

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Building the communist movement today

— PAGE 6

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Widows launch coalfield black lung benefits walk

Urge support from working people along way to Washington

BY FRANK FORRESTAL
AND TONY LANE

CHARLESTON, West Virginia—More than 60 people gathered here March 15 to launch Linda Chapman and Phyllis Tipton on a month-long “widows’ walk” to Washington, demanding the federal government provide full benefits to miners who contract black lung disease, as well as to their spouses.

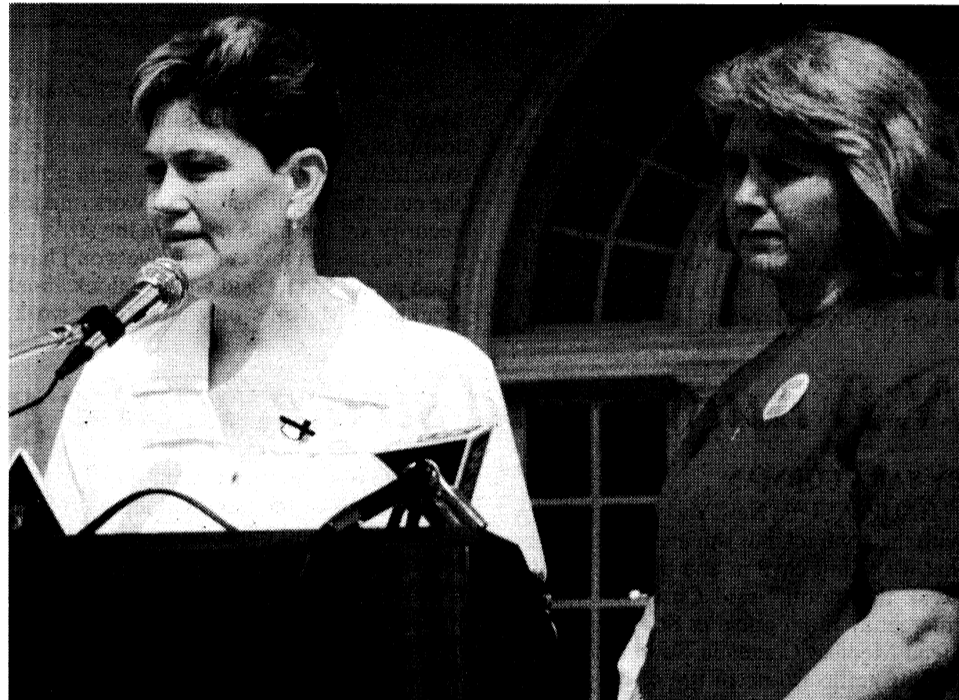
Their 400-mile-long walk will take them north through the mountains of West Virginia to Uniontown, Pennsylvania, and then on to Washington for a rally on April 15. The action is backed by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), National Black Lung Association (NBLA), and the Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition.

Along the way supporters of the fight are organizing press conferences, meetings, and other events to explain the devastating attack on the black lung benefit program and bring news of the struggle in the coalfields to force the government and the coal bosses to live up to their pledge to coal miners and their families.

A rally is scheduled for April 1, Mitchell’s Day, in Uniontown. The day is a holiday for all members of the UMWA, traditionally used to hold rallies and meetings to defend coal miners and their union. For example, the UMWA organized a meeting of nearly 2,000 in Uniontown in 1998 to defend black lung and health and pension benefits for miners.

The kickoff for the walk to Washington was held in front of the UMWA District 17 headquarters here. Among those speaking in support of the effort were current District 17 president Joe Carter and former president Bob Phalen, the state AFL-CIO president and other union officials, representatives from the Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition, leaders and activists from

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Linda Chapman (speaking) and Phyllis Tipton at rally to launch widows’ walk

Militant/Tony Lane

U.S. press blackout at Guantánamo pierced, brutal treatment exposed

BY PATRICK O’NEILL

The 300 prisoners from more than 30 countries held by the U.S. military at its illegally occupied naval base in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, have continued to protest against the brutal conditions of their detention. A hunger strike, sparked in late February by the forcible stripping of an inmate’s turban, has continued. The men have also called out to reporters in attempts to break the wall of

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Palestinians’ intransigence deepens crisis of Israeli regime

BY PATRICK O’NEILL

Displaying a growing sense of confidence in the face of a virtual military occupation of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, Palestinians have intensified their resistance to the Israeli war machine, deepening the crisis of the regime in Tel Aviv.

Stepped-up Palestinian military attacks on Israeli outposts, soldiers, tanks, and other targets are leading to a higher number of casualties among the occupation forces.

Reporters for the big-business press have had to admit that, among Palestinians, they have found “full support for attacks, not a truce” during the recent Israeli military deployment across Palestinian-held areas, according to a *New York Times* article.

As the Israeli forces began a mid-March pullback to the fringes of Ramallah and other towns subjected to a large-scale incursion over the previous three days, a 22-year-old Palestinian man told journalists the attack “boosted the morale of our people.”

Three days earlier Palestinian fighters destroyed a Merkava tank, a mainstay of the Israeli armored land forces, the second blown up over the past month. As the tank rolled down a road in the Gaza Strip, Palestinian forces detonated a 200-pound bomb that blew a hole in the bottom of the 60-ton vehicle, blowing the engine out of the top of the tank and killing the three soldiers inside. The tank was once a symbol of Israeli

military invincibility.

In response, Israeli officers announced that for some missions they would replace the tank with armored personnel carriers, which have more armor on the underside to protect them from similar blasts.

In February Palestinian fighters intro-

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In Omaha, fired socialist worker organizes fight for workers’ rights with meat packers

BY NANCY COLE

DES MOINES, Iowa—Michael Italie’s day-and-a-half tour in Nebraska and Iowa March 13–14 began with a house meeting in Omaha, Nebraska, attended by eight workers from ConAgra’s Northern States Beef slaughterhouse. A union organizing campaign is in full swing at the plant. The meeting began at 9:00 p.m. after the conclusion of a ConAgra workers committee meeting.

Despite the lateness of the event, workers stayed for more than an hour to exchange experiences with Italie and to present him with a petition signed by 28 workers at their plant and at Nebraska Beef. The petition protests Goodwill Industries’ firing of Italie last October from his job as a sewing machine operator. Italie was the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Miami at



Hundreds of people rally in Miami March 12 to protest cop killings of Black people

Militant/Eric Simpson

Hundreds in Miami rally against cop killings, harassment

BY REBECCA ARENSON

MIAMI—“Keep the pressure on!” chanted hundreds of people assembled in downtown Miami March 12 in the latest of a series of protests to demand justice for Eddie Macklin, Alphaeus Dailey, and other Blacks killed or harassed by the cops in recent years.

Dailey was in a wheelchair when police shot him in the back. His uncle addressed the crowd. He asked how many people had family members killed by the police. More than a dozen hands shot up in the air. “We can’t stop protesting until they listen to us!” he said. “When the police murder someone they need to be put in jail!”

Dailey’s brother, Tracelyn Thomas, told the *Militant*, “They might as well go back and hang us on trees. All they change is the people. It’s the same system. Things need to change and nobody else is going to do it for us.”

The rally was sponsored by Brothers of the Same Mind, the NAACP, American Civil Liberties Union, the Justice Now coalition to stop police brutality, members of the Black Firemen’s Association, several radio stations, and family members of those killed

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Strikers at Lockheed hold rally in Georgia

BY NED MEASEL

MARIETTA, Georgia—Several hundred strikers and their supporters rallied outside the gate to the Lockheed Martin plant here March 15 on the fourth day of their walk-out against the Pentagon contractor.

The 2,700 members of International Association of Machinists (IAM) Local 709 rejected two company contract proposals and voted overwhelmingly to go on strike to stop Lockheed Martin's continued outsourcing of work and demands to increase health coverage premiums. The strikers are also fighting to win better retirement benefits.

Another 100 workers are on strike against the Lockheed Martin sub assembly plant in Meridian, Mississippi. They are members of IAM Local 2386, which coordinates bargaining with the Marietta local. In a phone interview Local 2386 president Joyce Williams said that although the contract was approved at the Mississippi plant, they set up picket lines and only seven nonunion employees are working at the plant. Williams said that UPS drivers are honoring the line.

Among the unions represented at the March 15 rally here were the Teamsters, Service Employees International Union, United Auto Workers, and Communication Workers of America. Representatives of the Atlanta Labor Council, the Georgia State AFL-CIO and the AFL-CIO Industrial Union Department also spoke. Greetings were also presented from the NAACP Young Adult Council. A few local politicians and public office holders were also introduced.

Last year Lockheed Martin received a \$200 billion contract from the U.S. government to build the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter plane, the largest armaments contract in history. The company builds the F-22 Raptor fighter plane and the C-130J Hercules transport plane at the plant here.

In interviews at the rally and on the picket line strikers described a rigged pension system that denies full benefits to many workers. One 55-year-old worker said that even though he has been working for the company for 17 years, because of time deducted for layoffs he will have to have work another 11 years before he can receive a full pension. Workers also point out that there is no cost-of-living allowance to the pen-

sion and no cap on the insurance premiums.

Violet Brown explained that many workers are also opposed to a "pay for knowledge" clause the company is seeking in the new contract. She said this would simply give the company the "right to discriminate. There's no language to define 'knowledge.' They want to use it to do away with seniority and combine jobs. It's like signing up to be eliminated."

Another demand of Lockheed Martin is that workers be prohibited from walking on picket lines with other unions. Striker Belinda Cook said the company "can control what you do on the job but they don't have the right to control the union." Pat Cook added, "If I'm not at work I should have the right to go where I want."

Many workers are quick to point out the problem of the steeply tiered wages structure that the company imposed in the early 1980s. Workers who were hired in 1984 still remember their starting wage was \$6.69 an hour, less than half of what other union members doing the same job were earning. Today, although some workers earn more than \$20 an hour, the starting wage remains between \$8 and \$9 with gradual increases to top pay over 11 years.

N.Y. nurses end strike, make gains in contract

BY SARA LOBMAN

HAUPPAUGE, New York—"I'm happy with the contract, but I'm even more happy that we didn't cave in and that they didn't break the union," said Chris Carallo, an emergency room nurse at St. Catherine of Siena Medical Center in Smithtown, New York. Carallo is one of the 474 registered nurses at the hospital who had been on strike since November. The Long Island nurses voted 302-31 on March 9 to approve a contract, ending a 111-day strike.

Less than 30 nurses crossed the picket line during the course of the strike. "Fifty-four voted against the strike, but only half that went in," Cavallo said. "And many of those who were initially against the strike became the most militant fighters. They stopped looking at just their department and saw

German metal workers to strike over pay



The IG Metall union, Germany's largest industrial trade union, announced plans to stage "warning strikes" at the end of March to press its demand for a 6.5 percent wage increase. The union rejected the bosses' offer of 2 percent.

"We lost the cost-of-living allowance about six years ago and since then we've lost about \$6 an hour," said Sid Parker, a structural worker on the F-22, adding that the company's outsourcing of work and job security are the main issues in the strike.

"If we accept this contract we won't have a job pretty soon," said Greg Blalock about Lockheed Martin's outsourcing of work.

"We've been losing on every contract. There have been take-aways on the last three. It's time to take a stand. We're finally seeing the unity to say 'enough is enough.' If we go down we'll go down fighting."

Ned Measel is a textile worker. José Aravena, also a textile worker, contributed to this article.

what we were all up against."

Hundreds of the nurses along with family members and other supporters enthusiastically celebrated the successful conclusion of the strike before returning to work, at a spirited party and dance at the Windham Watch Hotel here on March 15. Many of the nurses wore the red sweatshirts they had made their trademark on the picket lines and other strike activities.

"We are one incredible bargaining unit," Barbara Crane, head of the New York State Nurses Association unit at St. Catherine, told the gathering to loud applause.

The main demands of the nurses in the strike were an end to mandatory overtime and improved nurse-to-patient ratios. Instead of hiring additional staff, the hospital often forced nurses to work double shifts to fill anticipated gaps in the schedule. The new contract only allows the hospital to force nurses to work overtime in emergencies and includes a financial disincentive over and above time-and-a-half when overtime is required. A unit-by-unit schedule of staffing guidelines is still to be negotiated.

A number of the nurses pointed out that concern for patient care was at the heart of their demands. "We didn't deserve to be treated the way we were," Holly Meduri, a delivery room nurse, noted, "but neither do our patients." Meduri explained that nurses at the hospital had in the past won input into staffing ratios but that this, along with thousands of dollars in accrued personal and vacation time, overtime incentives, and pensions, were lost when the current owners bought the hospital two years ago.

Under the three-year contract, base salaries will increase 5 percent each year. Beginning in January 2003, nurses who retire between the ages of 60 and 65 and who have at least 20 years of service, will receive \$2,500 per year to purchase health insurance until they are eligible for Medicare. Previously, retired nurses received no health insurance.

Several nurses noted that the hospital can still try to get around some of the provisions on overtime and staffing. "My biggest fear is that we'll go back and nothing will have changed," Laura Crespolini said. "We'll have to work to make them stick to the contract," another nurse, who asked that her name not be used, added.

In addition to daily picketing at the hospital, the nurses organized many special events, including a candlelight vigil, rallies, protests at the corporate offices of Catholic Health of Long Island, and a parade on February 16 of 1,000 people through downtown Smithtown to the hospital.

The nurses also held almost weekly union meetings to discuss the strike. Many came to observe the negotiating sessions between the company and the union. Daily strike bulletins were e-mailed out to each nurse by Barbara Crane.

Nurse after nurse pointed to the confidence they had gained through the strike. "I'm very proud to have been a part of this," commented Marilyn Alter.

Sara Lobman is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 342-50 in Farmingdale, New York.

