

# THE MILITANT

**INSIDE**  
Socialist conference in Atlanta  
builds communist movement

— PAGES 8–9

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## Widows' walk rooted in decades of struggle by coal miners

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

PITTSBURGH—Despite rain storms and snow, the widows' walk for miners' black lung benefits is making steady progress through the mountainous roads of northern West Virginia. Along the way Linda Chapman and Phyllis Tipton, who are leading the effort, have been joined by supporters, and are receiving solidarity from passersby and onlookers, as well as attracting some media attention.

A union rally in Uniontown, Pennsylvania, April 1 will mark the halfway point of the month-long 450-mile journey to Washington. The event is sponsored by District 2 of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA).

Their walk from Charleston, West Virginia, to the nation's capital is aimed at mobilizing support for the struggle of working people that has emerged over the past several years in the coalfield regions to demand the federal government and coal companies provide benefits to miners who contract black lung disease and their families. The action is also putting a spotlight on the fact that black lung, more than 30 years after the 1969 Mine Health and Safety Act was enacted, still runs rampant in the coalfields.

Black lung, also known as coal workers' pneumoconiosis, is a debilitating and sometimes fatal respiratory disease. The UMWA estimates that 1,500 miners die each year from the disease.

In the years after the passage of the 1969

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## Socialists call subscription campaign for 'Militant,' PM'

BY JACK WILLEY

Socialist workers and Young Socialists in eight countries are getting organized for an eight-week campaign from April 13 to June 9 to widen the readership of the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and Pathfinder books among working people resisting the assaults by the employers and their governments. Supporters aim to sell in the range of 900 subscriptions to the *Militant* and 450 to *PM*, and are organizing for the week of April 13–21 to be an intensive kickoff of the effort.

A second aspect of the drive is to sell hundreds of copies of *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*, by Jack Barnes. The book is available in English, French, and Spanish and will be offered for only \$10 for the duration of the circulation campaign.

Over the past months the socialist publications have been welcomed by, among others, coal miners and participants in protests condemning police brutality across the United States; unionists at the 20,000-strong march in Victoria, British Columbia; and working people and youth at rallies to oppose the brutal treatment of immigrants by the Australian government. Many are interested in reading the *Militant* or *Perspectiva Mundial* not only because of the coverage provided of their own struggles but for the wide range of articles on U.S. and world

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## U.S. must end all aid to murderous Israeli regime

### For a democratic, secular Palestine!

Working people in the United States should demand an immediate end to Washington's aid to the Israeli regime, which in the last month has escalated its murderous attacks on Palestinians. U.S. funds and military equipment continue to pour into Israel, even as the U.S. government presents itself as a neutral party in the efforts to force the Palestinian leadership to halt the nearly one-and-a-half-year period of heightened Palestinian resistance.

The intolerable conditions imposed on Palestinian working people, from the mounting death toll to the wholesale destruction of farms, homes, and public buildings, and the lockdown imposed on an entire people,

### EDITORIAL

underline the pressing need to build a movement to overthrow the Israeli state and establish a democratic, secular Palestine. Only through such a revolution will Palestinians and Jews be able to live as equals, regardless of race or creed. A principal demand of such a struggle is the right of all Palestinians to return to their former family homes.

As U.S. government officials apply pressure to cobble together an agreement to tamp down the fighting, all they have to offer are variations of the deals signed in the last decade, built on attempts to divide the Palestinians and stifle their resistance by setting up a "statelet" on tiny areas of land. The

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Palestinians rally in Jabaliya refugee camp, Gaza Strip, on February 8. Their struggle against Israeli occupation is having a deep impact among Israeli working people.

## 'U.S. government frame-up of five Cuban revolutionaries is an assault on working people'

BY GREG McCARTAN

NEWYORK—At a Militant Labor Forum here March 22, *Perspectiva Mundial* editor Martin Koppel said the defense of five Cuban revolutionaries framed up and imprisoned by the U.S. government takes place in "a world of sharpening conflict between workers and farmers on the one hand and the wealthy ruling classes of the capitalist world, including in this country, on the other."

The brutal treatment of prisoners in Afghanistan and at the Guantánamo naval base in Cuba by the U.S. government and military shows what the imperialist rulers have

in store for all working people, Koppel said. He encouraged those at the forum to campaign to get out the truth about this assault and to demand the immediate release of all those held by U.S. and allied forces.

Koppel, who is a leader of the Socialist Workers Party, pointed to the Mideast, where the Palestinian people in their hundreds of thousands are standing up in the face of savage Israeli military occupation and assaults. And in Cuba, a strengthening of the revolution can be seen in "a giant movement to expand culture and educational opportunities—something that is only

possible because working people have made a socialist revolution in Cuba and hold state power," Koppel said.

The resistance to the employers' assaults by working people in the United States includes the Machinists strike at Lockheed and the Widows' Walk to Washington to demand the government guarantee federal benefits for widows and miners suffering from the disease.

"Last June, five Cuban revolutionaries were framed up and convicted in federal court in the United States on a series of con-

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## Goodwill withdraws challenge to socialist's unemployment benefits

BY CHRIS HOEPPNER

MIAMI—"Goodwill Industries has just retreated from its attempts to deny me unemployment benefits," said Michael Italie. "This is a victory for all workers fighting employer attacks on our rights. It shows that we can win when we stand up to bosses like Dennis Pastrana of Goodwill, and reach out for support from other workers and farmers in struggle."

Italie, a sewing machine operator, was the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Miami in the 2001 elections. Goodwill bosses fired him October 22 a few days after a televised debate where he explained his opposition to the war in Afghanistan and his defense of the Cuban Revolution. Goodwill CEO Dennis Pastrana told the

*Miami Herald* on October 30 that he fired the socialist candidate because "we cannot have anyone who is attempting to subvert the United States of America."

Italie and his supporters have mounted a nationwide campaign to defend workers' rights and have gathered thousands of signatures demanding the socialist worker be rehired by Goodwill. The fight has joined with others across the country who are also standing up to firings and victimization by the employers and the government.

On March 4, Goodwill filed a formal appeal of Italie's eligibility to receive unemployment benefits. A hearing was set for April 2 at the Office of Appeals in Miami. In its appeal Goodwill representative Annette

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# U.S. rulers reinforce military operations in Afghanistan

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

Week-by-week, U.S. imperialism is taking steps to reinforce its garrisons in Afghanistan and extend military-police operations across the country. Acknowledging that there is no prospect of putting in place a stable pro-imperialist regime, Washington is reluctantly establishing direct control of Afghanistan.

At the request of the U.S. military command, the first of 1,700 British marine commandos arrived at the U.S. Bagram air base in eastern Afghanistan this past week, bringing the total British deployment inside the country to 6,000 troops—a number comparable to the U.S. force. Noting the vulnerability of helicopters to ground fire such as during fighting at Shah-i-Kot, the Pentagon also announced that it had flown in A-10 “Thunderbolt” attack jets to Bagram. The slow-flying aircraft, armed with a seven-barrel Gatling gun that can fire 3,900 rounds a minute, can also carry bombs and missiles. It is the first fixed-wing aircraft to be stationed in Afghanistan and is used in close air support to ground attacks, said Maj. Gen. Franklin Hagenbeck.

U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. John Rosa, the deputy director of the current operations of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, said on March 19 that U.S. operations in Afghanistan “still continue. We still have teams operating in the area, looking for any remaining Taliban and al Qaeda, searching caves and in other positions they may have occupied.” Attacks on other areas in the eastern and southern parts of the country are being planned, officials said.

“We continue to watch all of Afghanistan. We have assets and resources available to do that for reconnaissance on the ground, intelligence, [and] cooperation with Afghan forces,” said Maj. Brad Powell, a Pentagon spokesman at the central command post in Tampa, Florida, March 24.

Four days earlier, U.S. aircraft bombed an area in Khost, near the border with Pakistan, after a U.S. soldier and several allied

troops were injured in an ambush.

The governor of the eastern province of Khost is demanding that the U.S. Special Forces hand over several men apparently involved in an assassination attempt on the province’s chief of security. The accused men are among a large number of mercenaries that U.S. forces have recruited, armed, and paid \$200 to serve as foot soldiers. The men are often recruited from rival militias, according to the *Financial Times*.

As officials in the Bush administration have publicly trumpeted the creation of a national Afghan army, a U.S. government review states that at most only 4,000 Afghan troops will be equipped and trained by the end of September. A further year after that will be required to attain a strength of 12,000 troops.

