to sabotage the premiere. After two performances, the composer and poet were told the work would be banned unless they agreed to change some of the lines in two of the poems, "Babi Yar" and "Fears."

For example, "I wish that men were possessed of the fear of condemning a man without proper trial" was replaced with "I see new fears arising, the fear of being insincere to the country."

In 1966 Soviet author Anatoly Kuznetsov published a book entitled *Babi Yar*. Though heavily censored by Soviet authorities it described Kuznetsov's visit to the site after the collapse of the dam: "I went there and looked in amazement at the lake of mud, swallowing the ashes, bones, stone debris gravestones."

The book has a chapter detailing the slaughter at Babi Yar by Dina Pronichev, one of a handful of survivors.

In 1966, on the 25th anniversary of

Continued on page 7

Fight to free Cuban 5 wins support at Neb. conference

BY MAGGIE TROWE

LINCOLN, Neb. — The fight to free the Cuban Five won new support Oct. 4 at the Nebraskans for Peace conference here, where more than 100 participants

discussed issues from Washington's war against Iraq and Syria to the movement to protect the environment. (See article on page 7.)

A display of prison paintings by Antonio Guerrero, one of the Five, was up in the main meeting hall.

During the lunch break, NFP President Mark Vasina called participants' attention to the paintings and introduced Jacquie Henderson, who has helped organize showings of the paintings here and in Omaha, to talk about the Five, their frame-up by the U.S. government and the international campaign for their freedom.

Three of the Five volunteered to go to Angola, Henderson pointed out. Ger-

rardo Hernández, Fernando González and René González were among some 425,000 Cuban volunteers who between 1975 and 1991 took part in an internationalist mission to help newly independent Angola repel repeated invasions by the white supremacist South African regime. "This gives us some insight into what has shaped the exemplary character of the Five and the internationalist, selfless character of revolutionary Cuba, which has sent hundreds of medical volunteers to combat Ebola in Africa today," Henderson said.

In addition to 15 watercolors painted to mark 15 years of incarceration, the exhibit included one new painting, "The Verdict of the Jury," from a collection of 16 works by Guerrero on the trial of the Five. It shows prisoners' hands applauding for the Five through bars as they return to prison following their conviction. "The painting gives us a glimpse of the esteem the Five have won among fellow inmates," said Henderson.

Dozens of people came by to look at the paintings and read the descriptions. Eleven picked up books on the case, including *The Cuban Five: Who They Are, Why They Were Framed, Why They Should be Free; Voices from Prison: The Cuban Five*; and *I Will Die the Way I've Lived*, a collection of Guerrero's prison paintings with descriptions and comments by him and others.

Several people who viewed the paintings said they would work on showing Guerrero's paintings in several towns across the state.

U.S.-Cuba Relations and the Case of the Cuban Five

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Militant/Maggie Trowe

Participants at Nebraskans for Peace conference view prison paintings by Antonio Guerrero, and learn about Cuban Five.

Who are the Cuban Five?



Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González and René González are Cuban revolutionaries who during the 1990s accepted assignments from the Cuban government to gather information on the 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 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, on the pretext that he bore responsibility for the Cuban government's 1996 shoot-down of two Brothers to the Rescue planes 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.

René González returned to Cuba in May 2013 and Fernando González on Feb. 28 this year.

Nebraskans for Peace

Continued from front page

struggles, including opposition to profit-driven environmental destruction, support for working farmers, defense of political prisoners, resistance to government attacks on immigrants, labor solidarity and fights against racist discrimination.

Nebraskans for Peace, which today counts some 1,000 households as members, was founded in 1970, during the rise of the anti-Vietnam War protests and on the heels of the Black rights movement of the 1950s and '60s. During its first years, the group was part of organizing tractorcades of farmers to show support for civil rights actions by African-Americans in Omaha. And they were part of fights to free political prisoners, including Black Panthers Ed Poindexter and Mondo we Langa, who were framed up for killing an Omaha police officer in 1970; and Leonard Peltier, a leader of the American Indian Movement framed up for the killing of FBI agents at the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota in 1973. Supporters of the three prisoners are still fighting for their release.