THE MILITANT

Defend Palestinian struggle for land

The U.S.-backed military aggression of Tel Aviv has been unable to crush the Palestinian resistance. The growing confidence of the Palestinian people to fight Israeli brutality has sharpened the crisis of the Israeli regime. Read the 'Militant' to get a working-class view of the Palestinian struggle for self-determination.



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Editor: GREG MCCARTAN

Business Manager: JACK WILLEY

Editorial Staff: Róger Calero, Martín Koppel, Jack Willey, Brian Williams, and Maurice Williams.

Young Socialists column editor: ROMINA GREEN

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Fidel Castro speaks in defense of 'the five Cuban heroes imprisoned by the empire'

The following speech was given by Cuban president Fidel Castro at a ceremony to decorate the mothers and wives of the five Heroes of the Republic of Cuba imprisoned in the United States.

In a trial held in Florida last year, the five were each convicted on the frame-up charge of conspiring to "act as an unregistered foreign agent." Three were found guilty of conspiracy to "commit espionage" and one of conspiracy to "commit murder," under claims he supplied the Cuban government with information about the Brothers to the Rescue flights. Four pilots of the rightist outfit were killed when their planes were shot down by the Cuban air force after they entered Cuban airspace in 1996.

The five—Gerardo Hernández, René González, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, and Fernando González—received sentences ranging from 15 years to life. They have been divided up and sent to separate prisons across the United States (see addresses below).

In their trials each of the Cubans explained they were in the United States to collect information on the activities of counterrevolutionary anti-Cuban groups operating in Florida in order to defend their country against attacks and aggression from U.S. soil.

The ceremony that Castro addressed was held at the Karl Marx Theater on March 8. The Cuban government has proclaimed 2002 the Year of the Heroes Imprisoned by the U.S. Empire. The translation of Castro's talk was provided by the Cuban Council of State. Footnotes and subheadings are by the *Militant*.

❖

BY FIDEL CASTRO

Compatriots: Throughout history we have paid tribute to legendary heroes and heroines, those glorious examples of bravery, unselfishness and the spirit of sacrifice that always inspire whole generations in their fight for a better, more humane and fair world. There have, however, been very few times when we have been able to live alongside those men and women. The five Heroes of the Republic of Cuba imprisoned in the empire and their admirable mothers and wives—our contemporaries and the pride of our country—have deeply touched the hearts of their people and, we can say without exception, every one of our sons and daughters.

Here today on International Women's Day to receive the Mariana Grajales and Ana Betancourt Orders in a moving and solemn ceremony that will surely never fade from our memories are Carmen, Magali, Irma, and Mirta; and Adriana, Rosa Aurora, Olga and Elizabeth: the mothers and wives of Gerardo, Fernando, René, Antonio, and Ramón.

Absolutely innocent of the charges—after 16 months of isolation and seven months of a rigged trial where the lies, hypocrisy, and cynicism of the accusers were shattered—three have been sentenced to life



Cuban president Fidel Castro speaking at special session of Cuba's National Assembly December 29 where the five Cuban revolutionaries imprisoned in the United States were named "Heroes of the Republic of Cuba."

imprisonment and two to long stretches in jail. In yet another manifestation of rage and hate, they continue to receive heartless and brutal treatment. Thinking that their morale and strength can be destroyed, the courts have put them in five top-security prisons, with a minimum of 1,400 kilometers [870 miles] between each jail, after a hazardous and cruel journey! They were always held in punishment cells, and then thrown into the general population of prisons where control, impartiality, and moral leadership are conspicuous by their absence.

U.S. arrogance

This is a harsh test of our heroes' unshakable strength and valor. And this is being done to men who, seeking information about terrorism, were defending their people to the death. Allying the same objective, the United States has launched all its forces to invade nations, using its most sophisticated and destructive weapons, declaring a long, indefinite and imprecise world war against terrorism.

With the height of superiority and arrogance, it has threatened more than 80 countries and taken the liberty to indicate which are, or are not, terrorists. It also has the gall to mention Cuba among those terrorist nations, when in reality thousands of Cubans have died as a result of terrorism from the United States, and not one single U.S. citizen has suffered the slightest scratch or harm from any act of this type by Cuba.

It goes without saying that our country cannot be intimidated. By using such stupid threats, they are banging their heads against a brick wall. The U.S. government must ask Cuba's forgiveness for the thousands of acts of aggression, sabotage, and terrorism committed against our country for the last 43 years. The U.S. government must ask Cuba's forgiveness for over three decades of economic war and the total blockade of food and medicine; these are genocidal acts which even in times of war are sanctioned [prohibited] by 1948 and 1949 international treaties signed by both nations.

The U.S. government must compensate our country for crimes that have caused enormous suffering and the loss of tens of

thousands of lives. The U.S. government must break with the Miami terrorist Mafia, which organized and financed brutal acts of terror such as the explosion of a Cuban airplane in full flight with 73 passengers on board, all of whom perished, and the innumerable bomb attacks on Cuban buildings and hotels, hundreds of assassination attempts on leaders of the Cuban Revolution, biological warfare against people, animals, and plants.¹

The U.S. government must arrest and try Orlando Bosch, the well-known terrorist who, along with others, freely walks the streets of Miami. The U.S. government must stop protecting Posada Carriles and demand that justice be done for him and the other criminals who brought scores of kilograms of extremely powerful explosives to Panama, planning to kill hundreds of young university students with the aim of assassinating the Cuban delegation to the Ibero-American Summit, in Panama City.²

End the blockade against Cuba

The U.S. government must eliminate the Torricelli Act, the Helms-Burton Act, and numerous amendments aimed at tightening up the blockade against our country. The U.S. government must eliminate the murderous Cuban Adjustment Act, which has cost the lives of so many women, children, elderly, and other citizens, and continues to take the lives of the people of Cuba.

The U.S. government must discuss with Cuba the illegal and arbitrary occupation of a piece of our territory [at Guantánamo], to come to an agreement about when it will be returned to our country. The U.S. government must respect the Cuban people's right to self-determination, as well as the economic and political system it has decided to follow.³

The U.S. government will never have the moral authority to fight terrorism as long as it continues to use such practices against countries like Cuba, and continues to support massive, repugnant and brutal massa-

ces such as those being perpetrated by its ally, the state of Israel, against the Palestinian people. It must renounce its policy of world domination, stop intervening in other countries, respect the authority of the United Nations, and honor the treaties it has signed.

These are indispensable requisites for achieving a climate of peace in the world and eradicating that odious scourge of terrorism.

Our heroes must be freed. The whole world will learn of the enormous injustice committed against them. Millions of books will tell the truth and send out Cuba's message. Sooner rather than later, our comrades will come home! No matter what it costs or where they are, their relatives will exercise their right to visit them every month, and bring them the encouragement and affection of all their people.

(Applause)

Eternal glory to the heroic sons of Cuba! (Shouts of glory!)

To the mothers who bore them and raised them! (Shouts of glory!)

To the wives and children who contributed lovingly to creating their will of iron and invincible spirit! (Shouts of glory!)

Hasta la victoria siempre! [Ever onward to victory!]

Patria o Muerte! [Homeland or Death!] Venceremos! [We will win!]

¹In 1976 counterrevolutionary groups organized the hijacking and bombing of a Cubana Airlines flight off the coast of Barbados. The perpetrators and masterminds of the attack, which resulted in the deaths of all 73 people on board, worked for the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. One of them, Orlando Bosch, who is widely credited with planning the attack, walks free in the streets of Miami to this day.

²CIA-trained terrorist Luis Posada Carriles was imprisoned in Venezuela for the 1976 bombing, but escaped and later worked for Washington to further its *contra* war against the Nicaraguan revolution. Prior to the start of the November 2000 Ibero-American Summit in Panama, Cuban officials gave Panamanian security forces the addresses, phone numbers, and aliases of right-wing terrorists positioned to take part in an attack on Cuban president Fidel Castro. Panamanian officials were forced to act and arrested Posada Carriles. The government of Panama later said it would not respect Havana's requests that Posada Carriles be extradited to Cuba to face trial.

³The U.S. government continues to illegally occupy the Guantánamo base at the eastern end of Cuba under a lease signed with a U.S.-installed regime in 1903. Since 1959 the Cuban government has called for the removal of the military facility. However, Washington has refused to give up this military foothold against the Cuban Revolution.

Write to the five Cuban revolutionaries

René González, #58738-004, FCI Loretto, P.O. Box 1000, Loretto, Pennsylvania 15940

Antonio Guerrero, #58741-004, U.S.P. Florence, P.O. Box 7500, Florence, Colorado 81226

Gerardo Hernández, #58739-004, U.S. Penitentiary-Lompoc, 3901 Klein Blvd., Lompoc, California 93436

(for Fernando González), write to: Ruben Campa, #58733-004, F.C.I. Oxford, P.O. Box 1000, Oxford, Wisconsin 53952-0505

(for Ramón Labañino), write to: Luis Medina, #58734-004, U.S.P. Beaumont, P.O. Box 26035, Beaumont, Texas 77720-6035.

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Others to be announced

Sponsored by the Socialist Workers Party branches and Young Socialists chapters in the region.

The event will coincide with a meeting of socialist workers who are members of the United Food and Commercial Workers.

North Korea condemns new U.S. military exercises

BY GREG MCCARTAN

The government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) has condemned a large-scale military exercise being carried out by U.S. and south Korean forces March 21-27 across the southern part of the Korean peninsula.

The joint maneuvers come at a time of heightened military threats by Washington against Pyongyang, the DPRK statement notes. Over the past month the Bush administration has named the north Korean government part of an "axis of evil" along with Iran and Iraq, included the DPRK in an unofficial "leak" of seven nations that are potential targets for U.S. nuclear attack, and refused to certify the country is meeting commitments under a 1994 nuclear development accord.

In a March 19 interview with the *Militant*, Pak Gil Yon, Permanent Representative of the DPRK to the United Nations, said, "The size and character of this military maneuver is unprecedented; it is larger than the annual Team Spirit exercises" last conducted by Washington and Seoul in 1993.

Under an "antiterror" pretext, Pak added, "the U.S. government is sending its troops to a number of areas of geopolitical importance." In addition to nearly 40,000 U.S. troops stationed in south Korea, backed by warships and nuclear weapons, Washington has 48,000 sailors and soldiers in Japan.

"Now they are deploying forces in the Philippines, and possibly Indonesia, Yemen, Georgia. Their real purpose is to conquer the whole world under the 'antiterror' pretext," Yon said, adding that the people and armed forces of north Korea are prepared to defend their country against imperialist attacks.

A March 13 statement carried by the Korean Central News Agency said the DPRK "will not remain a passive onlooker" in face of these threats. The United States is "working in earnest to prepare a dangerous nuclear war to bring nuclear disasters to our planet and humanity," it said. Mentioning Washington's use of atomic weapons against

the people of Japan at the end of World War II, the north Korean government said that "if the U.S. intends to mount a nuclear attack on any part of the DPRK, just as it did on Hiroshima, it is grossly mistaken."

The threats from Washington have met broad opposition among the peoples of both Japan and south Korea, sending ripples through bourgeois politics. South Korea's conservative opposition Grand National Party has called on the regime there to protest the nuclear threats. The party of President Kim Dae Jung cautiously demanded a fuller explanation from the White House while reaffirming its strong ties to Washington.

In agreements between Washington and Pyongyang in 1993 and 1994, the U.S. government "assured us they will not use or threaten the DPRK with nuclear weapons," the ambassador said. "Declaring the potential use of nuclear weapons—the Americans clearly mentioned possible use of nuclear weapons against the DPRK—means they are willing to annihilate the whole of the Korean nation."

Roots of Washington's hostility

The roots of Washington's hostility toward north Korea lie with the revolutionary struggle by the Korean people to rid their country of first the Japanese, then the American imperialist occupation forces. Meeting in Yalta in February 1945, representatives of the United States and the Soviet Union, the two major allied powers in World War II, agreed to the postwar occupation of Korea and its later division at the 38th parallel.

The struggle in the north led to the establishment of a workers and farmers government and the overturn of capitalism. In the south, Washington brutally suppressed rising battles of workers and peasants, then carried out a war of aggression in 1950 under the fig leaf of the United Nations.

Some 4 million Koreans were killed in the war, along with 54,000 U.S. troops. Washington leveled every meaningful target in the north in its attempt to overturn the socialist revolution and open up a drive to retake

China, which itself had been freed from the imperialist boot by a powerful revolution in 1949.

The U.S. rulers sustained their first military defeat in this war, as Chinese volunteer troops joined Korean soldiers to push U.S. forces from the Yalu River in the north back to the 38th parallel. No peace treaty was ever signed by Washington, leaving the combatants officially at war today. With U.S. backing the south Korean regime has built a 150-mile-long wall along the demilitarized zone between two halves of the divided nation.

Korea will be unified

Ambassador Pak told the *Militant* that the north and south Korean governments signed agreements in 1991 that they will not launch a military assault against each other and that the reunification of the country "will be through the united efforts of the Korean people themselves without depending on outside forces."

"Our country has been the object of U.S. military threats and economic blockade by the United States for more than a half a century," Pak said. "If there are no American troops stationed in south Korea, we would not need the effort and expense we currently put towards defense. But we have to defend ourselves, with our own efforts, with whatever defensive or offensive weapons are needed."

"We don't need nuclear weapons," the ambassador said, "because the southern part of Korea is also the Korean nation. The Korean nation is one. It was one and it will be one."



EBay withdraws Malcolm X documents from auction block

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

"The property will be previewed for potential bidders in Los Angeles March 8-10 and in San Francisco March 15-17," said a press release in late February announcing the sale of archives of handwritten and typed speeches, correspondence, and photographs of Malcolm X, who was among the outstanding revolutionary leaders of the 20th century. The Internet auction house eBay withdrew the vast collection from the auction block March 12 amid a hailstorm of protests from the family of Malcolm X, New York's Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, various scholars, working people, and others across the United States.