News reports since the conclusion of the imperialist offensive at Shah-i-Kot help show both the lack of any central authority outside of the occupying armies headed by Washington and the divisions and conflicts among the ruling layers in Afghanistan.

## Divisions in Afghan ruling layers

Midway through the 11-day assault, “question marks over the reliability of local Pashtun militias were underscored by the Afghan government’s decision...to reinforce the allied contingent with 1,000 ethnic Tajik fighters from the Northern Alliance,” reported the March 14 issue of *Time* magazine. The alliance, whose brutal rule preceded the Taliban regime, provided the principal proxy troops for the imperialists in the first months of the war.

The article in the big-business weekly, entitled “What We Learned in Shah-i-Kot,” reported that “pro-government Pashtun commanders in nearby Gardez have called for the Tajiks to be withdrawn, some saying their men would rather have the Taliban and al Qaeda on their turf than the Northern Alliance.” Noting that “the ongoing campaign in Afghanistan runs the risk of exacerbating ethnic tensions,” *Time* concluded, “Shah-



i-Kot may be another reminder of why Afghanistan is not famous for short wars.”

In an indication of similar divisions at the national level, 87-year-old Mohammad Zahir Shah, who ruled Afghanistan as king until his overthrow in 1973, announced on March 23 the postponement of his planned return to his “number 8” palace in Kabul. The delay, reported the *New York Times*, resulted from strains within the government “that roughly parallel the ethnic split between Mr. Karzai, a member of the Pashtun tribe that is Afghanistan’s most populous, and members of the Tajik, Uzbek, and Hazara minorities who owe their role in the government to their membership in the Northern Alliance.”

## Protests in Kyrgyzstan

Signs that social and class conflicts are on the rise in the broader region where U.S. imperialism is seeking to strengthen its military foothold have also appeared. In Kyrgyzstan, protests erupted during March over the government jailing of Azimbek Beknazarov, an opposition parliamentarian known as an outspoken critic of the government of President Askar Akayev.

The government’s interior minister announced that in the course of two days of protests, police had attacked thousands of demonstrators in Kerben and other towns in the south of the country, killing four and injuring many more.

Akayev, who has accused “Islamic radicals” from neighboring Uzbekistan of stirring up dissent against his government, claimed that the opposition forces had mounted an attempted coup. Following the protests, however, and with expressions of Washington’s “concern” ringing in his ears, Akayev released Beknazarov.

Since launching its assault on Afghanistan Washington has established the beginnings of a major airbase near Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan. Hundreds of U.S. and allied imperialist troops, along with fighter jets, have been stationed there.

The *Financial Times* observed that the events “raised uncomfortable questions

about the stability of one of the U.S.’s newest and most important bases.” U.S. officials, noted the London-based daily, “have said they anticipated little opposition among the local population to Kyrgyzstan’s new position as a frontline state in the war against the Taliban in nearby Afghanistan.”

## Instability in Pakistan

The Pakistani regime of Gen. Pervez Musharaff is also threatened with growing instability and continued opposition to its backing to the U.S. assault against neighboring Afghanistan. The military ruler, who seized power in a 1999 coup, has suggested that rather than face elections he may hold a referendum to legitimize a further five years of rule.

The proposal from “one of Washington’s most critical allies in the war,” reported the March 23 *New York Times*, “is not likely to be met with any objection by the United States or the European Union.”

For 28 of the 55 years since Pakistan was formed as a pro-imperialist outpost against the Indian revolution, the country has been ruled by a military government. The Musharaff regime has announced its intention of expelling around 7,000 Arab, Afghan, and other foreign students studying at religious schools in Pakistan. New enrollments will be forbidden.

The Pakistani government alleges that forces opposed to Musharaff’s wholesale backing for the imperialist invasion of Afghanistan were involved in the kidnapping and assassination of *Wall Street Journal* reporter Daniel Pearl, and a grenade attack on a church in Islamabad that took five lives, including that of an employee of the U.S. embassy in Islamabad.

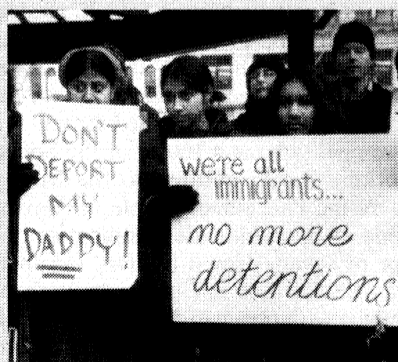
Maj. Gen. Franklin Hagenbeck of the U.S. 10th Mountain Division, the commander of U.S. forces at the Bagram base, said that U.S. forces might pursue Taliban and al Qaeda forces across the border into Pakistan. The region around the two countries’ border, home to a majority Pashtun population, is known as a stronghold of op-

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### Free Cuban prisoners held in U.S. jails

Five Cuban revolutionaries were sentenced to long terms in U.S. prisons as Washington began setting up its prison camp on Cuban soil at Guantánamo Bay. These assaults on workers’ rights go hand-in-hand with the detentions of more than 1,200 immigrants, raids on Arabs’ homes, and military tribunals.



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# Washington squeezes semicolonial countries

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

Top U.S. government officials used the occasion of the United Nations-sponsored International Conference on Financing for Development, held March 18-22 in Monterrey, Mexico, to press their assault on semicolonial countries, especially in Latin America. While a so-called plan to halve world poverty by 2015 received widespread publicity in the United States, the reality of the capitalist economic crisis and the fact that finance capital can never resolve the situation in the interests of working people also broke into the press.

The conference drew delegations from some 80 countries and was designed to put some pressure on the imperialist governments to increase what are called "foreign aid" budgets by 50 percent and to put the funds toward the "development" of semicolonial countries to cut hunger and increase levels of education and health care.

Washington's \$10 billion foreign aid allocation is organized to advance the interests of the small number of superwealthy families that rule the United States. It extends credits and grants to purchase goods from U.S. companies and helps prop up regimes loyal to U.S. imperialism. The countries that receive the lion's share of "aid" are Israel and Egypt, which receive \$2.8 and \$2 billion respectively.

Addressing the proposals and themes of the meeting in a speech that was boycotted by U.S. officials, Cuban president Fidel Castro summed up the imperialist system of finance capital as one that "constitutes a system of plunder and exploitation like no other in history." (See speech below.)

The *Financial Times* reported that in his speech to the meeting Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez "invoked the spirit of Simón Bolívar, legendary Latin American national liberator, and made a rhetorical call for the IMF to be supplanted by an International Humanitarian Fund, saying that the IMF's structural adjustment programs had been 'mortal poison' for the people of the developing countries."

A "Monterrey Consensus" document adopted at the meeting bore the marks of the dictates of the U.S. delegation. The general language of the document proposed to "eradicate poverty...and promote sustainable development," and reaffirmed a previously adopted UN goal of halving the number of those living in extreme poverty by 2015. No program for attaining the target was adopted, other than to emphasize the central role of the U.S.-dominated World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), along with the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the United Nations itself.

## Results of imperialist order

Information distributed by the conference organizers hinted at the scope of the oppression and exploitation imposed by the imperialist order upon the 4.6 billion people in semicolonial countries. According to UN figures:

- Some 2.5 billion people live on less than \$2 a day;
- 11 million children under the age of five die each year from preventable causes;
- More than 850 million people are illiterate;
- One billion people have no access to clean water, and more than twice that number lack access to basic sanitation.

U.S. officials at the conference, including President George Bush, made clear that a promised 50 percent increase of Washington's foreign aid budget to \$15 billion by 2006 will find its way only to countries that undertake a broad range of "reforms," meaning an end to trade barriers to U.S. goods, along with government austerity drives, the slashing of social programs, and the sale of government-owned enterprises to local and foreign capitalists.

In his Monterrey speech, Bush said, "To be serious about fighting poverty, we must be serious about expanding trade. Greater access to the markets of wealthy countries has a direct and immediate impact on the economies of developing nations."

U.S. treasury secretary Paul O'Neill added that if "we are going to have real economic development in the world, most of that will come from capital coming into those countries to create jobs. We're not going to do it with welfare."

The *New York Times* summed the U.S. approach up this way: "If the United States

is to open its wallet, poor nations must open their markets. If they undertake political, legal, and economic reforms, Washington will help them trade their way to prosperity." It added that Washington's "list of deserving nations will be much shorter than the list of needy ones."

On the eve of the conference both Bush and U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell increased the pressure on the government of Argentina to carry out draconian austerity measures in order to receive further loans from the IMF.