The event was held at the Center for People in Need, where volunteers each month distribute groceries to 1,000 families, many of them immigrants.

In a workshop titled, "Kids Fleeing Violence in Central America and Immigration Reform," participants discussed how to respond to Gov. Dave Heineman's attack on Central American immigrants, many of them children who entered the U.S. and are staying with family or sponsors while they await immigration hearings.

Heineman demanded federal officials reveal "the names of the unaccompanied illegal children who are being sent to Nebraska and the names of their sponsors."

Members of Nebraskans for Peace organized a Climate March here Sept. 21, to coincide with marches in New York, San Francisco and other cities. "Seventy people came out," Brittany Crawford, a NFP staff member, told the *Militant*.

The conference opened with a panel on "Water and Peace: Is Peace Possible in an Era of Diminishing Water Supplies?" Panelists included Dr. Ann Bleed, former state hydrologist; Clint Rowe, professor of Climate Science at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln; Paul Olson, Nebraskans for Peace president emeritus; and State Sen. Ken Haar.

Bleed and Rowe talked about rising temperatures and falling water tables in Nebraska as a result of high levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide. Haar presented legislative proposals aimed at limiting carbon emissions and other environmental protection measures, and explained how increased use of nuclear power could help reduce carbon pollution. Olson said diminishing water supplies in parts of the world could lead to wars over scarce resources. He also pointed out that grain-based ethanol not only cuts into food production, but also takes more energy to produce than it provides.

The conference, an annual event for some four decades, convened a week after Willie Nelson and Neil Young sang and raised money at a protest against the Keystone XL pipeline in Neligh, and as falling prices of corn



Militant/Maggie Trowe

Participants at Nebraskans for Peace conference held in Lincoln, Nebraska, Oct. 4.

and soybeans threaten economic hardship for working farmers across the Midwest.

Squeeze on small farmers

"As a result of speculation driving up land prices and the ongoing rise in the cost of production, close to 40,000 farmers have lost their farms nationally in the last five years," said Kathie Starkweather, director of the Farm and Community Program of the Center for Rural Affairs, who chaired a workshop titled "Building a Regional Food System." She advocated measures to help younger people start farming and encourage local farmers markets.

A workshop on "Economic Inequality and the Case for Raising the Minimum Wage," led by Hank Van den Berg, University of Nebraska-Lincoln economics professor, spurred discussion on fights by workers at fast-food restaurants, retail chains and airports for unions and higher wages. The Ne-

braskans for Better Wages coalition, as well as unions and other groups in the state organized the collection of more than 130,000 signatures this summer to put a \$9 per hour minimum wage initiative on the ballot in November.

During the lunch break, Anne Else from Omaha encouraged those present to take part in the statewide speaking tour this month of Mark Braverman, author of *Fatal Embrace: Christians, Jews, and the Search for Peace in the Holy Land*. NFP is a co-sponsor of the tour. A number of people at the conference had been part of protests in Iowa and Nebraska against the recent Israeli assault on Gaza.

Also during the lunch break NFP President Mark Vasina pointed to the exhibit of prison paintings by Antonio Guerrero, one of the Cuban Five. Guerrero's art was displayed in the main meeting room. A brief presentation spurred interest in the international campaign for their freedom. (See article on page 6.)

"My favorite was the workshop on race facilitated by A'Jamal Byndon," said Candella Foley-Fincham, who came to the conference from Council Bluffs, Iowa. "Lots of good information there, and lots of wisdom from the participants also." In the workshop titled "Table Talk on Race and Violence in Nebraska," several people from smaller towns, including Scottsbluff and Norfolk, talked about their experiences in how to counter racist remarks in communities with few African-Americans. Others described participating in the ongoing protests in Ferguson, Missouri, against the Aug. 9 killing of Michael Brown by police officer Darren Wilson.

Debates were joined in a number of workshops, including on the role of the Russian government in a discussion on "Ukraine and Russia" and around questions of strategy in support of the Palestinian struggle in a workshop titled "The Settlements and Other Roots of the Israeli/Palestinian Conflict."