Some of the items initially put up for sale include an unpublished journal of the revolutionary leaders' meetings with African and Middle Eastern political leaders in the early 1960s, and 87 typed manuscripts of prepared articles and speeches delivered at Clark College, Yale University, and Howard University. Another archive includes 800 pages of talks delivered at mosques, temples, and public rallies in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and other cities. The collection also contains negatives and photographs from public appearances.

Malcolm X's uncompromising stance against racism and imperialist exploitation earned him the enmity of the U.S. government and a wide following among the exploited and oppressed not only in the United States but around the world as well. That hatred on the part of the U.S. rulers accelerated during the last year of his life—following his 1964 break from the Nation of Islam—as he increasingly condemned the capitalist system and adopted prosocialist views. Malcolm was gunned down while giving a speech in New York in February 1965.

EBay was expecting bids reaching nearly

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U.S. brutal treatment exposed at Guantánamo

Continued from front page

silence built around them by the U.S. government and maintained with the complicity of the capitalist media.

In spite of the tight military control over press reporting, some more facts about the prisoners' treatment have emerged. In a March 16 article entitled "An Uneasy Routine at Cuba Prison Camp," *New York Times* writer Katharine Seelye reported that officials are using golf carts to transport prisoners several hundred feet to the "interrogation huts...because it was quicker and because the prisoners' leg shackles were rubbing their ankles raw when they had to walk there." As happened to prisoners on chain gangs in the United States, the leg irons tear through the skin down to the bone of those forced to walk and work with shackles on.

The prison camp, where those who have been kidnapped and taken to Cuba are kept in eight foot by eight foot chain-link outdoor cages, is run by Brig. Gen. Michael Lehnert of the U.S. Marines. Officials have developed a system of small privileges—a book, reading glasses, warm tea—dispensed so they can be taken away to punish and discipline the prisoners who have been allowed no other amenities, including even a roof over their heads. The prisoners are allowed out of the cells twice a week for exercise periods of 15 minutes.

Seelye reported that journalists are allowed no foot access to the facility and are prohibited from interviewing the prisoners. They base their observations on trips through the camp in a van. Lehnert told reporters on March 15 that if the prisoners' yelling became a "problem," they would be allowed even less access. Then he turned and blamed the reporters, saying the Marines "may end up moving you back so that you can no longer provide the catalyst for them to do those things."

"Military officials say the prisoners are enormously frustrated and angry because their future is so uncertain," wrote Seelye. "The Bush administration has given no in-

dication of what it intends to do with them after they are interrogated, has set no timetable for the questioning, and has not lodged any charges against them."

'Victims of circumstance'

In February, U.S. secretary of defense Donald Rumsfeld said that the prisoners might be held "during the period of the conflict so that they can't go back and kill more people." While Lehnert asserted to reporters that most of the prisoners were "high ranking Taliban" or members of al Qaeda, the deputy commander of the prison, Lt. Col. William Cline, blithely admitted that some were probably "victims of circumstance" and innocent.

The U.S. government is using its holding of the prisoners to expand the buildings and infrastructure of the naval base that it occupies, in spite of objections by the Cuban government. U.S. forces have begun construction of permanent facilities able to hold 2,000 prisoners. This has aroused particular concern among the prisoners, some of whom have thrown gravel at the guards.

Raising a rare voice of protest among forces within the United States, the New York-based Center for Constitutional Rights placed Washington's conduct before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, a little-known body of the Organization of American States. On March 13 the commission called on Washington to hold hearings to determine whether the Guantánamo inmates qualify as prisoners of war.

The families of one Australian and two British citizens held at the camp have filed lawsuits in a Washington District Court, alleging violation of the constitutional rights of the three men as well as those of the 297 other inmates. "There are few principles more firmly established in our law than the prohibition on indefinite detention," said Joseph Margulies, the lawyer for David Hicks, a 26-year-old Australian citizen.

Clive Smith, the lawyer retained by the parents of the two British captives, said that "the argument that people held in Guantánamo Bay have no rights means [the government] could just take out a gun and shoot them."

Meanwhile, the U.S. Justice Department has announced that it will seek the death penalty in its prosecution of French-born Zacarias Moussaoui, who is accused of preparing to join the other hijackers in the September 11 attacks. The department's case will rest on circumstantial evidence and Moussaoui's statements and political beliefs.

The *Wall Street Journal* described the move as "an unprecedented effort to secure the federal death penalty against a defendant on conspiracy charges alone.... Never before in modern legal history have state or federal prosecutors sought the death penalty in a case in which the defendant is charged with merely conspiring to commit murder rather than actually helping carry it out."

"The burden of proof for conspiracy is much lower than with other crimes," pointed out the big-business daily.

Oppose Washington's war threats against north Korea Support the fight for national reunification

Come to a meeting to send off the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists solidarity delegation to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

Militant Labor Forums

◆ Brooklyn and New York Garment District Pathfinder Bookstores
April 5, Dinner: 6:30 p.m.
Program 7:30 p.m.

◆ Upper Manhattan and Newark Pathfinder Bookstores
April 6, Dinner: 6:30 p.m.
Program 7:30 p.m.

◆ Los Angeles Pathfinder Bookstore April 7, times to be announced

Speakers: Steve Clark and Jack Willey, members of the SWP Political Committee, joined in Los Angeles by Olympia Newton, a national leader of the YS and the third member of the delegation

See page 8 for more information.

Fired socialist worker discusses rights fight

Continued from front page

his case to the meat packers, as well as fights by other workers he has met who are also standing up to victimization by the bosses since September 11. "My case, my fight, is a part of the fight of the Palestinians for a homeland, of immigrant workers against discrimination, of women demanding their rights," he said.

The accelerated assault on working people in the United States since September shows that whatever advances and victories workers and farmers make in their struggles against the employers and their government, "until working people organize a revolutionary struggle and take power out of the hands of the capitalists, any gains we make are only temporary."

Defending workers' rights to express views in opposition to government policies, run for office against the bosses' parties, and organize in their own class interests is part of defending democratic rights and the constitutional liberties enshrined in the Bill of Rights, such as the freedom of expression and assembly, Italie said.

Several of the Nebraska meat packers explained the struggles they had waged against firings by the bosses for union organizing activity.

One worker who has been at the plant for 25 years said he had faced intense harassment from a boss. The worker was suspended under charges of verbally con-

fronting the boss and everyone thought he would be fired. "My co-workers mobilized to defend me," he said. "They started talking about ways to support me, including with a work stoppage, and it all got back to the big managers. The result was I got my job back. But the pressure at work is still great."

Italie responded that this is how it was at Goodwill as well, "with bosses always looking at us, telling us to work harder, trying to humiliate us. The question is how to organize against this. You have a good example here of how to fight back."

A plant maintenance worker explained his participation in union organizing efforts going back to 1976. "That plant closed and I lost the illusion that we could organize," he said. "But over time, with conditions getting worse, I got involved again at this plant. What did we have to lose? We couldn't continue to work there anyway with these conditions."

The organizing drive led to a victory for the maintenance workers in November 2000, while the pro-union vote among production workers fell short. Maintenance workers ratified their first contract last year and it has led to some gains and small victories on the job, he said. But the company has continued to target him as a pro-union fighter, and fired the worker three months ago. This occurred after a serious accident at work that left him badly injured and unable to hold his job. His case is in arbitration.

Truth about the war

Another worker said that in the past he has supported wars waged abroad by the U.S. government. "They never tell the truth and I believed what I heard. But since I have been buying books from Pathfinder, I'm beginning to understand what's behind these wars. Now I'm against the war," he said. Among the "mountain" of books he has bought, the worker said he has read *Fertile Ground: Che Guevara and Bolivia* and parts of *Nueva Internacional no. 1*, which contains "Washington's Assault against Iraq: Opening Guns of World War III," by Jack Barnes. Participants in the event contributed \$78 to the work of Italie's defense committee.

Italie also traveled to Marshalltown, Iowa, March 14 and spoke with a few workers from the Swift meatpacking plant after first shift. A Swift worker explained that she had been one of the first Mexican workers in the plant 13 years ago. The speedup and deteriorating conditions over those years have left her with numerous injuries and health problems. Now that she's incapable of working anywhere else, she said, the company wants to drive her out of the plant.

"Some co-workers say, 'Why do you stay here? Your husband has a good job.' I say, 'that's him, and this is me!'" She and other

Thousands of unemployed workers in Argentina march to demand jobs



Thousands of unemployed workers in Argentina converged in front of Government House in Buenos Aires March 15 to demand the creation of "millions of genuine" jobs and government assistance. The unemployed workers initiated their march four days earlier in different parts of the country, holding rallies in front of government buildings en route to the Argentine capital. The marchers came carrying signs that read, "Bread and Jobs," "They should all leave," referring to government officials, and "Do not pay the foreign debt and open the factories," reflecting the main demands of the action.

workers at Swift participated in protests in 1999 against a proposal to give town police the power to arrest and begin deportation proceedings against anyone they suspected of lacking valid immigration papers.

Later that evening, Italie spoke at Drake University at a meeting sponsored by Drake Mobilization for Peace and Justice. Mark Westerberg from Drake Mobilization chaired the meeting and announced an anti-war conference in Des Moines scheduled for April 13-14.

In his talk Italie said working conditions at Goodwill—where many workers earn at or below the minimum wage, receive no medical benefits, and disabled workers are superexploited—are an example of what working people face in Miami. Goodwill contracts with the U.S. government to make flags and military uniforms. Miami has an official poverty rate of 32 percent, and has been designated as the poorest city in the United States. "Maybe I won't get my job back," Italie said of the fight he has waged, "but they may have to think twice about doing this to someone else."

Also speaking was Larry Ginter, a hog farmer from Rhodes, Iowa. "Government legislators will do everything in their power to protect major corporations so they can operate unmolested around the world," said Ginter. "However, most lawmakers remain mute when citizens like Mr. Italie express an opinion and then are fired from their jobs. We must all remember one thing," he concluded, "those who would take away our civil liberties must first destroy organized

resistance."

The Drake event was attended by 20 people, including several students new to the politics expressed by Italie, such as freshman Kate Albrecht. Albrecht stayed after the meeting to talk with Italie and other socialists, and then made plans to stop by the Pathfinder bookstore the next day to pick up a copy of *From the Escambray to the Congo*, by Victor Dreke. At the bookstore she said the meeting the night before had been a revelation for her.

"I knew about the attack on civil liberties, but I had no clue that these conditions existed for so many workers in this country," Albrecht said. "I was a waitress and I made \$3 an hour with nothing extra in tips when business was slow. I just thought this was the way it was. I didn't realize things like this happened to so many workers in other places and that they organized to do something about it. Mike Italie's talk really opened my mind. I am definitely interested in learning more about the ideas he supports."

Participants in the tour raised \$470 for the Committee to Defend Freedom of Speech and the Bill of Rights.

For more information on this struggle or to make a contribution, write to the Committee to Defend Freedom of Speech and the Bill of Rights, P.O. Box 510127, Miami, FL 33151-0127. Tel: (305) 724-5965 or e-mail: DefendFree-Speech-@yahoo.com.

Nancy Cole is a meat packer and member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1149 in Perry, Iowa.

Oil workers in China protest benefit cuts

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Tens of thousands of workers laid-off from the Daqing oil field in China's northeastern province of Heilongjiang, have been conducting daily protests since March 1 against cuts in severance benefits.

According to the Associated Press, "at least 10,000 protesters have appeared every morning to sit down around the central offices" of the Daqing Petroleum Administration Bureau. As many as 50,000 workers are participating in the actions.

The oil field in Daqing is part of PetroChina, one of China's largest state-run enterprises, with 300,000 employees. Over the past several years more than 80,000 of these oil workers have lost their jobs, as capitalist investors, with backing from the ruling bureaucracy sitting on top of the Chinese workers state, attempt to privatize the country's oil fields.

When they were laid off the workers were promised winter heating subsidies of about \$360. After the Chinese New Year, however, this subsidy was eliminated. Each worker was told that they would now be required to pay about \$317 a year into their own social security fund. This increased to \$439 last year and to \$560 this year, reports the web site of the China Labor Bulletin.

The protesters, mostly oil field workers in their 50s and 60s, gather everyday for about six hours and then return to their homes. According to AP, the protesters "claimed company officials received bonus payments of \$110,000 at the same time they were cutting benefits to former workers."

Oil workers from Xinjiang, Shengdi, and Liaocheng have staged solidarity demonstrations with the protesters in Daqing. Some workers still employed by the company are participating in the demonstrations as well to protest the fact that they are being asked to increase their payments into a pension fund from about \$365 last year to \$1,219 for the current year.

Hundreds in Miami rally against cop brutality

Continued from front page and beaten by cops.

The rally also demanded the release of the Haitian refugees being held at Krome Immigration Detention Facility outside of Miami. Many in the crowd carried "Free Haitian Refugees!" signs.

"We demand the 188 Haitians held at Krome be released immediately!" said Marlein Bastien from Fann Aytien Nan Miami (the Haitian Women of Miami). "They are not being let into the United States because of racism. There are children and pregnant women incarcerated at Krome—even an 18-month-old baby. And what did they do? They are just trying to enter this country to live and work."

'Jail killer cops'

Among the signs carried by participants in the action were ones that read, "Stop using Black men as target practice!"; "Jail killer cops!"; and "Not one more dead Black man!"

Victor Curry called for continued protests and urged rally participants to register to vote. "We are tired of these killer cops. We don't have police officers, we have paid assassins."

Juaneda Fain told the *Militant* of her family's fight to have charges brought against the officers who beat her son Antonio Edwards. In 1992, Edwards went into a coma after he was accosted by police and

put in a choke hold.

He remains in a vegetative state today. "He had shackles on his legs when he was in a coma," said Fain, adding that District Attorney Kathy Rundle refused to bring

charges against the cops.

"This issue affects every nationality, every race," explained Tanya Melendez, a 23-year-old Miami resident. "If there is an injustice being done, we need to stand up."