"We are hoping that Argentina will make the necessary reforms, the tough decisions necessary to earn the confidence of some of these international financial institutions," Bush said. "The country itself is going to have to make some tough calls, starting with reforming the relationship between the [provinces] and their budgets and the central government."

Powell said the Argentine people "have to be willing to make the necessary sacrifices...to go through the structural reforms that are necessary."

The second in command at the IMF, Anne Krueger, added at a press conference in Moscow: "Obviously, we are not going to be able to lend into a situation where they continue having the same difficulties."

The Argentine peso has lost 70 percent of its value since January, when the government in Buenos Aires ended a one-to-one peg with the dollar.

## Impact of imperialist trade barriers

A World Bank report publicized during the conference presented a different picture of the impact of such commerce. The "greatest trade barriers in the world" are those imposed by the "rich" imperialist nations, wrote bank officials.

**The following speech by Cuban president Fidel Castro was presented at the International Conference on Financing for Development, in Monterrey, Mexico, on March 21, 2002. The translation was provided by the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Cuba to the United Nations. Footnotes are by the Militant.**

## BY FIDEL CASTRO

Excellencies:

Not everyone here will share my thoughts. Still, I will respectfully say what I think.

The existing world economic order constitutes a system of plunder and exploitation like no other in history. Thus, the peoples believe less and less in statements and promises.

The prestige of the international financial institutions rates less than zero.

The world economy is today a huge casino. Recent analyses indicate that for every dollar that goes into trade, over 100 end up in speculative operations completely disconnected from the real economy.

As a result of this economic order, over 75 percent of the world's population lives in underdevelopment, and extreme poverty has already reached 1.2 billion people in the Third World. So, far from narrowing, the gap is widening.

The revenue of the richest nations, which in 1960 was 37 times larger than that of the poorest, is now 74 times larger. The situation has reached such extremes that the assets of the three wealthiest persons in the world amount to the Gross Domestic Product of the 48 poorest countries combined.

The number of people actually suffering from hunger was 826 million in the year 2001. There are at the moment 854 million illiterate adults while 325 million children do not attend school. There are 2 billion people who have no access to low cost medications and 2.4 billion lack basic sanitation conditions. No fewer than 11 million children under the age of five perish every year from preventable causes while half a million go blind for lack of vitamin A.

The lifespan of the population in the developed world is 30 years higher than that of people living in Sub-Saharan Africa. A true genocide!

The poor countries cannot be blamed for this tragedy. They neither conquered nor plundered entire continents for centuries; they did not establish colonialism, or reestablish slavery; and, modern imperialism is



Peasants demonstrating against construction of new airport near site of UN conference

WTO director Michael Moore, arguing for so-called free trade policies to be more widely adopted, cited estimates that agricultural subsidies paid by governments in North America and Western Europe effectively push exporters in the semicolonial countries out of markets worth \$250 billion a year. Such subsidies overwhelmingly favor wealthy capitalist farmers and big business. Washington spends twice as much on direct subsidies to agribusiness as it does on foreign aid, reported the *Times*.

Shortly after delivering his speech, Castro left Monterrey, explaining that "a special situation created by my participation in this summit obliges me to immediately return to my country."

In a press conference March 22 Ricardo Alarcón, the leader of the Cuban delegation following Castro's departure, exposed

Washington's role and the collusion of the Mexican government in the incident.

Before the conference, he said, "persons of high authority in the Mexican government" had told Cuban representatives of "pressure" from the U.S. government in opposition to Cuba's—and specifically Castro's—participation. In a further outrage, Mexican officials excluded Alarcón himself from participation in a "retreat" for government leaders on the grounds that the event was reserved for heads of state. In face of this affront, representatives of governments from the Caribbean and elsewhere boycotted the retreat in protest.

Alarcón described as "fundamentally false" statements by Mexican foreign minister Carlos Castañeda to the effect that nobody in the government had been authorized to place limits on Cuba's participation.

# Castro: 'A system of plunder and exploitation'

not of their making. To the contrary, they have been its victims. Therefore, the main responsibility for financing their development lies with those states that, for obvious historical reasons, enjoy today the benefits of those atrocities.

The rich world must cancel their foreign debt and grant them fresh soft loans to finance development. The traditional offers of assistance, always scant and often ridiculous, are either inadequate or unfulfilled.

For a true and sustainable economic and social development to take place much more is required than is usually admitted. Measures as those suggested by the late James Tobin<sup>1</sup> to curtail the irrepressible flow of currency speculation—although it was not his purpose to foster development—would perhaps be the only ones capable of generating enough funds, which in the hands of the UN agencies and not of baneful institutions like the IMF could supply direct development assistance with a democratic participation of all countries and without the need to sacrifice the independence and sovereignty of the peoples.

The consensus draft, which the masters of the world are imposing on this conference, expects us to accept humiliating alms that subject us to conditions and interferences.

Everything created since Bretton Woods<sup>2</sup> must be reconsidered. A farsighted vision was missing then, and the privileges and interests of the most powerful prevailed. In face of the present deep crisis, we are offered a still worse future where the economic, social and ecological tragedy of an increasingly

ungovernable world would never be resolved and where the number of the poor and the starving people would grow higher, as if a large part of humanity were doomed.

It is high time for statesmen and politicians to calmly reflect on this. The belief that a social and economic order that has proven to be unsustainable can be forcibly imposed is truly senseless.

As I have said before, the ever more sophisticated weapons piling up in the arsenals of the wealthiest and the mightiest can kill the illiterate, the ill, the poor, and the hungry but they cannot kill ignorance, illnesses, poverty, or hunger.

It should be said for once and for all: "Farewell to arms."

Something must be done to save humanity!

A better world is possible! Thank you.

<sup>1</sup>James Tobin (1918-2002) was an economist and adviser to President John Kennedy. In 1972 he proposed of 0.1-0.5 percent tax on foreign exchange transactions to limit currency speculation.

<sup>2</sup>The 1944 Bretton Woods conference, held in New England, adopted a plan presented by Washington for an international monetary system to be built around the U.S. dollar, which was fixed in relation to gold. The conference, at which 44 countries were represented, also established the International Monetary Fund. The decisions registered Washington's predominant economic and military position in the closing years of World War II. The dollar-gold standard lasted as a stable system for little more than a decade, and was officially abandoned in 1971 by the government of President Richard Nixon.

## Laundry workers in Chicago fight for union

BY LISA POTASH

CHICAGO—Thirty-eight workers are on an "unfair labor practices" strike at Carousel Linen laundry in Highwood, fighting for a contract and recognition of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE). Highwood is 25 miles north of Chicago.

Carousel Linen contracts with restaurants and large outfits like Marshall Fields department store, the American Medical Association headquarters, and the Chicago Athletic Association, to repair, launder, and press table linens for special events, such as dinners and banquets.

Carousel cut wages, bringing most workers down to the minimum wage of \$5.15 an

hour. Since the strike began at the end of October, the company has brought in replacement workers to scab on the union struggle. Strike supporters have picketed in downtown Chicago, reaching out for support for their fight. Workers at V&V Supremo Foods, Inc., a cheese factory that had been struck by members of the Teamsters, and others have joined in these actions. The strikers have also joined other labor protests, including a rally in Chicago to support UNITE members fighting for a contract at Brylane Company in Indianapolis. Representatives of Carousel Linens are now meeting with UNITE officials.

Lisa Potash is a garment worker and member of UNITE in Chicago.

# Socialist workers in UK double sales of Pathfinder in 2001

BY PAUL DAVIES

LONDON—"Sales of Victor Dreke's *From the Escambray to the Congo: In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution* have been brisk over the past few weeks since the book became available," said Rose Knight, a volunteer at the Pathfinder bookshop in London. Forty-six copies of the book have been sold to date. The interest in the book is part of a 50 percent growth in sales at the shop during 2001 with more than £12,000 of books sold (£1=US\$1.43).

"Last year's sales increase was a result of an effort to expand the use of revolutionary books as part of the weekly activity of communist workers and youth in response to new political openings," Knight explained.

In addition to book sales to young people demonstrating against the imperialist war against Afghanistan and to locked-out car parts workers at Friction Dynamics in north Wales, "key to the sales growth were consistent literature tables in the workers district immediately surrounding the bookshop," she said. "With regular propaganda work in the area and a weekly Militant Labour Forum series, more people were introduced to Pathfinder books. People attending the forum series at the bookshop are staying around longer for informal discussion and often buy a book or two in order to dig more deeply into the issues that had been raised."