"I was pleased with the panel and workshops," said Vasina in a telephone interview. "The spirit was high and there was an open atmosphere in the workshops, even when people disagreed."

Nebraskans for Peace publishes a monthly newsletter, *Nebraska Report*, available at nebraskansforpeace.org.

Babi Yar: Nazi massacre of Jews in WWII

Continued from page 6

Babi Yar, thousands of people — from Kiev and throughout the Soviet Union — came to the ravine. A spontaneous rally took place that included three speakers, Pronichev, Nekrasov and Ivan Dzyuba, a Marxist who wrote *Internationalism vs. Russification*. Dzyuba's book defended Soviet policy under the leadership of V. I. Lenin to back the fight to free Ukrainians and other oppressed people from centuries of oppression under the Russian empire and support their

cultural development. But after Lenin's death, Stalin revived Russian domination, including resettlement of ethnic Russians in Ukraine, known as Russification.

Dzyuba's speech was clandestinely published as samizdat and circulated in the Soviet Union and abroad.

"Babi Yar is a tragedy of the whole of mankind, but it happened on Ukrainian soil," Dzyuba said. "And therefore a Ukrainian must not forget it any more than a Jew."

"But what is strange is that no battle has been waged against [anti-Semitism] during the postwar decades," he said, "and what is even stranger, it has often been artificially nourished."

"The Jews have a right to be Jews and the Ukrainians have a right to be Ukrainians in the full and profound, not only the formal, meaning of the word," he said.

Under pressure, Stalinist officials eventually put up a monument to Babi Yar in 1976, but it contained no mention that any of those killed were Jews.

A monument to the Holocaust victims at Babi Yar was finally erected after the fall of the Soviet Union and the establishment of Ukraine as a sovereign nation in 1991, along with memorials to Jewish victims in World War II in cities across the country.

In November 2013 popular protest began in Ukraine that led to the overthrow of pro-Moscow President Viktor Yanukovich in February 2014. The government of Vladimir Putin in Russia sought to paint the protesters as rightists and anti-Semites.

Asked if there was anti-Semitism at the "Maidan" protests, one of a number of Jewish fighters leading self-defense units there told the Israeli news website Hadashot, "There was not even a hint of such attitudes."

"There is little doubt that the spirit of freedom and unity is concentrated on Maidan in abundance," he said.

The Jewish Question: A Marxist Interpretation

by Abram Leon

Traces historical rationalizations of anti-Semitism to the fact that, in the centuries preceding the domination of industrial capitalism, Jews emerged as a "people-class" of merchants, moneylenders and traders. Leon explains why the propertied rulers incite renewed Jew-hatred in the epoch of capitalism's decline. **\$22**

On the Jewish Question

by Leon Trotsky

"Never was it so clear as it is today that the salvation of the Jewish people is bound up inseparably with the overthrow of the capitalist system" — Trotsky, 1940. **\$6**

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Cuban medical volunteers: ‘We stay as long as needed’

Below is an excerpt from Capitalism and the Transformation of Africa by Mary-Alice Waters and Martín Koppel. Reporting from Equatorial Guinea in Central Africa, the authors focus on the social transformations unfolding as revenues from offshore oil extraction are used to build infrastructure on which rising productivity, industry and progress depend. Pulled into the world market as never before, both a capitalist class and a working class are being born. This piece highlights the work of volunteer Cuban medical brigades there as the living example of Cuba's socialist revolution. Copyright © 2009 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY MARTIN KOPPEL
AND MARY-ALICE WATERS

At the end of our two-week tour, [Dr. Juan Carlos] Méndez and [Dr. Tebelio] Concepción took time from their busy work schedules with the medical brigades posted throughout the country and at the school in Bata to tell us a little more about the work Cuban volunteers are carrying out.

The medical cooperation between the Cuban and Guinean governments, they emphasized, aims to train Equatorial Guinean doctors and nurses who will work to transform public health



Militant/Martín Koppel

Guinean medical students with Cuban medical brigade at hospital in Equatorial Guinea, 2008. “That tens of thousands of Cuban medical personnel are today providing health care in the most hard-to-reach parts of countries the world over is one of the most demonstrative expressions of the socialist character of the revolution that Cuban workers and farmers carried out.”

care in their country. This is a principle guiding all Cuba's medical missions in every country where they are invited to work, they noted.