Steel tariffs hit semicolonial nations

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poultry products to Russia annually. This amounts to almost half of U.S. poultry exports worldwide and a fifth of all U.S. exports to Russia.

Washington's steel import tariffs are beginning to have a domino effect upon other nations as well. A Russian government commission has recommended placing import duties of nearly 32 percent on galvanized steel plate from Ukraine and Kazakhstan.

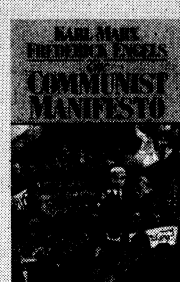
There have been some disagreements voiced within U.S. ruling circles over the tariff decision. Testifying before the Senate banking committee, Alan Greenspan, chairman of the Federal Reserve, said, "I understand the difficulties that any president has in trying to come to grips with our trade laws. I happen not to agree with the particular judgment."

Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill told an off-the-record event of the Council on Foreign Relations March 13 that he "was stick-

ing to his long-held position that imposing tariffs risked the nation's interests and the world's leader in promoting free trade," reported the *New York Times*. O'Neill has been pushing an effort to negotiate deals with other steel-producing countries to enact "voluntary" reductions in steel production in order to shore up prices on the capitalist market.

Spokespersons for various domestic industries that are big users of steel, including manufacturers of cars, industrial equipment, and appliances, warned that the steel tariff will increase their raw material costs. Speaking on behalf of a coalition of steel-using industries, Robert Crandall, from the Brookings Institution, called Bush's plan "a damaging economic blow that could delay the U.S. economy's recovery by increasing the cost of steel-made products like automobiles, cutting the demand for them and setting a dangerous precedent that could cause tens of thousands of layoffs in steel-using firms."

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Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 8

Building the communist movement today

BY JACK WILLEY

NEWYORK—Owing to the accomplishments of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists in finding their way to and joining the beginnings of social movements around the country, the communist movement has "bottomed out" and will begin to grow in the years ahead, said Jack Barnes.

Barnes, the SWP national secretary, spoke to the March 16-17 meeting of the party's National Committee, in which branch organizers and international guests also participated. Under the report, entitled "Proletarianization and the New International," he returned to the themes of a National Committee meeting held five weeks earlier (see March 4 *Militant*).

The heart of the activity to build a communist party—through which socialist workers reach out to and join in the proletarian resistance, and find and recruit workers and students—remains the weekly *Militant Labor Forum* series, consistent sales of communist literature in workers districts, propaganda work at factory gates, and the staffing of Pathfinder bookstores, he said.

Campaigns such as those aimed at winning support for five Cuban revolutionaries in U.S. jails and for Michael Italie, a socialist worker fired from Goodwill Industries for his political views, are also valuable instruments in working with others attracted to the communist movement and in helping to recruit them to the YS and party.

Emerging social movements

Barnes pointed out that the successes of U.S. imperialism during its decade-long economic boom of the 1990s were built on the backs of working people. In the industries where the capitalists have gone furthest in driving down working conditions and wages in order to shore up their profits, social movements have emerged in cities and regions of the country to confront the bosses' attacks.

Several years ago members of the SWP and Young Socialists recognized this shift in the resistance of the working class and set out to find where it existed, join with those engaged in struggle, and carry out party-building work as part of these fights.

The meeting was marked by the contributions of participants who reported on work along these lines and the opportunities to build the world communist movement today.

Frank Forrestal, a member of United Mineworkers Local 1248 in Pennsylvania, had just returned from Charleston, West Virginia, where he participated in the kick-off of the widows' walk for federal black lung benefits. Two widows of miners who died of black lung are on a month-long, 400-mile walk from Charleston to Washington demanding compensation for miners and the spouses of miners who have the disabling and often fatal disease. At each stopover they will be greeted by supporters with rallies, dinners, and other activities.

"These working-class fighters are reaching out to everyone who supports their struggle," he said, "and communists have an obligation to work with miners and other working people, both in the coalfields and more broadly, to join the walk and help put together activities along the route."

Forrestal reminded the meeting that this series of actions is not an anomaly, but part of an emerging social movement in coalfield regions across the United States. Recently, 200 people held a demonstration demanding compensation and the cleanup of an environmentally devastating mine spill in Inez, Kentucky, that happened two years ago. Widows of miners killed in a mine explosion last year at a Jim Walters mine in Alabama picketed across the street from the company, explaining that they have received little or no compensation. Last year four mine floods destroyed some 3,000 homes in southern West Virginia, fostering growing resentment toward the coal bosses among working people in the area.

Western coal fields

Jason Alessio reported that the company at the union mine where he works in western Colorado recently held a meeting announcing attacks on working conditions. "They told us they invested \$7 million in Enron and now we need to cut more coal in fewer hours, reduce the amount of drinking water we take underground, and limit the number of pairs of safety glasses we use each month—all to make up for their losses," he said. "Naturally, workers were outraged."

Several co-workers and other miners in

the area have started to find out about the widows' march and are discussing ways to offer solidarity, he said. Among the best responses to the *Militant* from workers across the country is from coal miners, several participants noted.

Working conditions in the large Omaha packing houses continue to spur union organizing fights, Don Reed reported. Workers at one plant regularly meet to discuss how to advance their effort. They have begun distributing a newsletter to their co-workers called *La Neta*, Mexican slang for "The Truth," to strengthen their struggle. Workers are gaining confidence in their capacity to organize to fight the bosses, Reed said, and *La Neta* is starting to have a few stinging articles and cartoons that really do portray "the truth" about the bosses.

The fight is one example of how packinghouse workers from South St. Paul to Omaha to Chicago are finding ways to resist the bosses' offensive and are part of a



Leading off the widows' walk in Charleston, West Virginia, Linda Chapman (left) and Phyllis Tipton (right) start on their 400-mile journey to Washington as part of the fight for full black lung benefits for miners and their families. The action is part of an emerging social movement in coalfield regions as working people resist the assaults by the bosses and their government. Socialist workers are deepening their involvement in similar developments across the country as they build a proletarian party.

common, if still atomized, social movement taking shape, even as the relationship of class forces in the labor movement remains unchanged for now.

Joe Swanson reported on a meeting that Michael Italie took part in with seven meatpacking workers in Omaha who are part of the union fight. Swanson described the meatpackers' deep interest not only in Italie's description of his firing as an attack on workers' rights, but also in the political questions he championed during his campaign as the Socialist Workers Party candidate for Miami mayor last fall.

Defending immigrant rights

Socialists at the meeting described a series of protests in California and Florida organized by immigrant workers and others to demand the right to a driver's license. A recent action in Watsonville, California, involved farm workers who were part of a hard-fought union organizing drive at Coastal Berry several years ago.

A party member from Tampa, Florida, said that she and other meatpackers arrived at work one day to find flyers posted for a demonstration around the driver's license fight. They are looking forward to hooking up with other workers in the plant and the area to build the event.

Several participants pointed out that when social struggles such as these get going, union organizing drives and struggles have a better chance of winning against the bosses. The unions will continue to get weaker, even as social struggles are on the upswing. A rising social movement will make it possible for workers to begin to fight to strengthen and transform their unions, and organize millions into their ranks.

A number of participants described examples of how Washington has all but worn out its ability to use September 11 to convince working people to hold off their struggles and keep at an arm's length socialist publications campaigning against the imperialist assault.

James Harris from Atlanta reported that

more than 20 strikers at Lockheed Martin, a military aerospace manufacturer, bought copies of the *Militant* during the first few days of the strike. Beth Fineas, who works in a surface mine in eastern Pennsylvania, recounted a discussion she had with several coworkers about a hated mine boss. One pointed to a coal dust-covered American flag hanging on the wall, and made a joke about the boss's right-wing views, saying, "We should stick up the flag of Afghanistan instead... Or better yet, a rainbow flag. That would really get him!"

Barnes noted in his report that Pathfinder bookstores have opened in three cities and towns where the party has branch organizing committees. They are Craig, Colorado; Kannapolis, North Carolina; and Tampa, Florida. Socialist workers in each city have followed the lines of resistance, sunk roots into the proletarian struggles in their regions, and begun taking on many characteristics of party branches.

imperialist "democracy," and will offer everyone the opportunity to support and emulate these working-class heroes, Barnes said.

Cuba and coming American revolution

In a report on "Cuba and the Coming American Revolution," Mary-Alice Waters pointed to the transformation of education and culture in Cuba. She described the expansion of Pathfinder's publication of books that tell the history of revolutionary struggles that Cubans have been part of and experiences and lessons in building a communist party in the United States. Waters, who is the president of Pathfinder Press and a central leader of the Socialist Workers Party, had returned from a month-long trip to Cuba where she participated in the Havana International Book Fair and a series of meetings to present the new book, *From the Escambray to the Congo*, by Víctor Dreke. Waters is the editor of the book.

The Cuban leadership is organizing a profound transformation of the education system, raising the cultural level of the entire population, she said. "Education for All" classes through the television offer courses on an expanding range of topics, and a wider range of books are being printed to expand the libraries in the homes of working people.

Waters displayed a copy of one of the 400 literary classics being produced in tabloid newspaper format that are being distributed in mass quantities across the island. The revolutionary leadership's goal is to get these books into every workers' home, she said, and to set up "popular libraries" in each neighborhood to make the full range of books accessible to all.

Winning youth to study and work

The revolution is opening the university system to larger numbers of working people, Waters said. A growing number of youth have dropped out of school and are neither studying nor working, a byproduct of the special period and the influence of the dollar, she noted. New social worker schools and accelerated teacher schools are geared toward reintegrating these youth as productive members of society.

Every person who dropped out of secondary school and decides to go back is automatically accepted into the university after graduation, she reported. Most of these programs are politically led and administered by the Union of Young Communists.

Coming out the worst of the special period, there has been a revitalization of the arts and culture, Waters noted. One example is the startup of a new on-line cultural magazine, *La Jiribilla*, accessible through the growing network of computer clubs. A recent issue included a feature article on the 1912 revolt by Black Cubans—brutally crushed by the forces of the semicolonial regime—against racist discrimination and the banning of the Independent Party of Color.

Waters said the work to publish books that tell the history of the Cuban Revolution, participation in events such as the Havana book fair, and ongoing collaboration in publishing more books that tell the truth about the Cuban Revolution, are all aimed at building a communist party in the U.S. and the world communist movement.

The lessons of the Cuban revolutionary struggle are needed today in building a proletarian party. For example, Víctor Dreke points out in *From the Escambray to the Congo* that the Rebel Army commanders, and the commanders on international missions, stood with their troops on the front lines, not back in an office away from the heat. This is how revolutionary armies win wars and how their generals lead their troops, Waters said.

The steps the party is taking to move the national office of the Socialist Workers Party, and the editorial and business staffs of the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and Pathfinder into the same location as a New York branch meeting hall and bookstore have the same goal, she said. This will make it possible for the entire cadre of the branches to get out and work together on a daily basis to build the party at strikes, social protests, and other actions of working people in the city.

Leadership lessons in New York

The openings to build the party today place a premium on executive committees working with the standing committees in

Continued on Page 10

Bush and Cheney lay groundwork for assault on Iraq

MAURICE WILLIAMS

The Bush administration pressed on several fronts this week to lay the groundwork for a new imperialist military assault on the people of Iraq, part of an open drive to topple the government of Saddam Hussein.

Trying to justify renewed U.S. aggression, Vice President Richard Cheney said in a speech on the U.S. warship USS *John C. Stennis* that "the war will end when we and our allies have delivered justice in full measure and no terrorist group or government can threaten the peace of the world." Cheney spoke to sailors after visiting the capitals of several U.S. allies in the Middle East. "Our next objective," he said referring to Iraq, although not by name, "is to prevent terrorists, and regimes that sponsor terror, from threatening America and our allies with weapons of mass destruction."

Bush gave a similar talk that same day in Fayetteville, North Carolina, to an audience of 2,000 people that included special forces and other troops. He urged Congress to approve his proposed \$48 billion increase in military spending "so we can plan for this war." Two days earlier Bush said that he "understand[s] there's going to be loss of life," in a military onslaught against Iraq.

"But I strongly believe we're doing the right thing."

The U.S. government is demanding that the regime in Baghdad open up Iraq to unconditional and unlimited inspections of any site, under the guise of searching for weapons of mass destruction. The Iraqi government has so far refused to agree to such an abrogation of national sovereignty. Instead, the Saddam Hussein government has said it will cooperate with the United Nations in inspecting specific sites under an agreed-upon timetable.

The Clinton administration used Baghdad's expulsion of UN "weapons inspectors" as the pretext for launching a four-day military assault in December of 1998. The bombing raids by U.S. and British forces destroyed schools, hospitals, grain depots, and private homes, as well as military sites. In January the following year U.S. government officials were forced to admit that the "inspection" teams were in fact U.S. spies who carried surveillance equipment that allowed them to snoop on radio, cell phone, and walkie-talkie communications by members of the Iraqi security network.

Seeing that the demand for unrestricted access by inspectors may be subject to long



Protesters in Turkey on March 19 reject U.S. vice president Cheney's call for Turkish government to support a planned U.S. assault on Iraq.

and drawn-out negotiations, Washington hauled out Central Intelligence Agency chief George Tenet to testify before a U.S. Senate committee that the U.S. government is still investigating whether Iraq or Iran was involved in the September 11 attacks on the Pentagon and World Trade Center.

"Baghdad has a long history of supporting terrorism, altering its targets to reflect changing priorities and goals," Tenet said, using the most vague and general terms. "It has also had contacts with al Qaeda," he asserted, adding that the "two sides' mutual antipathy toward the United States and the Saudi royal family suggests that tactical cooperation between them is possible, even though Saddam is well aware that such activity would carry serious consequences."