This work led to people purchasing £467 of literature at the forums during the last six months of 2001. In addition, £3,462 of books were sold in the same period to people who visited the shop during its open hours. Many had learned of the shop by meeting communist workers at a street table or political event.

Interest in the speeches of Thomas Sankara, the central leader of the Burkina Faso revolution, was a feature of the increasing sales. "This reflects not only the increasing number of West African immigrants living in the United Kingdom, but what is happening in countries from where they come. Many want to study the speeches of a Marxist leader in order to fight imperialism," said Knight. A total of 28 copies of *Thomas Sankara Speaks* were sold last year.

Other books that featured prominently among the best-sellers were 31 copies of *Palestine and the Arabs' Fight for Liberation*; 6 copies of *Che Guevara Talks To Young*

*People*, and 25 copies of *Capitalism's World Disorder*, by Jack Barnes.

Several hundred pounds worth of revolutionary books from the shop were picked up by participants at an anti-imperialist youth festival held in Algeria last August. For many of the groups of revolutionists who came together at the festival, studying the continuity of the communist movement has become an indispensable part of their activity. The bookshop also sold many books at events organized to report back on the festival in London. Some who went to Algeria from the United Kingdom have continued to purchase Pathfinder titles this year as well.

Young people were able to stock up on a range of titles when the shop held a sale of overstocked or damaged books, as well as older printings of Pathfinder books donated by supporters of the bookshop. Young revolutionaries were able to begin rapidly building their own libraries. Among the titles snapped up were many books by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, founders of the modern communist movement.

## SWP supporters surpass goal in financing party

BY STUART CROME

SEATTLE—The campaign by party supporters to raise monthly contributions to the Socialist Workers Party to \$300,000 annually has gotten off to a strong start. As of March 6, new pledge goals in the campaign add up to an increase of \$3,418 monthly. This increase would mean a total of \$311,000 annually—well over the initial goal.

"There are still a handful of areas we need to hear from," said Sara Gates, who heads up the steering committee based in Seattle that organizes the monthly supporters contribution campaign. Ken Kawakubo and Stuart Crome are also members of the committee. "Because of this enthusiastic response, the steering committee will meet to adjust the national goal after we've heard from every city where supporters are part of this effort. We're asking those who haven't done so to contact us with their pledge goals right away," Gates said.

A supporter from Miami wrote to the steering committee: "We had discussions at our last two supporters' meetings about our

contributions from Miami and had great success. Our initial goal the first month was to raise it by \$50 per month by the end of July. But after thinking about it and getting the additional contributions this month, we surpassed that goal by \$10 and raised our goal to \$100 by the end of July. We have two additional people we want to talk to and ask if they want to be new contributors."

Supporter contributions are collected in each local area where there are supporters and are sent to the party national office on a monthly basis.

The current campaign to raise the level of contributions was launched on December 29 at a meeting of the steering committee in Seattle. The meeting discussed the opportunities and challenges facing the Party—from the international book fairs and developments in the international movement of anti-imperialist youth, to the volunteer weekend work brigades in New York to help in the reorganization of the Pathfinder printshop.

The response by supporters of the revolutionary party over the past several years

means that the SWP can count on the monthly contributions as part of its operating budget and projects for the coming year.

The first big step along this road came at the Active Workers Conference in August 1999, where supporters launched a campaign to raise the amount of the monthly supporters contributions. Participants came out of that conference with a goal of \$200,000.

A year later supporters set a course to increase the yearly contributions by another \$50,000. This goal was met as well. During the two campaigns the number of contributors rose from 180 to 270. This marks a 50 percent increase in the number of participants and a 93 percent increase in the amount contributed.

On the heels of these successes, the organizers of the effort in Seattle launched an "in full and on time" campaign to underscore the need to make sure contributions are received at the party's National Office in New York by the fifth of each month so that the party can count on these contributions for its operating budget.

In early March the Seattle steering committee met to prepare the launching of a web site that will allow supporters in each local area to record the results of their collection each month. This will help make the work of each area's financial director more efficient and allow the steering committee to follow progress in the campaign.

By using the web site, supporters in each area will take on more responsibility for the work of organizing the campaign and eliminate hours of accounting work previously done in the party's National Office. The steering committee plans to have the web site up and running this month.

If you would like to become a contributor to this effort, please send an e-mail to Sara Gates at [sjgates@attbi.com](mailto:sjgates@attbi.com).

## One million march in Italy to oppose government assault on workers' rights



Nearly 1 million people turned out for a protest called by one of Italy's main trade union federations March 25 to denounce plans by the government of Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi to rewrite the country's labor legislation to make it easier for bosses to fire workers. Two other union federations backed out of the protest after a leading proponent of the anti-labor attack was assassinated by a group claiming to be the Red Brigades.

## Pittsburgh: picket protests jailing of Ethiopian

BY LARRY QUINN

PITTSBURGH—A dozen people held a picket line outside the municipal court building here March 15 to support Getu Berhanu Tewolde, the latest victim of racist treatment by transportation employees and the Pittsburgh cops.

Tewolde, who is from Ethiopia, has lived in the United States legally for almost a year. He was arrested on February 1 during a scheduled stop at the Pittsburgh Greyhound Bus terminal while en route from Washington to Denver.

Other recent cases include the October 28 arrest of Art Institute of Pittsburgh student Salam El-Zaatari at the Pittsburgh International Airport for carrying an exacto knife in his laptop case.

Mazen Mohamed Abdallah, a student, was also arrested last November in the Pittsburgh Amtrak station. Surprised to learn that bags were not inspected, Mazen asked an Amtrak employee why this was so, as one might contain a bomb.

Mazen was arrested and charged with making a terrorist threat, simple assault, and disorderly conduct.

Tewolde was reboarding a bus when a Greyhound employee began yelling at him and accused him of trying to shove her. The driver told Tewolde to leave the bus. In the bus station, the same Greyhound employee called the cops on Tewolde after he refused to follow her instruction to sit down. He pointed out he had a right to walk around if he wanted to.

When a man wearing black approached Tewolde, he again refused to obey an order to be seated since he did not know the man

was a cop. The police officer then tried to grab a pen that Getu was holding. When Tewolde moved his arms away from the cop he was beaten and fell to the ground. Tewolde's memory from that point is unclear.

Tewolde was detained and questioned by the FBI who responded to a call by the cops reporting a class-one bomb threat. After interrogating Tewolde, the FBI anti-terror unit refused to charge him with any crime. He was then arrested by the Pittsburgh police.

Taken to the Allegheny County Jail, Tewolde was given "mood stabilizing" antipsychosis medication without his consent. He was held in 24-hour lockdown in the mental health pod of the jail and was forced to ingest eight pills a day.

Testifying before Judge Daniel Butler, the arresting cop said that after he put a hand on Tewolde's shoulder, Tewolde grabbed his shirt and a scuffle ensued. During the altercation, said the cop, Tewolde attempted to stab him in the face with a Bic pen. The cop could not remember how the pen was produced or how close to his face the jabbing motion came.

He also couldn't remember if anyone came with him when he approached Tewolde, and claimed he didn't know if the swelling under Tewolde's eye resulted from a punch he had thrown.

A lawyer leaving the court told this reporter and two protesters that Tewolde was badly beaten in jail.

While the judge rejected the simple assault charge despite prosecution protests, Tewolde still faces charges of making terrorist threats, aggravated assault, and risk-

ing a catastrophe.

Grasping for a justification for these charges, the judge claimed a parallel with "the guy who sent the powder in the mail," and repeated the tired old scenario of a person yelling fire in a crowded movie theater. He added that police and fire department vehicles speeding to the bus station could have caused a catastrophe.

Friends of Tewolde posted a \$525 bond, which is considered a low bail under such serious charges. The hearing is scheduled for May 20.

## CUBA and the Coming American Revolution by Jack Barnes

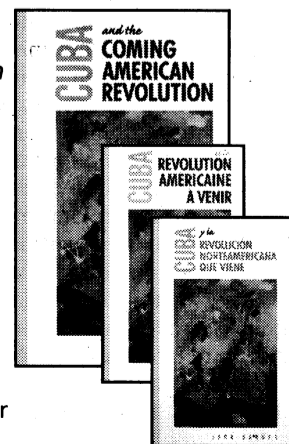
There will be a victorious revolution in the United States before a victorious counterrevolution in Cuba

— Fidel Castro, March 1961

*Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* is about the struggles of working people in the imperialist heartland, the youth who are attracted to them, and the example set by the people of Cuba that revolution is not only necessary—it can be made.