To accomplish this goal, Méndez said, “we are committed to stay as long as necessary.”

Such medical collaboration is an expression of the proletarian internationalist course that has marked Cuba's socialist revolution for half a century. ...

That tens of thousands of Cuban medical personnel are today providing health care in the most hard-to-reach parts of countries the world over is one of the most demonstrative expressions of the socialist character of the revolution that Cuban workers and farmers carried out, overturning capitalist property relations and transforming the consciousness of millions. No other country in the world is capable of anything remotely comparable, nor does any other government want to do so.

As Cuban revolutionary leader Ernesto Che Guevara, himself a physician, explained and demonstrated by his own example, “To be a revolutionary doctor, you must first make a revolution.” In Cuba not only has health care — an expensive commodity under capitalism — become free and available to all as a basic right, but those who become medical workers are educated in

that spirit.

As of 2008, more than 38,000 Cuban doctors, dentists, nurses, and medical technicians are working as volunteers in 73 countries, according to Cuba's Ministry of Health. That includes 1,500 medical personnel in 35 African countries. Cuban personnel are responsible for medical schools not only in Equatorial Guinea but in Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, and Eritrea. ...

Conquests of Cuban Revolution

In a discussion with more than thirty Cuban medical brigade members in Bata one evening, several talked about the deep impact the experience of working in Equatorial Guinea has had on them.

Some had previously served in Angola, Iraq, Western Sahara, Ethiopia, or other countries — one was on her fourth internationalist assignment. For most of them, however, it was their first time living and working outside Cuba. While they vary widely in age and work experience, most are in their forties or early fifties.

“Here we discovered a reality we ourselves had never encountered in Cuba,” said Dr. Laura Cobo. “We've seen preventable diseases we had previously only read about in books. We've seen children dying of malaria or dying of

hunger.” Some of the doctors noted that many diseases common in Equatorial Guinea had ravaged working people in Cuba as well, before the socialist revolution triumphed in the early 1960s and began transforming social relations. Even the oldest of the brigade members, however, are generally too young to have experienced those capitalist conditions firsthand.

In Equatorial Guinea, Cobo said, Cuban medical personnel often treat patients for polio. “In our country it's been years since we've seen a case of polio. In Cuba children receive thirteen vaccinations in their first year.”

One of the hardest experiences here, several doctors told us, was seeing children with malaria or other curable illnesses who were brought to the hospital too late to be successfully treated and died. At the same time, Dr. William Pérez added, “there are cases of children in critical condition who, despite our limited resources, we are able to restore to health. That gives us tremendous satisfaction.”

Dr. Rubén Romero told us he has been teaching in Bata two years. “This medical school is a big step forward. Now the third class of students is graduating,” he said. “We can begin to see the fruits of our labor.”

Cobo said the hardest thing she's had to get used to is that “health care here is a commodity.” In Cuba high quality medical care is free for everyone. But here “patients have to pay for everything, from medicine to emergency operations. If they can't pay we're not supposed to treat them.”

Some doctors told us they find this so difficult to carry out that they not infrequently forget to tell patients they have to pay.

“This experience prepares us to work better on behalf of the Cuban Revolution,” Cobo said. “When we return home, we'll be able to use these experiences — despite all the material shortages we face in Cuba — to explain the gains of the revolution,” to explain what a socialist revolution means.

The conditions the Cuban doctors describe are the reality millions confront in Africa and other parts of the semi-colonial world. Most satisfying of all, they say, is the opportunity to be part of changing this reality.

October

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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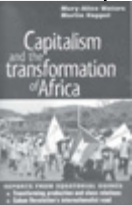
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Hong Kong protesters demand political rights

BY JOHN STUDER

Tens of thousands of students, trade unionists and other supporters of political rights have taken to the streets in Hong Kong for more than a week, camping out 24-hours a day outside government offices and in business districts to demand the right to elect government officials and the resignation of Leung Chun-ying, chief executive of the autonomous Chinese province.