One notable side of the administration's tough talk is that the arrogant Bush and Cheney rarely mention Iraq by name. While the entire world is operating under the assumption that the biggest imperialist power is moving to launch an assault, the U.S. government's top elected officials who are directing the push have lower officials and the big-business media do their dirty work for them.

For example, while Cheney never uttered the word "Iraq" in his speech to sailors on the *Stennis*, the *New York Times* reported, "the Bush administration is determined to confront Iraq...to stop terrorists and rogue states from developing weapons of mass destruction."

The *Times* claimed that Cheney spoke to "thousands of cheering sailors." Most of them, however, didn't hear a word he said, since "his speech in the *Stennis*'s cavernous hangar was inaudible to most of the assembled sailors because the PA system didn't work," wrote BBC reporter Tom Carver.

Public objections from Arab regimes

During his sweep through the Mideast, Cheney encountered public objections to a renewed strike against Iraq on the part of government officials from Egypt to Saudi Arabia. "I do not believe it is in the United

Continued on Page 14

Palestinian resistance deepens Israeli crisis

Continued from front page

duced a new rocket, named the Qassam 2, capable of reaching further into Israel than the widely used mortars. On March 19 two were fired into Ashkelon, 40 miles south of Tel Aviv. The same day, two Palestinians crept to within 11 yards of an Israeli military encampment in the Jordan Valley, killed a commander in a special forces unit, and wounded three soldiers, before being themselves shot dead. Palestinians have killed more than 30 Israeli soldiers over the past month, a sharp increase since the conflict reignited 17 months ago.

Support for liberation of 'all Palestine'

A university in the West Bank released a survey in which almost 90 percent of Palestinians said they were in favor of continuing the armed attacks inside Israel and the occupied territories. The same number supported the liberation of "all of Palestine," while almost two-thirds opposed the visit of Gen. Anthony Zinni, the U.S. envoy who is pressuring Palestinian representatives to fulfill Israeli conditions for a cease-fire.

The growing determination and militancy among Palestinians is particularly striking, given the scale of the invasion and the Israeli army's attempt to terrorize the population.

This was the largest Israeli offensive in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 35 years of occupation. Some 1,500 Palestinian youth and men were rounded up in three refugee camps, ordered over loudspeakers to surrender to Israeli forces while combat helicopters hovered overhead and tanks rumbled nearby.

"Some returned insisting they were verbally abused and threatened with death," reported the *Toronto Star*, which interviewed a number of the detainees. "They said they were handcuffed and blindfolded for hours while prevented from going to the wash-

room, kept hungry and dirty, and released in the dead of night—when gunmen and soldiers can shoot anything that moves — and told to make their own way home." At least 150 are still being held.

"Don't think this will make us fear them," said Hassan, 44, a resident of the Deheishe refugee camp. "It will only make us hate them more."

A public storm arose in Israel over film footage of the operation that slipped through the self-censorship of the country's TV networks. The coverage showed Israeli soldiers using explosives to break down the door to a home in the West Bank's Al-Ayida refugee camp. When the smoke cleared, the mother of the family lay mortally wounded. An ambulance called by the father became trapped between checkpoints. While one soldier told the family members to "shut up," another turned to the camera and said, "I don't know what we're doing here.... It's not clear to me what a Hebrew soldier is doing so far from home."

Impact among Israelis

"Fear, and coping with it, have become stitched into daily life here," reported the *New York Times* from Jerusalem. The article noted that outdoor cafes and other popular areas are largely deserted by Israelis.

In addition there are signs of a growing polarization. The liberal "Peace Now" forces are organizing frequent demonstrations and statements by armed forces reservists have called for the government to withdraw its forces from the occupied territories. On the other hand there are strident objections by right-wing forces to the alleged "restraint" shown by the Sharon government.

Ya'ir Hilu, a young military reservist who has completed two 28-day terms of imprisonment for refusing to fight in the occupied territories, eloquently described the death trap that Israel has become in a letter published in the January-February issue of *Challenge*, an anti-Zionist monthly publication.

"How does the activity of the state, implemented through the army, benefit me and those I care for?" he wrote. "The 'sterile' Jewish space created by the State of Israel is a ghetto for its Jewish residents. It prevents them from integrating into the Middle East. Nobody is safe in this space—either Jews or Arabs."

In his much-publicized March 19 stop-over in Israel, during an 11-nation tour to drum up support for U.S. aggression against Iraq, U.S. vice-president Richard Cheney "placed the onus for achieving a cease-fire" on Yasir Arafat, reported *Ha'aretz*. Meanwhile, reported the liberal daily, "Prime Minister Ariel Sharon again presented the Palestinian Authority Chairman with a set of humiliating conditions, including a

thinly-veiled warning that if the PA leader did not 'behave' himself at the upcoming Arab summit" scheduled for Beirut at the end of March, "he would not be granted a return ticket home."

Withdrawal to settlements

Under pressure from Cheney and U.S. special envoy Zinni, the Israeli government withdrew its forces from Ramallah and elsewhere in the West Bank and Gaza. Palestinians told reporters that the tanks and soldiers had only withdrawn to nearby settlements and bases, and could be back in minutes.

In its March 16 issue, the *Economist* observed that the Israeli onslaught was "designed to show that the army's reach extends to all parts of the Palestinian areas. But Palestinians have been showing that they can reach everywhere, too." The London-based weekly cited a suicide bombing at a cafe opposite Sharon's official residence in Jerusalem where two Israelis died in an attack in Netanya, "one of the most heavily policed areas of the country."

Combined with Israeli accusations of attacks by Hezbollah in south Lebanon, such incidents "added up to a twofold message," reported the magazine. "No Israeli is secure, and the more Israel hits Palestinians...the greater the prospect of Israel's armed confrontation with the Arab world."

Afghanistan: imperialist forces dig in

BY GREG MCCARTAN

With 5,300 troops already stationed in Afghanistan, U.S. imperialism this week stepped up its construction at the Bagram airbase, put 1,700 British troops on the ground under its command, and worked to win the agreement of the Turkish government to take charge of the occupation force in Kabul, the capital of the country.

At the request of Washington the British government said it will immediately send troops from the 45 Royal Marine Commando who are trained in mountain warfare to join U.S. and Canadian troops operating under U.S. command in Afghanistan.

"These troops are being deployed to take part in warfighting operations," said Geoffrey Hoon, defense secretary in the Labour government in London of the biggest British deployment since the Persian Gulf War in 1991. "We will be asking them to risk their lives," he said. "They may suffer casualties."

The troops will be stationed at the Bagram airbase, located north of Kabul, the former base of Soviet forces during Moscow's occupation of the country in the 1980s. Describing how U.S. forces are preparing for the long haul, John Burns wrote in the *New York Times* that "heavy equipment was at

work around Bagram, an old Soviet base, erecting steel frames and building earth-filled security barriers. American heavy-lift transport jets arrive almost by the hour. At times as many as 50 helicopters, including troop-carrying Chinooks and Apache, Cobra and Black Hawk attack craft, have been visible on the taxiways."

During a stopover in Ankara, the capital of Turkey, U.S. vice president Richard Cheney said Washington will give the Turkish government \$228 million to take over command of the international occupation force of nearly 5,000 troops that has been patrolling Kabul since December to protect the figurehead regime of Hamid Karzai. The force has until now been run by the British military, which comprises the bulk of the troops that currently make it up.

Cheney said the force will be limited to Kabul and reiterated Washington's support for Turkey's entry into the European Union as further inducements for Ankara to commit a large number of soldiers and command the forces in Kabul. A German colonel will be second in command.

It later turned out that the funds amount to \$28 million in direct aid from Washington and \$200 million in debt forgiveness.

Protest the Israeli Invasion of Palestine! End the Occupation!

Mark Palestinian Land Day, commemorating massive demonstration in March 1976 by Palestinians inside Israel to defend their land against confiscations.

Sat., Mar. 30.

Los Angeles: 1:00 p.m. Federal Building in Westwood—Wilshire Blvd. and Veteran St. Tel: (714) 636-1232.

Washington: 1:00 p.m. Freedom Plaza, 13th and Pennsylvania Ave. Tel: (202) 244-2990. For New York buses, call (917) 768-6009.

Sponsored by American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee.

Widows start walk for black lung benefits

Continued from front page
the Black Lung Association (BLA), workers from black lung clinics in West Virginia, and other supporters of the walk including several widows. The rally was covered by newspapers, and radio and television news stations in West Virginia.

A carload of retired miners from Illinois led by National Black Lung Association president Lewis Fitch drove in for the event. Fitch, who started in the mines in 1941, is a veteran UMWA member. Members of the Fayette County Black Lung Association drove 70 miles to the kickoff, along with staff from the New River black lung clinic. There was also staff from the Bluestone and Upper Kanawha clinics and members of the Kanawha Black Lung Association, including NBLA secretary and a key organizer of the widows' walk, Debbie Wills.

Kathryn South, widow of Mike South, a longtime black lung activist and former president of the NBLA, was present. Earlier in the week she had led a delegation of widows that unsuccessfully sought to testify before a Kentucky state senate committee reviewing black lung legislation. Despite being shunted by the Kentucky senate, South was able to get the word out on the unjust conditions widows and coal miners face around black lung compensation.

"Don't make the people wait until they are almost dead to get benefits," she said to an Associated Press writer in Frankfurt, Kentucky. A bill making limited changes to state black lung benefits was approved by the House 93-0.

UMWA president Cecil Roberts, in a March 15 press release supporting the walk, "applauded the widows' campaign," and said the "UMWA strongly endorses their cause...and is offering whatever assistance it can."

Black lung, or coal miners' pneumoconiosis, is a preventable disease caused by breathing coal dust. With water sprays, ventilation, and respirators and other breathing apparatus, coal dust can be kept below harmful levels.

Some of the rally participants had, along

with UMWA president Roberts, taken part in a UMWA-organized action of more than 200 people the day before in Inez, Kentucky, to protest the environmental record of anti-union, coal giant Massey Energy. Roberts and 10 others were arrested. In October 2000 there was a massive sludge spill in Inez from Massey subsidiary Martin County Coal's containment pond, dumping several hundred million gallons of sludge into surrounding valleys and streams. The union has received numerous calls from coalfield residents to do something about the coal giant's destruction of the surrounding environment.

'One foot in the grave'

Speakers at the rally said that they are not demanding additions to the black lung law but the deletion of two portions of the legislation added in 1981 that have made it almost impossible for widows or miners to qualify for benefits. When miners say you have "to have one foot in the grave in order to receive benefits," they do not exaggerate.

A press release by the NBLA explains that "the original act stated that if a miner was employed for fifteen years or more in the mines and other evidence demonstrates the existence of a totally disabling respiratory or pulmonary impairment, then there shall be a rebuttable presumption that such miner, his widow or dependents is entitled to benefits under the law.

"That act also stated that a widow would qualify for benefits if the miner's death was caused by black lung or if he was totally disabled by black lung at the time of his death. Both provisions were amended to say, 'except in claims filed on or after the effective date of the amendments.' This line needs to be removed from the current law," the statement concludes.

Linda Chapman explained the hurdles that are placed in front of miners and their widows who are seeking benefits. Her husband, Carson Chapman, was denied both state and federal black lung benefits. His state claim was initially approved but the decision was reversed on appeal by the coal company on the grounds that there was medical evidence Chapman had black lung for more than a decade before filing and that he had filed too late. The company lawyer who argued the appeal later showed up at Chapman's federal hearing and argued that he never had black lung disease.

For miners and their widows securing legal representation is difficult because the lawyer only gets paid if the claim is approved. On average it takes seven years to win a claim and only 4 percent of all claims are approved. New regulations were introduced last year to level the playing field for miners filing claims, but they gave no relief for widows, and the jury is still out on whether the new federal law benefits coal miners.

Chapman said the walk is "really not about me. It's about a lot of women who are older than me who don't have a voice." After the rally she said that "it was awesome to be able to go down and talk to more of the widows and tell them why we are doing this."

Other widows at the rally told their own stories. Peggy Coleman read the names of several widows who support the walk but are too ill to attend the rally. She added that if she were "20 years younger she would be walking but now she lets her fingers do the walking on the phone." Virginia Richards said that eight months after her husband died the black lung benefits were cut off. He worked in the mines 35 years.

A new wave of miners who started in the mines in the mid-to-late 1970s are beginning to come down with black lung, activists said. These new cases are cropping up after changes in laws regulating mining were supposed to bring an end to the bosses allowing coal dust to exist at levels high enough to cause black lung.

In addition, Tony Canada, a former coal miner and now a health worker at the New River clinic, said they are seeing more injured miners today. He noted that miners are younger, working longer hours, and working deeper in the mines. "I just saw a 32-year-old miner with a severe back injury in the clinic. He will never work in the mines again," said Canada.

The widows walk is part of the beginnings of a social movement against the worsening conditions working people face in the coal fields. Last year 13 miners were killed in West Virginia, 12 of them in the mines south of Charleston. This comes at the same time that the Bush administration is attempting to cut safety regulations and funding for federal safety programs.

Chapman, Tipton, and their supporters will walk through Clendenin, Spencer, Grafton, Fairmont, and Morgantown in West

Virginia, then on to Uniontown, Pennsylvania. After the April 1 rally, the marchers will drive back to Grafton to continue their walk to Washington.

The NBLA is asking supporters to help by "joining the march, contributing money for the expenses of the walkers on the road, and/or put pressure on Congress and your congressmen to pass a stronger Black Lung Benefits Act."

"I hope we make it all the way, and we hope to see all of you in Washington, D.C., on April 15," said Phyllis Tipton, who spoke at the end of the rally. Chapman and Tipton then put on their walking shoes and began their 400-mile trek.

For more information on the widows walk call Peggy Coleman at (304) 595-2280. Donations for the walk can be sent to the NBLA, c/o Tom Ellis, P.O. Box 632, Royalton, Illinois 62983. A web page with newspaper reports on the walk is available at www.knowareland.com.