Preface by Mary-Alice Waters. **In English, Spanish, and French.**

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# Circulation drive

Continued from front page  
politics presented in the pages of the two publications.

Reading the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and Pathfinder books is a crucial way for anyone involved in a struggle against the bosses to gain a broader view of similar battles today, as well as the fundamental reasons for the imperialists' assaults on workers and farmers at home and abroad. The publications also provide working people and youth with an introduction to the communist movement and an explanation of why they need to be a part of building proletarian parties and the Young Socialists in the country where they live.

As the article on the opposite page about the increase in Pathfinder sales in the United Kingdom points out, setting up regular literature tables in workers districts surrounding Pathfinder bookstores is among the best ways to expand the readership of the socialist press. Especially during a time of increased political polarization over questions such as imperialist war, attacks on democratic rights, racist killings by cops, and other political questions, having an established public presence on a street corner provides a lively forum for discussions among workers and a place many can count on to find the *Militant* or a book they have been thinking about purchasing. In several cities, workers who have recently joined the communist movement first met socialists at one of these tables.

As communist workers establish themselves as fractions in the garment, meatpacking, and coal mining industries, opportunities for winning new readers are opening up. By far the most interest and consistent results have been from coal miners, who are buying the *Militant* on the job, at mine portals, and union events. Many in these regions are interested in the fight by coal miners and their widows for federal black lung benefits, and struggles to defend safety on the job. Fielding more teams to the coalfield communities and mine portals will be a feature of the circulation campaign.

There is also a small but growing readership of Pathfinder and the socialist press among garment and meatpacking workers. In the last subscription drive members of the United Food and Commercial Workers

union sold 55 subscriptions to the *Militant*, and 67 to *Perspectiva Mundial*. The ongoing union-organizing struggles in the Midwest, and the initial stages of a social movement interconnected with these fights, show the continued opportunities along these lines.

## The coming American Revolution

Socialists in the unions will be discussing how to utilize *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* to discuss central questions in world politics with their co-workers, including the prospects for building revolutionary parties in Canada, New Zealand, the United States, and elsewhere. The book offers workers an introduction to the communist movement, pointing to "the example set by the people of Cuba that revolution is not only necessary—it can be made," as the back cover of the book explains.

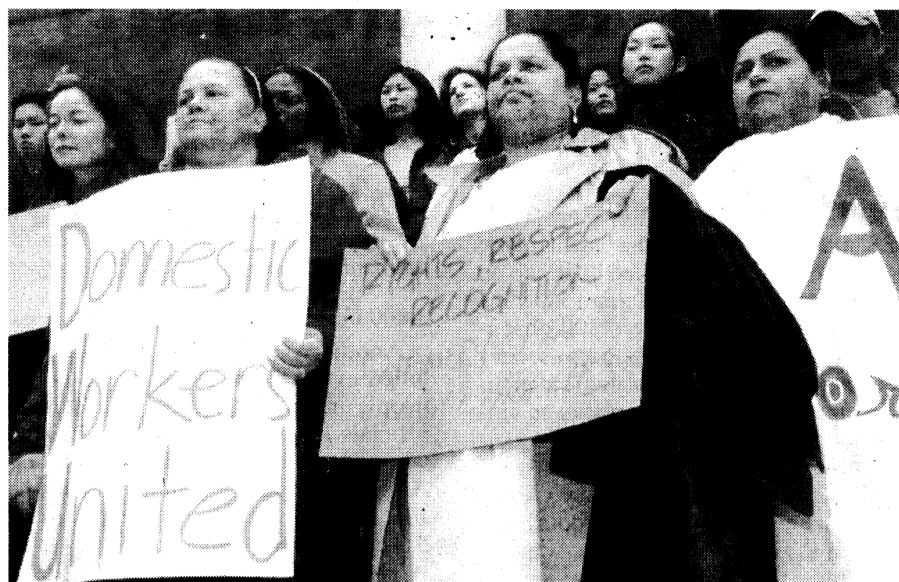
*Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* explains that the exploiting classes promote the myth that working people can never organize to make a revolution, never mind reorganize all of society to meet the needs of humanity. The capitalist rulers tend to make workers and farmers underestimate what they can accomplish and to doubt our own worth, the book points out.

Mary-Alice Waters answers this claim in the introduction. "What the workers and farmers of Cuba showed us," Waters writes, "is that with class solidarity, political consciousness, courage, focused and persistent efforts at education, and a revolutionary leadership of high caliber like that in Cuba, tested and forged in battle over the years, it is possible to stand up to enormous might and seemingly insurmountable odds and win."

This revolutionary perspective is why socialist workers will be organizing a week-by-week campaign to get the book into the hands of as many workers, farmers, and youth as possible, along with the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*.

The increased number of book tables, work on the job, and door-to-door sales will also help expand the building of the weekly *Militant* Labor Forums as a place where working people and youth can discuss a proletarian course to confront the horrors of capitalism. They will be an aid in bringing people to Pathfinder bookstores where the full se-

## New York domestic workers demand minimum wage and rights



Organized by Domestic Workers United, a group of domestic workers in New York City demonstrated March 24 to press city legislators to approve a proposed bill requiring employment agencies and families to sign a contract that would guarantee payment of minimum wages, overtime pay, and other benefits. "I'm supporting this bill because a lot of us are working long hours without overtime pay and no vacation and no sick days," said one of the workers. The group's organizers estimate that some 200,000 people—the vast majority of them immigrant women—work in New York City, and 600,000 in the metropolitan area, as nannies, baby-sitters, and house cleaners for minimum wage or less. The workers are also demanding eight paid holidays, one week's severance pay for each year worked, payment of transportation for workers living outside the city, and medical coverage either through medical insurance or direct payment for annual checkups and emergency medical care.

lection of books and pamphlets distributed by the publishing house are available.

Over the last several weeks, the *Militant* has been well received by working people who are hungry for answers to the growing brutalities of capitalism. At a protest in front of a Brooklyn federal detention center March 23 demanding the release of detainees locked up after September 11, 12 people bought the *Militant* and several Pathfinder books.

## Recent sales successes

In the first 16 days of the Lockheed strike in Marietta, Georgia, workers picked up 34 copies of the socialist paper, which has covered their fight against outsourcing work and for increased health coverage premiums

from the day they walked out. Twelve participants in a protest in front of a federal detention center March 23, demanding the release of people held under the pretext of "fighting terror," bought the paper.

In order to run a scoreboard with goals for the circulation campaign, please send information on the local goals and plans for a big kickoff week into the *Militant* by the end of the day April 8. We encourage participants in the drive to send in notes or articles about their experiences. And pictures of sales at literature tables, plant gates or mine portals, and protest actions are also encouraged. Specifications for submitting a photograph or article to the *Militant* can be found at themilitant.com.

## EU retaliates against U.S. steel tariffs

BY GREG McCARTAN

Trade disputes continued this week between the U.S. imperialists and its rivals in Europe, who announced a list of steel, citrus, and textile products it may slap with tariffs in retaliation for protectionist steel

measures recently put in place by Washington.

The Bush administration also moved to impose a 29 percent tariff on imports of softwood from Canada, which provided some \$6 billion worth of the lumber used mostly in housing construction to the U.S. market last year.

Despite publicly releasing the targeted products, Pascal Lamy, the trade commissioner for the European Union (EU), said the EU will rely on the trade dispute appeals process under rules of the World Trade Organization (WTO), which will take up to 18 months to complete. Washington's tariffs on steel are slated to last for three years.

"There is a lot of frustration in European public opinion," Lamy said, reflecting the concerns of capitalist rulers in various countries on the continent. "If we wait for the judge for 15 months, we [will be seen] as crazy or naive or weak. But it is a political decision on our side. I want to stay within the international rules," he added.

EU officials reiterated they are rapidly moving to implement their own measures to prevent a surge of imports that would have otherwise gone to the United States. Three steel trusts control nearly all production in Europe.

Countries affected by the protectionist steps by both Washington and the EU around steel are mostly Third World countries and workers states in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

U.S. officials, casting the United States as a victim of unfair trade, said the announcement by the EU of a potential list of retaliatory products was "disappointing" because "we're still in a consultative phase at the WTO."

Canada's international trade minister called Washington's tariffs on lumber "obscene" and also said the government there would take up the issue with the WTO. U.S. officials claim Canada subsidizes the lumber industry by charging very low rates for timber cut on government land.