Students began boycotting classes after the Chinese National People's Congress in Beijing voted Aug. 31 to impose undemocratic conditions on the implementation of universal suffrage in Hong Kong set to begin in 2017. The People's Congress decided that only three candidates — handpicked by a 1,200 member government-appointed elections committee — would be able to run for chief executive.

At a rally of striking students Sept. 26, a student leader called on participants to march to Hong Kong's government complex. Hundreds took part, and, as word of the action spread, hundreds more joined in. By the next morning thousands had set up encampments on the street.

Three organizations have led the campaign: the Hong Kong Federation of Students; a high-school age group called Scholarism, which led protests in 2012 that pushed back a Beijing-imposed curriculum; and a group calling itself Occupy Central with Love and Peace.

By the next day, tens of thousands were in the streets.

On Sept. 28 the regime's police attacked demonstrators with tear gas and pepper spray. Protesters opened up thousands of umbrellas to shield themselves, after which the protests became known as the "umbrella revolution."

Thousands more joined the encampments in response to the attack. On Oct. 1 the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions urged its affiliates to strike in support of the mobilization for political rights. Union leaders estimated some 10,000 workers took part in strike actions to denounce the cop attack, including the Professional Teach-

ers' Union.

On Beijing's orders, Hong Kong authorities backed off, adopting a "wait-them-out" approach. Leung released a video statement refusing to resign, saying, "I have to continue my work on universal suffrage."

Beijing fears the demonstrations for greater political rights could inspire struggles of working people and oppressed nationalities on the mainland. Chinese state television has branded protesters as under the influence of U.S. agents.

On Oct. 3, the day after the Chinese government's *People's Daily* warned that Hong Kong will "fall into chaos" if the demonstrations continue, protesters were attacked by thugs in the Mong Kok neighborhood. Many of the attackers have ties to the Triad gangs, notorious for murder, extortion and drug dealing. The Triads have a political history, including as informers and enforcers for the Japanese occupation in World War II.

Some shopkeepers and local residents, frustrated by difficulties getting to work and other disruptions, cheered the attackers on. Others intervened on the side of demonstrators.

Negotiations between protest leaders and Leung's deputy Carrie Lam opened Oct. 6. As of Oct. 7 talks were still limited to discussing what to talk about.

Since the talks began, the protests have ebbed and many participants have



AP/Mitsuru Tamura

Protesters demanding right to elect candidates of their own choosing without interference from Beijing continue sit-in Oct. 6 in Hong Kong. China fears spread of protests to mainland.

returned to classes or work.

Hong Kong had been under foreign domination since 1842, when London seized it from the Qing Dynasty in the First Opium War. The British government appointed every governor of the crown colony from then until 1997, when control was ceded to Beijing. Under Chinese authority, the chief executive post has been appointed by a local committee loyal to Beijing.

'One country, two systems'

The new setup, called "one country, two systems," has meant that local capitalists could maintain their wealth, assets and privileges, while working people retain some political rights they carved out in struggle against British rule.

Part of the handover deal between

London and Beijing was that Hong Kong citizens would gain universal suffrage in 2017 — which the Chinese government is moving to gut of any content.

Hong Kong's capitalist families — concentrated in banking, real estate and retail trade — have grown close to Beijing and increased their wealth since 1997. Hong Kong's 10 richest men control much of the city's real estate, with a combined fortune of some \$130 billion.

Over the same period, tens of thousands of workers have lost jobs as 80 percent of the city's manufacturing has closed in face of competition from mainland China, where wages are lower. Meanwhile, Hong Kong wages have stagnated, while the cost of housing, food and basic necessities have soared.

Low on arms, Kurds battle Islamic State in Syria

Continued from front page

ality in Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria — carved out an autonomous region in northern Iraq following the 2003 U.S. invasion there. The capitalist rulers of these countries, as well those of Washington and its imperialist allies, have sought to prevent the Kurdish people from gaining such ground in Syria, where Kurds wrested de facto control over their lands in the course of the civil war and struggle against the Bashar al-Assad dictatorship.