Frank Forrestal and Tony Lane are coal miners and members of the United Mine Workers of America.

Widows' March to Demand Black Lung Benefits for Miners and their Families

April 1 — 1:00 p.m. rally in Uniontown, Pennsylvania, at the Holiday Inn

April 15 — Final protest rally at the Capitol in Washington, D.C.

For more information, contact Kawawha Valley Black Lung and Disabled Workers Association at (304) 595-2280. Funds for the widows' walk can be sent and made out to NBLA c/o Thomas Ellis, P.O. Box 632, Royalton, IL 62983.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

IOWA

Des Moines

Oppose Israel's War against the Palestinian People. Speaker: Mary Martin, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Mar. 29, 7:30 p.m. 3720 6th Avenue. Tel: (515) 288-2970.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Palestinians Fight against Israeli Occupation. Crisis of Israeli Regime Sharpens. Speaker: Mike Taber, Fri., Mar. 22, 7:30 p.m. 506 Springfield Ave., 3rd Floor. Donation: \$4. Tel: (973) 643-3341.

NEW YORK

Brooklyn

The 1979-83 Grenadian Revolution and Its Overthrow. Speaker: Angel Lariscy, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Mar. 22, 7:30 p.m. 372A 53rd St. (at 4th Ave.) Donation: \$5. Tel: (718) 567-8014.

Garment District

Free the Five Cuban Revolutionaries Imprisoned in U.S. Jails. Speaker: Martin Koppel, editor of *Perspectiva Mundial*, participant in Havana International Book Fair. Fri., Mar. 22, 7:30 p.m. 545 8th Avenue, 14th Floor. Donation: \$4. (212) 695-7358.

Upper Manhattan

Venezuela: U.S.-Backed Capitalists Seek to Oust Chavez. Speaker: Stu Singer, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Mar. 22, 7:30 p.m. 599 W. 187th Street, 2nd Floor. Donation: \$5. Tel: (212) 740-4611.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

Socialism and the Fight for Women's Liberation. Speaker: Hilda Cuzco, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Mar. 29, 7:30 p.m. 5237 N. 5th Street. Tel: (215) 342-2307.

CANADA

Vancouver

Oppose the British Columbia Government's Referendum on Native Treaties. Fri., April 5, 7:30 p.m. 2645 East Hastings, 2nd Floor. Tel: (604) 872-8343.

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AUSTRALIA

Sydney: 1st Flr, 3/281-287 Beamish St.,

Campsie, NSW 2194. Mailing address: P.O. Box K879, Haymarket, NSW 1240. Tel: (02) 9718 9698.

E-mail: cl_australia@bigpond.com

BRITAIN

London: 47 The Cut. Postal code: SE1 8LL. Tel: 020-7928-7993. E-mail: 101515.2702@compuserve.com

CANADA

Montreal: 4613 St. Laurent. Postal code: H2T 1R2. Tel: (514) 284-7369. E-mail: Librpath@sympatico.ca

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FRANCE

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ICELAND

Reykjavik: Skolavordustig 6B. Mailing address: P. Box 0233, IS 121 Reykjavik. Tel: 552 5502. E-mail: milpth@mmedia.is

NEW ZEALAND

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Dr. Strangelove, just a movie?
—The recently released Nixon tapes included a meeting with his national security adviser, Henry

prez, “The nuclear bomb. Does that bother you? I just want you to think big.”

Some of their best friends...
—The new Nixon tapes includes a conversation with Billy Graham who confided to him that the Jews had a “stranglehold” on the media. Responded Nixon: “I can’t ever say that but I believe it.”

Blunt—“I missed work because of my son being in the hospital for two weeks. I was fired at that point. I lost my house. We went to stay with my mother for two months. We became a burden. We ended up in a shelter.”—Single mother Kim

Vialpando at a Denver, Colorado, news conference on the housing crisis there.

Let’s not get paranoid—“Enron paid huge bonuses in ’01; Experts see a motive for cheating.”—News headline.

Capitalism breeds new market?—Members of the seafood industry, gathering in Boston, will grapple with the threat of bioterrorism and some actual federal oversight of a dangerously contaminated product. The feds apparently fear that seafood from heavily polluted waters will prove a key terrorist threat.

Now will you shut up?—“Although California is widely known as a disaster-prone state, a new study, published by the National Academy of Sciences, concludes that in per capita dollar losses from all disasters, the state does not rank in the top dozen.”—*Los Angeles Times*.

Progress report—“Crowded jails will release prisoners early”—Headline, the *Times*, London.

But then again—“Behave or face [jail] cells, school tells unruly boys”—The *Times*, London.

Click, it’s yours—Even if your

town doesn’t boast a Saks Fifth Avenue shop you can order from the web site of the posh chain. Like, a matching T-shirt and zippered cardigan, both pure cotton. The T-shirt, \$85, the cardigan, \$695. A print ad quietly suggests, “Keep it real.”

Modest gain—With the onset of the recession, high-end real estate took a shellacking. But things are picking up. Like, in New York’s Manhattan in the last six months of last year only 23 co-ops were sold for \$4 million and up. So far this year, 22 in that category have been sold at an average price of \$8 million plus, somewhat lower than last year.



Harry Ring

Kissinger, who suggested moves to escalate the war on Vietnam. “I’d rather use the nuclear bomb,” responded Nixon. Kissinger thought that a bit much. Responded the

U.S. steel tariffs hit semicolonial countries hardest

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Washington’s imposition of tariffs of up to 30 percent on steel imported into the United States for the next three years has met sharp criticism from governments around the world.

The *Wall Street Journal* reported that the protectionist move will have the biggest impact on the semicolonial countries like Brazil and south Korea, which...don’t have the power or political will to stand up to Washington, given their need to export to the vast U.S. market.” Russia is among the workers states whose steel exports will also be affected by the moves.

Steel from Canada, the second largest exporter of finished steel mill products to the United States, and Mexico, the fifth largest exporter, as well as several other Third World countries, is exempted.

The tariffs, which take effect March 20, were described by the *Journal* as “the most protectionist move of any U.S. president in at least two decades.” They will in effect bar many types of imported steel from U.S. markets, setting the stage for an increase in steel prices of as much as 10 percent.

“Officials in South Korea and Brazil expressed dismay at the Bush steel tariffs,” another *Journal* article said, “but made clear that they had little desire to pick a fight with the U.S.”

At a March 11 meeting of the Inter-American Development Bank, Brazilian president Fernando Henrique Cardoso said the U.S. tariffs were not in the spirit of the Free Trade of the Americas Act, an agreement being pushed by Washington to open up Latin America and the Caribbean to further penetration of goods and capital from the United States.

“The path to strengthening multilateral trade is not the path of protectionism,” Cardoso said. “And it is certainly not the path of discretionary antidumping or agricultural subsidies used in scandalous proportions to impede free competition.”

The Brazilian Steel Institute, an employers’ organization, has proposed the imposition of tariffs on some finished U.S. steel products. Similar demands were raised by a steelworkers’ demonstration organized by leaders of the trade union federation Força Sindical, held March 12 in front of the U.S. consulate in São Paulo.

U.S. trade representative Robert Zoellick brushed off the demand, noting that the Brazilian government has not been receptive to taking such a step. He added a threat, stating that the action “would create a further sense of market uncertainty for companies thinking about doing business in Brazil. Brazil needs to show stability to draw investment.”

Despite a harsh reaction from Washington’s imperialist rivals in Europe, the U.S. government “faces mostly rhetorical pressure” so far, wrote the *Journal* after the smoke had cleared from President George Bush’s March 5 announcement.

Tariffs on steel imports from Europe affect about 3 percent of the total production by European steelmakers. The biggest impact of Washington’s new tariffs on the European imperialist powers could be a rise of imports to the continent. The European Commission, the executive arm of the European Union (EU), pledged to steel companies that imports will be closely monitored and action taken to block any surge in steel being sold.

European and U.S. steel trusts

The U.S. and European steel industries are dominated by a few large trusts, and a further consolidation is under way. Three pro-



Brazilian steelworkers rally March 12 outside U.S. consulate in São Paulo

ducers dominate the European market: Comp, a combination of Dutch and British steelmakers; ThyssenKrupp of Germany; and Arcelor, a pending combination of Usinor of France with Arbed of Luxembourg and Aceral of Spain. With the consolidation of the merger, Arcelor will be the world’s largest steelmaker, producing 54.6 million tons of steel a year, one-third of the entire output in Europe and more than half that of Japan. In carrying out this restructuring European steel producers have cut jobs by one-third to about 277,000 workers.

In the United States, the drive for protectionist measures by the steel trusts, and a demand on the U.S. government to take over the pension and health care costs of 600,000 steel workers, is also combined with restructuring. The U.S. Steel Corporation is seeking to buy up six major companies that together account for 85 percent of U.S. steel production.

Washington agreed to impose the tariffs despite the fact that U.S. steel imports have fallen 33 percent since 1998. According to the American Iron and Steel Institute, U.S. steel imports declined to about 30 million tons last year after reaching nearly 40 million in 1998. Almost one-third of those imports came from Canada and Mexico.

The crisis in the steel industry is rooted in capitalist overproduction, where too much steel is being produced to be sold at a profit. Some estimates put the total annual overcapacity as high as 200 million tons. The day after Bush’s announcement, National Steel declared bankruptcy, becoming the 32nd domestic steelmaker to take this route in the past four years.

EU reaction

EU officials said the tariff could cost European steelmakers as much as \$2 billion a year in lost trade. They are demanding immediate compensation for this amount from the United States in the form of reduced trade barriers on other products. EU officials are also threatening to impose up to \$4 billion in sanctions on U.S. exports in a dispute over a U.S. corporate tax break. The EU has launched two legal challenges to the steel tariffs before the World Trade Organization.

British prime minister Anthony Blair called the action “unacceptable, unjustifi-

able, and wrong.” He added that there was no “linkage” between the trade issue and London’s backing of the imperialist assault in Afghanistan, emphasizing that the two powers had a “mature relationship.” The

Labour Party government’s secretary of trade and industry accused the United States of “trying to dump their problems on the rest of the world.”

“Although EU steelmakers are angry at Washington,” noted a *Journal* article, “they seem content to let trade officials try to reverse the U.S. decision at the World Trade Organization—a process that could take two years—rather than push for immediate retaliation. ‘A trade war is no use to anybody,’ says [Arcelor spokesman] Mark Schonckert.”

Elsewhere, the Australian minister of industry stated that the government there was “not going to lie down on this. The Americans are doing what they always do, they put their own interests first.”

The Russian Foreign Ministry issued a statement saying that the tariffs “could have a serious impact on the atmosphere of Russian-American relations.” The tariffs affect about a third of Russia’s steel exports and will cost the country \$400 million a year in lost revenue, according to Russian government officials. Russia is the world’s fourth-largest steel producer, and steel makes up a 10th of its total exports to the United States.

Moscow bans U.S. poultry imports

Several days after Washington’s steel import ban went into effect, Moscow, citing concerns over food safety, banned all U.S. poultry sales to Russia. U.S. farmers export more than \$600 million worth of

Continued on Page 5

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

35 CENTS
THE MILITANT
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

April 1, 1977

This weekend in cities across the country thousands are joining in protests under the banner, “Get the U.S. out of southern Africa now!”

Our protest comes at a good time: the Carter administration has undertaken the first steps towards a military adventure in Africa.

The State Department has rushed \$2 million worth of “nonlethal” military goods to Zaire (the former Belgian Congo). Washington’s NATO allies—Belgium and France—are also airlifting massive quantities of war material to the reactionary regime of Gen. Mobutu Sese Seko. Mobutu has launched a military drive to crush secessionist rebels in mineral-rich Shaba province (formerly Katanga).

Wary of profound antiwar sentiment in the United States, and the deep feeling of solidarity with Africa among American Blacks, Carter is moving cautiously. But his actions pose the danger of full-scale imperialist intervention in Africa.

The big-business news media are already preparing the way. The rebellion is pictured as a “communist invasion”—staged from neighboring Angola, led by Cuban troops, and backed by the Soviet Union.

It was under the same battle cry—“Halt communist aggression”—that three presidents marched thousands of American young people to their deaths in Vietnam.

As in Vietnam, the real aggressors in Zaire are Washington and its imperialist allies. Their aim is to maintain their grip on Shaba’s cooper and cobalt resources and to check the liberation struggles mounting throughout southern Africa.

THE MILITANT
PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE
NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

March 31, 1952

LOS ANGELES—Reaction was swift and impressive to attempts last Sunday of terrorists to put the Florida race relations pattern into operation in Los Angeles. The would-be assassins used the same tactics, but Los Angeles is not yet Miami, or Groveland or Mims, Fla.

Bombs were placed under two homes in a predominantly “white” neighborhood. Negro ownership was the issue in both cases. The bombs exploded within seconds of each other shortly after 1 a.m. on placid Dunsuir Avenue. There were no casualties, but the living rooms of both houses were shattered.

Awakened by the explosions, neighborhoods rushed to the scene. A stream of people, Negro and white, kept coming all day, mounting in mid-afternoon to about 1500. A spontaneous meeting was held. Money was collected for the victims. Carpenters, painters, etc., volunteered to repair the damage. Other meetings were hastily called, one at the nearby American Legion hall, which was packed, another at a neighborhood church.

Air Force veterans, buddies of the victims who were both pilots in World War II, quietly made arrangements for an all-night vigil that night and on succeeding nights in the rear room of one of the bombed homes. They came prepared for action against a possible repeat performance. They remained on guard.

The NAACP, whose leaders were at the scene shortly after the dynamiting, called a mass protest rally for Sunday, March 23. The association sought—and quietly obtained—the cooperation of labor, minority, civic and liberal organizations.

Release Guantánamo prisoners

From the daily news briefings of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld to statements by the general in charge of Camp X-Ray, U.S. government officials continue to defend the inhuman treatment of the inmates at the prison camp at Guantánamo, Cuba.