## Taxi drivers win First Amendment fight

It took four years and a legal fight, but a federal judge ruled this week that the administration of Mayor Rudolph Giuliani violated the First Amendment rights of taxi drivers when he banned their protest against new regulations that the city planned to impose on them.

In May 1998 taxi drivers organized a mass protest against Giuliani's moves to increase insurance liability requirements, mandate drug tests of new drivers, and levy fines of up to \$1,000 for several moving violations. The drivers planned to hold another action in which they would slowly drive their cars over the Queensboro Bridge and down Broadway during the morning rush hour.

Giuliani banned the action and put scores of police at the entrance to the bridge to prevent drivers from joining the protest.

In his ruling the judge said that in preventing the protest the administration was motivated by a desire to retaliate against the drivers for their earlier action, not by concerns about traffic and safety as claimed by the city's lawyer.

After the strike collapsed, Giuliani gloated, "They know that we broke their strike—destroyed it, really."

The award by the judge to the United Yellow Cab Drivers Association and two of its members showed class justice at work. What is the cost to a capitalist city government for breaking a strike and carrying out a violation of the rights of working people? According to the judge, \$803.

## Minneapolis marchers demand justice for Somali man killed by cops

BY JENNY BENTON

MINNEAPOLIS—With chants of "Justice for Jeilani" and "Prosecute the Police," about 500 people marched to the Hennepin County courthouse here March 23. The action was organized to demand justice in the killing of a mentally ill Somali man, Abu Kassim Jeilani, by Minneapolis police March 10.

Witnesses say Jeilani was walking down the street with a machete and a crowbar when police surrounded him on a busy street corner. The cops refused assistance offered by several people who pleaded to let them speak to Jeilani in Somali. The cops shot him 16 times.

Despite intense pressure brought to bear by many liberal organizations, city officials, the police chief, and the press to "be responsible" and not hold the action, organizers pressed forward with their plans for the march. The protest attracted many passersby, several of whom helped give out leaflets to those driving cars and others walking past. Jennifer Coles said she joined the protest because she is "sick of police brutality. They think they can do anything they want to us because we are Black—unless we stop them."

High school students were among the main organizers of the march. "I think we need to fight back. We cannot let the police continue," said Nimo Farh. "We are people too. They think because we don't know the laws we will be afraid to fight back. But we know English, and we learn fast." Farh and several fellow high school students leafleted a 34-story apartment tower that is home to a large number of Somali workers the night before the protest. About 50 Somalis participated in the march.

A vigil was also organized the day before by several traditional Somali organizations. Nimco Ahmed, who participated in both events, said that the vigil "was very



*Militant*  
Protester at March 23 rally of 500 people in Minneapolis demanding justice for Somali man gunned down by cops.

good. Almost all those who attended were Somali. But I think that the march today is stronger because of the diversity. It shows we are not alone. Police brutality does not just affect the Somali community."

Reginald Harmon, another protester, said the demonstrations "show it happens to all of us. The police can't say it's just the Somalis who are saying they are brutalized by the cops."

Jenny Benton is a textile worker.

# More light shed on barbaric conditions at U.S. prison camps

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

U.S. military officials at the Guantánamo Bay naval base in Cuba hosted a 10-person Congressional delegation March 15 to view Camp X-Ray, where they hold 300 prisoners under brutal conditions, and to review the construction of a concentration camp for 2,040 inmates Washington wants to imprison there.

The bipartisan delegation apparently uttered not a peep of criticism as they viewed the open-air, eight-foot by eight-foot chain-link cages in which the prisoners, some of whom are in their early teens, are kept in shackles. U.S. intelligence operatives interrogate the prisoners in windowless plywood huts. The U.S. government has refused to accord the men prisoner-of-war status and, when pressed, claims to be following the rules of the Geneva Convention in its treatment of the captives.

Referring to the rapid construction of large-scale prison units, the commandant of the camp told the imprisoned men that it "does not mean you will be here forever if you haven't done anything wrong"—a backhanded admission that many are innocent of any charges Washington could dream up. The Pentagon's top lawyer said March 21 that the prisoners are "not being held on the basis that they are necessarily criminals." Lt. Col. William Cline, the deputy commander of the prison camp, recently acknowledged that some are "victims of circumstance" and are innocent.

Often blindfolded and forced to walk in shackles until the steel rubbed their flesh raw, the prisoners have been subjected to violations of their rights, denied legal representation, or not even informed what charges they face. Among the abuses is the taking of DNA samples of every prisoner by U.S. investigators, a fact made known by FBI director Robert Mueller when he visited the camp March 3.

Information on the barbaric treatment of prisoners from Afghanistan and other countries captured by Washington continues to leak out, despite a virtual information blockade.

Camp X-Ray, located on the illegally held U.S. base on Cuban territory, is one of three such hellholes fashioned by Washington. U.S. authorities say they have incarcerated 244 prisoners at the Bagram and Kandahar air bases in Afghanistan, where they await transfer to Guantánamo Bay. Arab newspapers report that among the inmates are citizens of Jordan, Syria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Tunisia, Morocco, Indonesia, and several Central Asian republics, as well as Kurds from Iraq.

Washington has attempted to justify these brutal conditions and has refused to recognize international rules of law in relation to the prisoners by claiming they are "irregular combatants" and therefore excluded from coverage under the Geneva Convention.

But a rough breakdown of the prisoners at Guantánamo published in the *Washing-*

*ton Post* shows that of the 544 men held at the three prisons, "Taliban officers from Afghanistan constitute the largest group."

## 3,000 being slowly killed

Another 3,000 men are being slowly killed in 40 prison cells built to hold 800 people in Shibarghan, Afghanistan. U.S. officials have interrogated the prisoners, who are ostensibly under the control of the Afghan government. But the warden, Gen. Jura Beg, says that no one from the regime has ever visited the prison.

These prisoners are left in the bitter cold day and night. They lack adequate meals, medical care, and sanitation. Beg said he has cut the food ration to the men because of government cutbacks. "We don't have enough food for them anymore. We don't have medicine," he said.

The drinking water "is full of garbage" the warden told a reporter, who observed that "lice have run rampant through the crowded cells." A team from Physicians for Human Rights found an epidemic of dysentery and jaundice.

At a field hospital in Afghanistan an inmate who was being treated was declared "consistently disruptive" because he refused to be shackled. Two soldiers guarding him were so shaken up by the experience that the military brass transferred them from the hospital to the prison camp at Guantánamo. CNN reported that another two at the naval base were transferred to new duties because of "apparent stress."

## Military tribunals

At a March 21 Pentagon press conference, U.S. defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld announced guidelines for conducting military tribunals. Rumsfeld presented the regulations some four months after President Bush issued an executive order establishing the tribunals as a vehicle to try "terrorism suspects."

At the press conference the defense secretary and other Defense Department officials indicated that some prisoners could remain incarcerated even if they are acquitted by a tribunal. "If we had a trial right this minute, it is conceivable that somebody could be tried and acquitted of that charge, but may not be necessarily automatically released," said Pentagon lawyer William Haynes. "The people that we are detaining, for example, in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, are enemy combatants that we captured on the battlefield seeking to harm U.S. soldiers or allies, and they're dangerous people."

The rules of the tribunals are stacked against the defendants, said Don Rehkopf, a lawyer in Rochester, New York, who is a member of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers. The Bush administration, he added, created "a tribunal that they say is fair, but then they can say, 'We don't like the results and the hell with it, we're going to hold you anyway.' This is



Above, and inset: 3,000 Taliban and al Qaeda prisoners have been crammed into Jowzjan jail in Shibarghan, Afghanistan, since being captured after U.S. assault in Kunduz. Lice and human waste run rampant in crowded cells, which lack sanitation.

a follow-on to their policy of holding people indefinitely before you charge them."

The new guidelines presented by Rumsfeld, noted the *New York Times*, were "concessions to critics" concerned that Bush's original order "codified a secret rigged system that could simply shuttle defendants to hasty deaths." The president now has won solid bipartisan support for the tribunal regulations, which "were praised by congressional leaders of both political parties as a much improved version," the *Washington Post* reported March 22.

Conservative columnist William Safire who had formerly denounced the tribunals as "kangaroo courts," said that he and others like him "now feel somewhat reassured." Despite Safire's newfound confidence, however, the military tribunals target workers' rights. The regulations limit appeals by so-called terrorism suspects and give them fewer rights than in civilian trials or U.S. military courts-martial.