"Today one may be seen as less dangerous than the other," Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesman Tanju Bilgic told the press, referring to Kurdish forces and Islamic State. "But at the end of the day, both are terrorists."

A statement issued by the Committees for the Protection of the Kurdish People (YPG) in Syria vowed "never-ending" resistance to the Islamic State's attacks. "Our call to all the young men and women of Kurdistan ... is to come to be part of this resistance," reported Reuters Oct. 3.

"Today it has been 23 days that we have fought Islamic State on our own," Asya Abdullah, co-chairwoman of the Syrian Kurdish Democratic Union Party, told the press Oct. 7. "And we are fighting their tanks with light weapons."

Ankara has blocked Kurds from passing through its borders to aid their compatriots in Kobani.

Kurds have taken to the streets in Turkey to demand Erdogan allow Kurds to pass through its borders. Turkish authorities have opened fire on protesters, killing at least 12, and imposed curfews in Kurdish areas.

Despite Ankara's attempt to prevent

it, "a huge number of fighters have joined from Turkey to protect Kobani," Ismet Sheikh Hasan, a leader of the Kurdish fighters in Kobani, told the *Wall Street Journal*. "But they are mostly civilians and inexperienced, and we are training them now."

"My son is over there. He crossed through a minefield to get there," Remzi Savas, 53, told Reuters from across the border in Turkey. "He is just 14. There are many children fighting for the YPG. We can't hold them back. They think they'll lose everything if Kobani falls."

At the same time, about 180,000 Kurds have recently fled Syria for Turkey as fighting intensified around Kobani, adding to some 850,000 Syrian refugees in Turkish refugee camps.

Washington-led air war

Washington has launched an air war in both Iraq and Syria, coupled with increasing use of military advisers and special operations forces in Iraq. As of Oct. 3, there had been 250 airstrikes in Iraq and 80 in Syria, according to the U.S. Central Command.

Kurdish militias have waged the most effective resistance to Islamic State in both Iraq and Syria. In Iraq, unlike Syria, they have received some limited arms and training from Washington.

In Iraq, Kurdish fighters have pushed back Islamic State forces from the town of Rabia, near the Syrian border, and Zummar, near the Mosul Dam.

Meanwhile, Iraq's Anbar province, a crucial buffer zone between Islamic State-conquered territory in northern Iraq and the capital Baghdad, is being threatened by Islamic State forces.

Iraq's armed forces are dispirited and

often ineffective. "We are continuously losing," Fali Al Essawi, deputy head of the Anbar provincial council, told the *Journal* Oct. 7.

Washington sent Apache helicopters to Fallujah in Anbar Oct. 5.

With the recent dispatch of 500 troops to Iraq, there are now some 1,600 U.S. troops in the war zone there. In neighboring Kuwait, Washington maintains a force of 10,500 soldiers. At the end of September the Pentagon activated a new quick-reaction force of 2,300 U.S. Marines for the Middle East.

"You are seeing the beginning of a sustained campaign," Army Lt. Gen. William Mayville, Joint Chief of Staff's director of operations, told reporters at a Pentagon news conference Sept. 23. "I would think of it in terms of years."

Among those joining Washington in airstrikes in Iraq are the imperialist powers of the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, Denmark, Australia and Canada.

Inching closer to joining the coalition, the Turkish parliament voted Oct. 2 to authorize military action in Syria and Iraq, which could allow Washington to use its air base at Incirlik in southern Turkey for launching airstrikes.

Correction

The article "Australian Gov't Assaults Rights, Joins US War in Iraq" in the Oct. 13 issue incorrectly states that Omarjan Azari and Mohammed Baryalei were charged with conspiring to carry out the beheading of a random person in Sydney. Azari has been arrested and charged, but not Baryalei, who is not in Australia.

—**MILITANT
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Sat., Oct. 18, 6 p.m. dinner and program.
Dinner, \$10; program, \$5. 143 Kennedy St.
NW Tel.: (202) 536-5080.

—**CALENDAR**—

TEXAS
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**15th Annual March to Abolish the Death
Penalty.** Sat. Oct. 25, 3 p.m. Little Tranquil-
ity Park, downtown. Tel.: (713) 503-2633.