The fuller picture of the brutal treatment of the 300 men that has been made public this week with the piercing of a press blackout gives working people ammunition to expose U.S. imperialism and demand the prisoners be released.

The men, charged with no crime and not afforded protection under the Geneva Convention, are subject to treatment reminiscent of the hated chain gangs that until recently were another widespread institution of U.S. capitalist justice. Military officials who run the prison casually admit that even in their eyes some of those incarcerated are innocent people, caught up in the dragnet.

Given the flagrant violations of elementary human rights at Camp X-Ray, the silence about the situation among political forces in the United States is nothing short of an outrage. With some isolated exceptions, few have dared challenge Washington's justifications for its right to arrest, kidnap, and put these men in open air cages. Early complaints from Washington's imperialist rivals in Europe died off long ago as well.

The prison camp, now undergoing a major expansion, is a provocation against the Cuban Revolution. The Cuban government has for decades demanded the withdrawal of U.S. forces. As Cuban president Fidel Castro says in a speech reprinted in this issue, the camp represents "the illegal and arbitrary occupation of a piece of our territory."

This provocation is combined with the U.S. government's

frame-up and jailing of five Cuban revolutionaries, fighters who Castro appropriately calls "heroes of the republic of Cuba" who were "defending their people to the death."

These events help show that what U.S. imperialism does abroad is an extension of what is happening in the United States; and what is happening abroad is a technicolor version of what the U.S. rulers will seek to impose on workers and farmers at home.

The treatment of prisoners at Guantánamo goes hand in hand with the accelerated attacks on workers' rights by the employers and their government, both done under the guise of "keeping America safe from terrorism." This includes police searches, broadening authority for cops to spy on working people, jailings and detentions of immigrants and others, firing of workers for their political views, and attempts to refurbish the use of the death penalty.

The announcement by the Justice Department that it intends to seek the execution of Zacarias Moussaoui, who is facing charges of conspiracy in relation to the September 11 events, should be a warning to all working people. When the U.S. rulers can't prove a person actually did something—as in the case of the five Cubans and Julius and Ethel Rosenberg—they weave a conspiracy frame-up on their victim.

The U.S. ruling class is the number one enemy of working people in the United States and around the world. They have no moral, legal, class, or historic right to keep the Guantánamo prisoners in barbaric imprisonment. Every working person, defender of democratic rights, and fighter against police brutality and other injustices can join in demanding their immediate and unconditional release!

Malcolm X's revolutionary legacy

Malcolm X is among the outstanding revolutionary leaders of the working class and the oppressed. His writings and speeches belong in books and institutions that are available to working people and those fighting racial oppression and capitalist exploitation the world over. They should not be turned into commodities to be sold to the highest bidder, as an auction house has recently tried to do.

All those who oppose imperialism and its assaults on working people today—from Washington's war in Afghanistan and the one it is preparing against Iraq, to police killings of Black youth and attacks on the social wage at home—will welcome the uncompromising revolutionary course advocated by Malcolm X.

Nearly four decades after his assassination, ever-greater numbers of young people, workers, and farmers around the world want to read what he had to say. Through their own experiences, many will come to agree with his opposition to both the Democrats and Republicans, the twin parties of the racist ruling class. Working people not only gain knowledge and clarity from his speeches and writings, but a firmer conviction of our own capacities, together with others, to organize and take on the most powerful imperialist government on the face of the earth.

The *Militant* was the main place you could find Malcolm's speeches in print from 1963 until his assassination in 1965. Like Pathfinder Press, which has worked to keep Malcolm's speeches and writings in print for nearly four decades since then, the *Militant* was always scrupulous in maintaining the integrity of his words as he said them and wrote them. That's why we strongly support Malcolm's daughter, the Schomburg Center, and others who are calling for the wealth of documents now in the

profiteering hands of the eBay auction house to be kept together and given to an institution that will organize them, preserve them, and make them accessible.

While there's every reason to believe there will be no surprises or revelations, the material in eBay's hands will reinforce understanding and knowledge of Malcolm's views and political evolution as known by many from reading the speeches already in print.

This includes internationalizing the struggle against racism, as he put it, and championing socialist revolutions in Cuba and China that broke the chains of imperialist domination. Malcolm welcomed the defeat of Washington by toilers fighting for their liberation around the world. "I'm not an American," he said, "[I'm] one of the victims of Americanism."

During the last year of his life Malcolm explained his political evolution, including why the term Black nationalism was no longer adequate to describe his political course and increasingly prosocialist views. As Malcolm changed his views about Black nationalism, he strengthened his uncompromising stance against the U.S. capitalist rulers and their twin parties of colonialism and racism.

Malcolm's speeches, interviews, and statements are steered by incorruptible honesty and revolutionary integrity—qualities that nobody can put a price on. Placing his revolutionary political legacy in a public institution that makes it available to whoever wants to use it would be an appropriate tribute to his life. The material belongs to the workers movement and to fighters against Black oppression who will put it to use—not on an auction block such as those where his forebears were once sold into capitalist slavery.

U.S. prepares assault on Iraq

Continued from Page 7

States interests, or the interest of the region, or the world's interest," Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Abdullah told ABC News.

"The people who are dying today on the streets are not a result of any Iraqi action. The people are dying as a result of an Israeli action," said Crown Prince Salman of Bahrain, reflecting the anxiety of the Arab rulers at the prospect of supporting an imperialist onslaught against Iraq while Tel Aviv conducts its unrelenting assault on the Palestinian people.

A number of Arab officials encouraged Cheney to both help de-escalate Israel's assaults on the Palestinians and press harder for the return of UN "weapons inspectors" to Iraq.

"We will try this direction as far as we can," Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak said in a joint press conference with Cheney at a U.S. military base in Sharm El-Sheikh. "Then after that, if there is nothing happening, we will find out what will be done" by Washington. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, Mubarak "didn't rule out the possibility" of joining a U.S.-led military operation aimed at overthrowing the Iraqi government.

Government officials in the Arab countries also recognize that their statements of opposition to Washington's military plans mean little to their imperial overlords. "The

Americans these days don't even listen to the Europeans, so are they going to listen to us?" asked an unnamed Arab official quoted in the *Financial Times*.

Mild criticism from Moscow

The Russian government, which opposed the 1998 air strikes, issued mild criticism of Washington's latest war drive against Iraq.

Defense minister Igor Ivanov called for a large team of international inspectors to search Iraq for "weapons of mass destruction." If weapons are found, he said, "we have to meet again and decide what further pressure should be applied."

The U.S. drive to war on Iraq has sparked divisions within the Labour government of Prime Minister Anthony Blair. Home Secretary David Blunkett warned cabinet members that an invasion of Iraq could provoke "major disturbances" in Britain. Some 120 Labour Members of Parliament signed a House of Commons resolution opposing British involvement in any U.S. military action.

Clare Short, the international development secretary, said on BBC television that she might resign if London joined a military assault against Iraq. "I'm proud to be a member of the government but I've got lots of bottom lines," she declared. "I don't expect the government to breach them but if they did I would [resign]."

Socialist meeting

Continued from Page 6

each branch to lead the weekly implementation of party decisions. Participants noted that leadership collaboration and drawing on the capacities of all members raise the political level of forums, and sales at plant gates and in the workers districts.

Norton Sandler presented a balance sheet of the work of the party's New York local since the previous National Committee meeting and fusion of the New York Young Socialists chapter with the local party branches. In addition to YS members who joined the ranks of the SWP that weekend, two workers joined the party a couple of weeks afterward, he reported.

This opportunity posed new challenges for the local branches. At the time of the fusion, the National Committee outlined the main tasks before the three New York branches to deepen the proletarianization of those branches.

These included working with new members to chart out a plan to get jobs in workplaces where the party plans to build industrial trade union fractions. Integrated into organizing this work are discussions and classes that take up the proletarian character of the party and the centrality of its orientation to the industrial proletariat.

Classes for new members were also placed as one of the main responsibilities of the weekly work of the branch executive committees. The class series needs to start with the communist continuity of the SWP, said Sandler, beginning with the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia and the struggle to build a Bolshevik party in the United States. Through carrying out the weekly activity of the party and taking part in this kind of class series, a new member begins to internalize revolutionary centralism and party patriotism and the fact that communist strategy and theory grow out of an understanding of the line of march, conditions, and ultimate general results of the proletarian movement—not out of a doctrine of "good ideas."

English classes for new members whose first language is not English are also a priority in building a party of equals who can function in the dominant language of bourgeois and working-class politics in the United States, he said.

The New York branches got off to a slow start in implementing those decisions, said Sandler, but had begun to chart a course to do so leading up to the weekend meeting.

Capturing the spirit of the opportunities to recruit to the communist movement in the period ahead, Waters said that "We're looking for proletarian soldiers." *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* is one of the best books to introduce working people to the struggle to build a revolutionary movement capable of overthrowing capitalism in the United States, she said. The spring campaign to sell *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* subscriptions will be coupled with goals for sales of that book.

The drive to make a success of the campaign to sell \$500,000 in Pathfinder books by July 1 will help introduce more workers and youth to the communist movement. Pathfinder's latest title, *From the Escambray to the Congo*, will be a feature of the book sales effort.

Malcolm X documents

Continued from Page 4

\$500,000 for the archive, which was to be put up for sale March 20 at its Butterfields auction house in San Francisco and on the Internet. The items were shown to reporters on March 7 in San Francisco for the first time before a three-day public viewing.

"These papers and images represent the most significant collection of Malcolm X material ever brought to the auction market," crowed Catherine Williamson, director of Butterfields' Books and Manuscripts Department.

In 1999 Butterfields had attempted to auction off the bullet-riddled telephone book Malcolm carried in his breast pocket when he was assassinated. The diary had been removed from the New York police archives.

The company halted the auction of Malcolm's archives after receiving a letter from Joseph Fleming, the lawyer representing some of Malcolm X's daughters. Fleming cited "possible irregularities" in the way the property arrived on the auction block. "The family's goal is to receive the property," he said. "If that involves litigation, they'll spend the time and money to do that. If that involves some compromise with all of the parties, they are prepared for that."

"We would just like to get all the papers together in one place," said Ilyasah Shabazz, one of the daughters.

An article in the *New York Times* headlined "Malcolm X Letters Show His Evolution" said the documents that were to be auctioned "offer fresh insights into the evolution of Malcolm X's thinking." Dozens of Malcolm's speeches have been kept in print by Pathfinder Press since his assassination in 1965, including many from the final year of his life. The first volume, *Malcolm X Speaks*, was published just a few months after his death. A companion volume, *By Any Means Necessary*, followed in 1970. Another Pathfinder title *February 1965: The Final Speeches* is a collection of speeches and interviews by Malcolm X from the last three weeks of his life. Pathfinder also publishes *Malcolm X Talks to Young People* and several other titles.

Howard Dodson of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in New York City's Harlem, is proposing the papers be donated to the institution. The Schomburg is a division of the New York Public Library and is considered one of the world's main repositories of African and African-American history.

Dodson, who is director of the center, said Malcolm X's family members told him that "the Schomburg is their preferred place" for the archives.

The class struggle and the fight for women's rights

Printed below is an excerpt from *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women* by Joseph Hansen, Evelyn Reed, and Mary-Alice Waters. This is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for March. The item quoted is from the chapter titled "The woman question and the Marxist method," by Evelyn Reed. Copyright © 1986 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.

BY EVELYN REED

The woman question cannot be divorced from the class question. Any confusion on this score can only lead to erroneous conclusions and setbacks. It will divert the class struggle into a sex struggle of all women against all men.

Historically, the sex struggle was part of

things, for the right of women as well as men to hold property in their own name. They won this right. Today, plutocratic women hold fabulous wealth in their own names. They are completely in alliance with the plutocratic men to perpetuate the capitalist system. They are not in alliance with the working women, whose needs can only be served through the abolition of capitalism. Thus, the emancipation of working women will not be achieved in alliance with women of the enemy class, but just the opposite; in a struggle *against* them as part and parcel of the whole class struggle.

The attempt to identify the interests of all classes of women as a sex takes one of its most insidious forms in the field of female beauty. The bourgeois myth has arisen that since all women want to be beautiful, they all have the same interest in cosmetics and fashions which are currently identified with beauty. To buttress this myth, it is claimed that fashion beauty has prevailed throughout all ages of history and for all classes of women. As evidence, they point to the fact that even in primitive society, women painted and decorated their bodies. To explode this myth, let us briefly examine the history of cosmetics and fashions.

In primitive society, where there were no classes, no economic and social competition, and no sexual competition, the bodies of *both* women and men were painted and "decorated," and it was *not* for the sake of beauty. It was a necessity that arose out of certain primeval and primitive conditions of labor, which I shall explain in detail in future articles.¹

It was necessary at that time for each individual who belonged to the kinship group to be "marked" as such. These "marks" were not merely ornaments, rings, bracelets, short-skirts, etc., but actual gashes, incisions, tattoo marks, etc. as well as different kinds of painting. These marks indicated not only the sex of each individual but the changing age and labor status of each individual as he matured from a child to an elder.

These marks identified the kindred members of the same group or labor collective. Since primitive society was socialist, these marks also expressed *social equality*. The bourgeois anthropologists will not reveal all



Militant/Colin McKay

Some 30,000 people marched in Montreal in defense of women's rights, October 2000.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

the bourgeois feminist movement of the last century. It was a reform movement, conducted within the framework of the capitalist system, and not seeking to overthrow it. But it was a progressive struggle in that women revolted against almost total male domination on the economic, social, and domestic fronts. Through the feminist movement, a number of important reforms were won for women. But the bourgeois feminist movement has run its course, achieved its limited aims, and the problems of today can only be resolved in the struggle of class against class.

The woman question can only be resolved through the lineup of working men and women against the ruling men and women. This means that the interests of the workers as a *class* are identical; and not the interests of all women as a *sex*.