Guidelines for the tribunals allow hearsay and other material obtained through "unorthodox" methods that can be used as evidence against defendants. One rule revised from the earlier policy now allows a defendant to see evidence used against him or her. Under "unique circumstances," however, the presiding officer can close trial proceedings if evidence is deemed to be "classified" or "sensitive."

Suspects on trial will be given a military lawyer free of charge; alternatively, they can hire civilian counsel. Any civilian lawyer must be a U.S. citizen and have security

clearance to review classified information.

Juries for the tribunals would be made up of three to seven officers appointed by the military. If a defendant is convicted, their appeal is limited to a panel of one military official and two other individuals hand-picked by Bush. They have no right to appeal to U.S. courts. A death sentence requires the unanimous vote of a seven-member jury. The president approves the findings and sentencing, giving him the power to overturn a ruling by the jury.

## Government raids

Meanwhile, in other developments, federal cops continue to raid homes and businesses of Arabs under the pretext of fighting terrorism. A round of raids began on March 20 and continued overnight and throughout the next day. On the first day, customs agents, guns drawn, stormed into the Herndon, Virginia, home of Mona Abul-Fadl at 10:30 p.m., waking her up as they broke down the front door. They seized three desktop computers, documents, files, diskettes, and copies of an academic manuscript.

"Normally, if one is in that situation, one would call the police," she said. "What police would you call now?"

The same day Abul-Fadl was assaulted, the U.S. Justice Department announced that it planned to interrogate 3,000 more immigrants, mostly from Middle Eastern countries. The department has already questioned 2,261 young men out of the 5,000 on its first list.

# U.S. military in Afghanistan

Continued from Page 2

position to Musharaff's backing for the war. The Pakistani government has so far not given permission for such "hot pursuit."

## Expansion of military presence

The imperialists have also been stepping up their assault on working people in other countries in the area.

British Royal Air Force jets and some 140 personnel, operating from the Kenyan port of Mombasa, have begun aerial surveillance of Somalia using high-tech cameras. Although the operation is being mounted under the banner of combating terrorism, British government officials admit that they have no evidence of "terrorist activity" in Somalia.

Somalia is also the target of a naval operation stopping incoming maritime traffic. The *Guardian* reports the "largest naval force since the second world war [comprising] more than 100 warships from a dozen countries has been tracking hundreds of vessels a day" in the northern Arabian Sea. The British weekly adds that "as far as we know, they have found nothing."

Some 200 U.S. military instructors, scheduled to arrive in Georgia near the end of March, will help prepare troops for offensive operations aimed at establishing government control over the Pankisi gorge. The area is home to Georgia's native Chechen population, whose numbers have been swollen by an influx of refugees from fighting between Russian and local forces in neighboring Chechnya. One analyst with the Carnegie

Endowment for Peace stressed the significance for Washington of the deployment. "It is the first time that a former Soviet state is being used as a battlefield," she said.

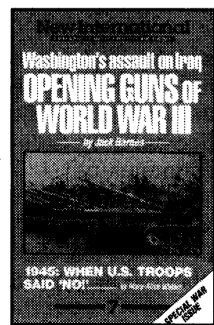
Unlike its counterparts in Georgia, Yemen, and the Philippines, the Indonesian government has turned down Washington's offer to send troops, citing its fear of the protests and controversy such a step would provoke. However, FBI director Robert Mueller is pressuring Indonesian officials to cooperate with U.S. cops in their pursuit of alleged "terrorists" in Indonesia and Southeast Asia.

As the U.S. government campaigns to prepare public opinion for a massive onslaught against Iraq, the capitalist media continues to float rationales for the possible use of a "low-yield nuclear weapon" against that country. Discussion is under way in Washington, the *New York Times* reported, concerning the development of a weapon that would harness a nuclear blast to dig deep underground to destroy such sites and "keep nuclear fallout to a minimum."

The Pentagon is also "rushing to produce a new and bigger bunker-buster bomb" called "Big BLU," the *Washington Times* reported March 15. The new weapon, which is being developed for the Air Force by Northrop Grumman Corp. in California, will be packed with 30,000 pounds of high explosive, and will be six times larger than the thermobaric bomb recently dropped on caves in Afghanistan. The targets for the bomb? Alleged "underground hideouts" used by Saddam Hussein.

## New International no. 10

- **Imperialism's March toward Fascism and War** by Jack Barnes
- **What the 1987 Stock Market Crash Foretold**
- **Defending Cuba, Defending Cuba's Socialist Revolution** by Mary-Alice Waters
- **The Curve of Capitalist Development** by Leon Trotsky \$14.00

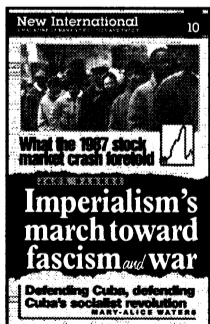


## New International no. 7

- **Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq** by Jack Barnes
- **Communist Policy in Wartime as Well as in Peacetime** by Mary-Alice Waters
- **Lessons from the Iran-Iraq War** by Samad Sharif \$12.00

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from Pathfinder



# Frame-up is an assault on working people

Continued from front page

spiracy charges," Koppel said. These included conspiracy to act as an unregistered agent of a foreign power, to commit espionage, and in one case, to commit murder. The five prisoners are Gerardo Hernández, René González, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, and Fernando González.

"The five were given draconian sentences from the federal judge ranging from 15 years in prison to a double life sentence," the socialist said. "But the real crime of these five men was carrying out a revolutionary mission to defend their country, Cuba. They were defending their revolution by gathering information on the activities of counterrevolutionary groups that operate on U.S. territory to launch violent attacks on Cuba. These groups have a long record of such activity and do so with complete knowledge and complicity by the U.S. government."

Koppel said the frame-up "is not only an attack on the Cuban Revolution, it is an attack on the rights of all working people in the United States. This includes the unconstitutional way the FBI carried out its so-called investigation of these men, the frame-up character of their trials, and the brutal prison conditions they are subjected to. What the five Cubans face will sound familiar to many working people throughout this country," he said.

## Internationalist mission

The mission the five undertook in the United States "is just like the internationalist combat missions that hundreds of thousands of Cuban volunteers have carried out over the past decades in Africa, in the Americas, and around the world," Koppel said. "Each of the five is from a generation born after the victory of the Cuban Revolution. So they're all in their late 30s, early 40s. Two were born in the United States—one in Chicago and one in Miami. They and their families returned to Cuba after the revolutionary victory as supporters of the revolution."

Koppel reviewed information about the life of Gerardo Hernández published in *Juventud Rebelde*, the newspaper of the Union of Young Communists in Cuba. Hernández was born in 1965 into a working-class family. In high school he became a leader of the high school students association and in the 11th grade joined the Union of Young Communists.

In 1989, together with thousands of volunteers from the island, Hernández joined the internationalist mission in Angola where Cuban forces were central to defending the country from invasion by the South African army under apartheid. As part of a tank brigade Hernández distinguished himself in 54 combat missions. He was stationed in Cabinda, an area of strategic importance because of oil wells located there.

"After completing his mission in 1990, he was awarded medals of honor for his courageous role in combat," Koppel said. "Three years later Hernández is admitted into the ranks of the Communist Party as a vanguard proletarian fighter nominated by his co-workers, like all those who join the Communist Party of Cuba."

"The other four Cubans who are in prison today have similar records as vanguard proletarian fighters," the socialist leader said. "Most were members and leaders of the Union of Young Communists when they were in high school and college. Fernando González and René González are also Angola veteran tank drivers. In all cases their families did not know that they were on a special mission when they moved to the



Three of the five served in tank battalions in Angola like those in picture above. "The mission the five Cuban revolutionaries undertook in the United States is just like the combat missions that hundreds of thousands of Cuban volunteers have carried out over the past decades in Africa, in the Americas, and around the world," Koppel told the meeting.

United States," he said.

Koppel noted that after their arrest by federal authorities in 1998, the U.S. government tried to break the five revolutionaries, and continues to do so today. They were taken to FBI headquarters where agents attempted to get them to cooperate. They were threatened with maximum sentences and told they could get a new life and identity in exchange for cooperating with the U.S. government and testifying against others. All five refused and were locked up in federal prison in Miami where they spent 17 months in solitary confinement in what is known as "the hole."

"Life in 'the hole' is something that many people in Cuba are beginning to learn about by reading letters sent from the prisoners to their families," Koppel said. "It is giving more people in Cuba a glimpse into what the reality of life in the United States is for millions of working people thrown into prison."