Ruling-class women have exactly the same interest in upholding and perpetuating capitalist society as their men have. The bourgeois feminists fought, among other

of this to you, but neither can they reveal anything about the underlying economic and social forces that govern either primitive or modern society.

Then came class society. The marks that signified, among other things, *social equality* under primitive socialism, became transformed into their opposite. They became fashions and decorations that signified *social inequality*: the division of society into rich and poor, into rulers and subjugated. Cosmetics and fashions became the marks of social distinction between the classes and the apex of this social distinction is found in the French Court before the French Revolution.

Among these kings, princes, and landed gentry, *both* men and women were dressed in the height of fashion, with their painted faces, powdered hair, lace ruffles, gold ornaments, and the like. Both sexes were "beautiful" according to the standards of the day. But, more decisively, both sexes in the ruling class were demarcated by these cosmetics and fashions from the peasants who sweated for them on the land and who were, by the same standards, not beautiful. Fashion at that period was the mark of *class distinction* of both sexes of the ruling class against both sexes of the working class.

Then, for certain historical reasons we will not go into here, men left the field of fashion primarily to the women. The big bourgeois, who emerged after the French Revolution, established his class standing through the fashions of his wife, and in other ways, in place of himself wearing gold pants and lace ruffles. Among the women, however, fashions were still the mark of *class* distinction and not *sex* identity in the days

of "Judy O'Grady and the Colonel's lady."²

But as capitalism developed, there arose an enormous expansion of the productive machine and with it the need for a mass market. Since women represent half the population, profiteers in "beauty" eyed this mass and lusted to exploit it for their own purposes. And so the fashion field was expanded out of the narrow confines of the rich and made socially obligatory upon the whole female population.

Now, for the first time, *class distinctions* were covered over and concealed behind *sex identity*, to serve the needs of this sector of big business. And the bourgeois hucksters began grinding out the propaganda: All women want to be beautiful. Therefore all women have the same interest in cosmetics and fashions. Beauty became identical with fashion and all women were sold on their common "needs and wants" for these fashions.

Today, billions are coined out of every department in the fashion field; cosmetics, clothes, hairdos, slenderizing salons, beauty salons, jewelry, fake and real, and so on. Beauty, it was discovered, was a very flexible formula. All you had to do to become rich was to discover a new aid to beauty and convince the whole population of women that they "needed and wanted" this aid.

¹See *Woman's Evolution*, especially pp. 99-103, 282-95.

²This quotation is paraphrased from Rudyard Kipling's poem "The Ladies." Its last two lines are "For the Colonel's Lady an' Judy O'Grady / Are sisters under their skins."

LETTERS

Yucca Mountain site

I noted in a recent Associated Press article that the Energy Department has spent \$7 billion studying the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste repository—and is now limping toward a conclusion, of sorts, that President Bush claims is based on "intense scientific scrutiny." Regardless, the issuance of a license from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for any facility may still be light years away, as the waste from our commercial reactors continues to grow by 2,000 tons annually.

This prompted me to look in my files for a 1984 article about the Energy Department's steps to put up "symbols or monuments so that future generations will understand they can't drill wells or otherwise intrude on these repositories," as one official said.

Among the options explored were creating a "modern Stonehenge" to ring the sites; establishing an "atomic priesthood" to produce "accumulated superstition to shun a certain area permanently"; and genetically encoding a warning in human genes through "microsurgical intervention with the human molecular blueprint."

These folks can be downright scary.

Frank Johnson
Tenants Harbor, Maine

Interested in your party

I would like to find out more about your party and organization. Do you have supporters in Israel? Is there any chance I can get your newspaper? What do you think about the conflict in Israel/Palestine and its

solution? The revolution in Cuba. I am a Trotskyist, 21 years old, would like to know more about the positions of the Socialist Workers Party. Revolutionary greetings.

D.M.
Israel

Antiwar protests

In terms of concrete protests against the U.S. "war on terrorism," *Militant* articles like the March 18 headline article, "End imperialist assault on Afghanistan! U.S. out!" have called for "Joining marches for black lung benefits, picket lines against police brutality, strikes of nurses and meat packers, and rallies against government austerity measures."

This glaringly omits protests against the war itself. Socialists and all opponents of U.S. military aggression need to work to organize the largest possible protests against the brutal war on Afghanistan and other U.S. military interventions, as well as "joining" protests against police brutality and union struggles. I have not seen any mention of it in the *Militant*, but there is a national march on Washington against the war and against racist attacks on Saturday, April 20.

Joe Callahan
Minneapolis,

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people.

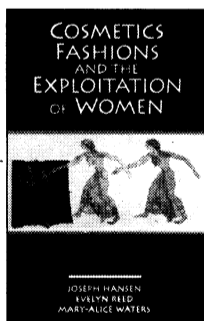
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March BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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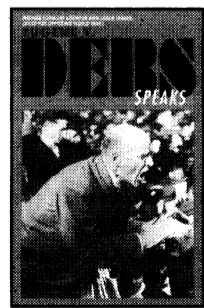
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Rally backs locked-out Labatt unionists

BY PATRICIA O'BEIRNE

LONDON, Ontario—Six hundred supporters of workers locked out by the Labatt brewing company rallied here March 9. The 300 members of the Brewery General and Professional Workers' Union were put on the street by the company January 8.

"We have very big community support because everyone has been touched by part-time work in Ontario," said Joe Gavin, a trucker at Labatt, commenting on the size of the rally. The treatment of new hires and younger workers "is not just an issue at Labatt, it's everywhere," he said.

The truck driver explained that one-third of the union members at the brewery's London plant will be eligible for retirement in the next five years and about 80 percent over the next 10 years. The union members "are not in this for themselves," he added. "It is the young people, the temps—that's the main issue."

Outsourcing of jobs

Labatt Breweries of Canada locked out the workers after they voted by a 97 percent margin to reject the company's final contract offer. The two main issues for the union are the bosses' hiring of temporary workers and the outsourcing of existing jobs. The London plant is the second largest Labatt plant in Canada and the only canning plant in Ontario. Workers at the rally said Labatt has been responding to expanding beer sales in the U.S. market and has room to expand the London plant.

Union members say the issue of temporary workers is important because Labatt wants to increase use of part-time workers as it expands production at the London plant. Temporary workers earn less than half of what full-time workers do, received few benefits, and have little possibility of becoming permanent, full time employees.

Jim King, a shipper with 25 years seniority at Labatt, said the company had them ship "a whole lot of beer to places the union knew were fictitious customers before the lockout. Everyone knew the company was preparing a lockout." King said the Toronto local at the Labatt plant voted to accept a contract 24 hours before London was locked out. "But they didn't really understand the implications for London of the temp issue, since it's a lesser issue in Toronto," he said. "They were offered a reduction of 5 per-



Militant/Elvidio Mejia

Above and bottom left: Members and supporters of Brewery General and Professional Workers' Union demonstrated in London, Ontario, March 9 against lockout by Labatt Breweries of Canada. Workers are protesting company's expanding use of temporary workers and outsourcing of jobs.

cent in permanent personnel to keep it steady at 250 union members, which they accepted, because their workforce cannot expand by much."

The London local had accepted unrestricted numbers of temporary workers six years ago because Labatt said they would close the Toronto plant, and that union members there would be offered bumping rights to work in London. But the company has kept the Toronto plant open. The union at the London plant was then faced with a situ-

ation in which the company had the unlimited right to hire temporary workers.

"It's just unbelievable how the young people are treated," King said. "It's like terrorism on the temps. You're allowed three refusals for call-ins, and then you're told you're not fitting into the program."

Union member Ian Goody said that if the company "can break the union here they will do it at the other breweries all over Canada." He said it was "pretty hard to tell the difference" between the bosses at Labatt and

Ontario premier Mike Harris or Alberta premier Ralph Klein. "They're only working for one group of people in our society as far as I'm concerned."

In addition to the locked-out workers and their families, workers from 15 other unions were also present to show their solidarity. Among them were 100 members of the Canadian Auto Workers from the Ford plant in Talbotville, Ontario, and members of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU) who went out on strike against the Ontario government March 13. A number of union members locked out at Labatt have joined picket lines of the OPSEU in London as well.

Several high school students came to the rally to show their support, including Jodi Kennedy, a 17-year-old student at South Secondary School in London. She is doing a school project on the lockout because "it's something I really believe in. I don't think it's right that Labatt is treating these workers this way. I really respect that they're doing this for the next generation."

Mike Derrough, who is in charge of organizing picketing for Ontario, explained that locked-out union

members have set up informational picket lines at beer distribution centers in Brampton, Whitby, London, and the Labatt plant in Toronto, among others. The union is calling for a boycott of Labatt products and says the company has already lost 20 percent of its market in London and 2.3 percent in Ontario. Each percentage point represents lost sales of Can\$13 million (US\$8.2 million). Following the 1985 strike, the company lost 5 percent of the market share and it took them five years to get it back, he said.

Government employees in Ontario walk out

BY ROBERT SIMMS

TORONTO—Members of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU) are waging their second strike in six years. Since the March 13 walkout, 33,000 members have set up picket lines around government office buildings and work sites where the functions of government ministries are carried out such as health, education, transportation, provincial parks, and court clerks.

Union members voted for the walkout with an 88 percent majority. Six years ago, OPSEU waged its first strike ever with a 65 percent strike vote.

The main issues in the strike are wages, demands of the government bosses for cuts to benefits, contracting out of union jobs, and the inability of temporary or casual workers, even after years of working for the government, to get "permanent" jobs. The government wants to make it even harder for casual workers to win permanent jobs.

Union members are demanding wage increases of 5 percent annually over three years while the government is offering 1.95 percent.

Since it was elected nearly seven years ago, the Conservative government has carried out massive spending cuts to all government services, including health, education, and the environment. One of the most notorious was at the Ministry of Natural Resources, responsible for environmental testing.

Cuts to staff and regulations led to the situation in Walkerton, Ontario, two years ago where unsupervised water tests led to the deaths of seven people and more than 2,300 people becoming ill in a town of 4,800 from a dangerous form of E. Coli in the town's water supply. The Conservative government is widely blamed for the catastrophe.

At one picket line set up outside an environmental testing laboratory in Toronto's north end, government scientist Dallas

Takeuchi said workers are worried not only about their own conditions on the job but also about how well public health is being protected. For example, even before the strike began there was a one-month backlog for testing water, soil, and other samples for contamination, due to lack of scientists and technicians.

When the union went on strike six years

ago, it had 55,000 members. But the Conservative government's cuts have eliminated more than 10,000 jobs in the civil service.

OPSEU also includes several thousand prison guards in its current membership of 45,000, but the government deems these essential workers and they remain at work. Emergency dispatch workers (911) also remain on the job.

Workers in Auckland, New Zealand, rally against social service cutbacks

BY JOHN COLLINS

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—The Auckland City Council, led by Mayor John Banks, a millionaire and minister of police in the previous national government, is running into opposition from working people to its plans to cut social services in New Zealand's largest city.

The council has announced its intention to increase rents on 1,641 pensioner housing units, and to sell the units when the existing tenants die or move out. The council also wants to sell 130 general rental houses. "They should be ashamed of what they're doing," said Elizabeth Withers, who lives in one of a complex of 140 council-owned pensioner flats in the working-class suburb of Otahuhu. "After the years of service we have given this country, people deserve better."

Chanting "John Banks, no thanks! David Hay, no way!" 1,200 people marched in downtown Auckland March 16. Hay is the deputy mayor. Over the previous month, a series of public meetings have provided an opportunity to speak out against the council's proposals, and protesters have voiced their opposition at city council meetings.

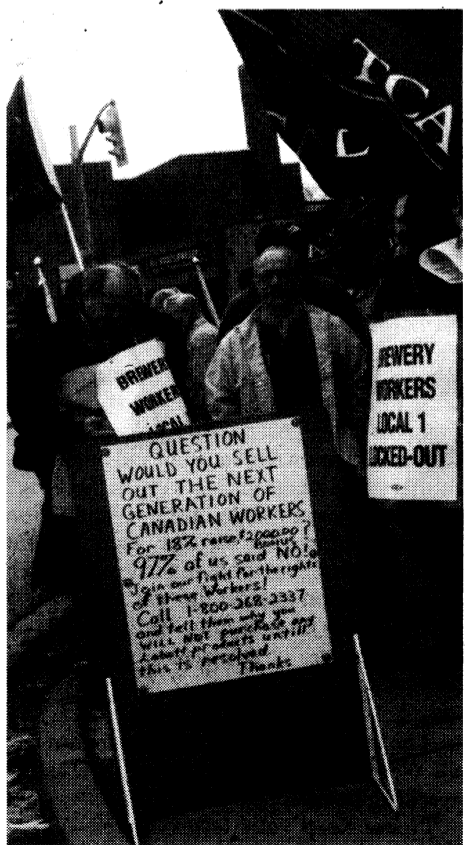
"Twenty-three of us were at the meeting

in the Otahuhu town hall," said Withers. "We didn't have transport for the march downtown, and some people here can't walk very far, but we've asked for a march from this complex. We'd love that."

In addition to targeting housing, the council's proposals include increases to rates (local taxes) that would impact most heavily on working people, including a flat annual charge of \$121 for rubbish collections, and the removal of rebates on water bills. At the same time, a council budget projects a 3.9 percent rates reduction for businesses in the central city, and a 1.7 percent reduction for other businesses.

Other measures are the sale of car park buildings and the council's stake in the city's airport, and the slashing of spending on arts, culture, and recreational activities. A report commissioned by the council from former national government finance minister William Birch, which recommended many of the "cost-cutting" measures the council aims to introduce, stated, "The provision of arts, culture, and recreation is not a public good."

The council has already acted to end special services for immigrants, in a city where according to the latest government census one in three of the population was born overseas.



Militant/Elvidio Mejia