## Part of a revolutionary tradition

"The actions of these five Cubans are part of a long revolutionary tradition in Cuba," Koppel said. "Revolutionaries who serve in Cuba's counterintelligence service combating counterrevolutionary organizations and efforts by the U.S. government to attack and overthrow their revolution are seen as heroes."

Two such combatants were Tony Santiago and Alberto Delgado, whom Koppel said he learned more about by reading *From the Escambray to the Congo*, by Víctor Dreke, a leader of the Cuban Revolution, and by talking with Dreke on a recent visit to Cuba.

"Tony Santiago was one of the first revolutionary guerrilla leaders Dreke met and he fought under Santiago's command," Koppel said. "After the triumph of the revolution, Santiago began to work for Cuban State Security. He later pretended to break with the revolution in order to infiltrate the CIA-backed forces. In January 1961 he was killed at sea when his boat was sunk by counterrevolutionary Cuban pirates who apparently did not know who he was. At that time, to give you an appreciation of the ability of these revolutionaries, Santiago was heading to Cuba where he was to take up a CIA-appointed post as overall head of the counterrevolutionary bands operating in the Escambray."

Alberto Delgado also took on a mission for Cuban state security after serving in the revolutionary armed forces. Today he is known as the Man of Maisinicú and his revolutionary activity is popularized in a well-known Cuban film by that name.

Delgado operated on a farm in the area of Maisinicú, which is near the southern central town of Trinidad in the Escambray region. He successfully became a key contact of the counterrevolutionary bands who would use his farm for their operations.

"In March 1964," Koppel said, "Delgado arranged to get a counterrevolutionary leader onto a boat that was supposedly going to take him back to the United States. This was at a time that the counterrevolutionaries began to be cornered by the revolutionary militias. So they decided to go back to their masters in the United States. But the supposedly 'American' boat that came to pick them up was manned by members of the Cuban armed forces," he said,

"who were all in American uniforms. They spoke perfect English and served him American whiskey and food. Just when the counterrevolutionaries were getting themselves comfortable, the 'Americans' told them to go below deck for immunization shots in order to get through immigration. So they all go down the hatch where they are arrested by state security officials." Remaining counterrevolutionary leaders found out about the arrests and they lynched Alberto Delgado, he said.

"The U.S. government has a healthy respect for Cuba's counterintelligence operations," Koppel said, "although they will never understand how the Cubans are able to do it. That is because over and over again they underestimate the capacity of working people in Cuba to defeat them. In fact, the two counterintelligence services that Washington has never been able to beat are the Cubans and the Bolsheviks in the early years of the Russian Revolution. Memoirs of old CIA war horses complain about this fact. The Cubans are simply following the revolutionary traditions of the leaders of the Russian Revolution," Koppel said.

## Brutal conditions of U.S. prisoners

"The abusive treatment of the five imprisoned Cuban patriots," the socialist leader said, "is of a piece with the outrageous treatment by the U.S. government of 300 men jailed under barbaric conditions at the U.S. naval base in Guantánamo, which is territory held against the will of the Cuban people."

"Many of you have probably seen that famous picture of the prisoners in chain-link cages, exposed to the elements with their hands and feet bound and their eyes covered with blacked-out goggles," he said. "This, by the way, is not a tropical climate. It's the one area in Cuba that is desert-like in its climate and the sun really beats down."

A recent article in the *New York Times* described some of the brutal conditions the prisoners face at the hands of their U.S. captors. "The reporter mentions that some of the prisoners are taken to interrogation huts in golf carts," Koppel said. "Why? Because the prisoners' leg shackles were rubbing the prisoners' ankles raw when they had to walk there. They're being rubbed down to the bone. And this is a government that claims to speak for civilization."

"The position of labor in this country," Koppel said, "has to be that these prisoners' basic rights and dignity must be protected no matter who they are. It is what the U.S. government is doing that is a crime," he said.

During World War II the SWP defended the up to 350,000 German prisoners of war in U.S. prison camps from abusive conditions and campaigned for their release and return to their country, Koppel noted. And in Europe during the war, "our comrades approached German soldiers with revolutionary literature in occupied France and Belgium, reaching out to them as fellow workers. These were the ones branded as the enemy. Jewish combatants, revolutionaries, risked death to leaflet German soldiers."

Similarly, the SWP defended the Soviet workers state from imperialist attack, but nonetheless condemned the Stalin government for sinking civilian German ships and refused to join the chauvinist anti-German chorus.

"Our starting point is that the number one enemy of humanity is imperialism," Koppel said. "What you see at work at the concentration camp in Guantánamo is not an aberration, but what they are seeking to make the norm. During the recent Afghan war we were in favor of the Taliban army smashing the imperialist troops," he added. "We were for the defeat of the U.S. troops in Afghanistan. That would have been a blow in favor of humanity," he said.

## A travesty of justice

The arrest, trial, and sentencing of the five Cuban revolutionaries was a travesty of justice and an attack on constitutional rights, Koppel said. The FBI agents repeatedly broke into their homes and raided their computer files before arresting them, violating Fourth Amendment protections against arbitrary search and seizure.

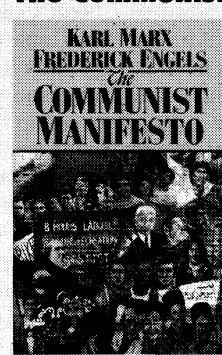
"When they arrested the five, U.S. officials charged them with spying and trying to obtain military secrets," Koppel said, "but the prosecution was not able to prove that any of them actually carried out a single illegal act. At the trial, no evidence of any military secrets being stolen from the United States was ever presented. All five testified at the trial that they were reporting on the activities of rightist groups with records of violent attacks on Cuba. Instead, the five were convicted of conspiracy charges, which is what the U.S. government does when they can't find any hard facts, despite a years-long investigation."

"These attacks are not an exceptional thing," Koppel said. "The treatment of these five in the U.S. judicial and police system is part of a broader war by the employer class in this country against workers' rights at home, including the efforts to try to expand the powers of the political police, which they're using this case to try to do."

It is the U.S. government and the superwealthy ruling families it represents that is the driving force behind the four-decade-long assault on Cuba, Koppel noted. This is because in the view of the U.S. rulers the Cuban Revolution is a dangerous example for working people all over the world, including in this country.

"The Cuban Revolution shows that it is possible for working people to make a revolution," Koppel said. "That it is possible to take power out of the hands of the exploiting minority and build a socialist society based on human solidarity together with people throughout the world."

## The Communist Manifesto



Karl Marx and Frederick Engels  
Founding document of the modern working-class movement, published in 1848. Explains why communism is derived not from preconceived principles but from facts and proletarian movements springing from the actual class struggle. \$3.95

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12

## Write to the five Cuban revolutionaries

René González Schweret, Reg. #58738-004, FCI McKean, P.O. Box 8000, Bradford, Pennsylvania 16701\*

Antonio Guerrero Rodríguez, Reg. #58741-004, USP Florence, P.O. Box 7500, Florence, Colorado 81226

Gerardo Hernández Nordelo (Manuel Viamontes), Reg. #58739-004, USP Lompoc, 3901 Klein Blvd., Lompoc, California 93436

Fernando González Llort (Rubén Campa), Reg. #58733-004, FCI Oxford, P.O. Box 1000, Oxford, Wisconsin 53952-0505

Ramón Labañino Salazar (Luis Medina), Reg. #58734-004, USP Beaumont, P.O. Box 26035, Beaumont, Texas 77720-6035

\*Please note mailing address for René González has been corrected since previous issue

# Atlanta conference builds comm

BY JACK WILLEY

ATLANTA—"Those who seek the most effective way to end the horrendous conditions workers, farmers, and youth face around the globe can use this concentrated weekend to consider joining the communist movement now," stated Brian Taylor in his welcome to participants in the Southeast Regional Socialist Conference. The conference took place March 23-24 under the banner, "Join the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialists, Build the World Communist Movement."

More than 100 people participated in the event, which included a reception and panel discussion Saturday evening followed by a social. On Sunday a YS leadership meeting open to all YS-age youth and a class on *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* rounded out the conference. The weekend's activities included a national meeting of socialist workers who are members of the United Mine Workers of America. Participation in the conference by leaders of communist leagues and Young Socialists from Australia, Canada, Iceland, and Sweden added to the international scope of the deliberations.

Socialist workers and young socialists from the region worked the week prior to the conference to prepare a range of displays on the themes of the meeting. One described the history of the coal miners' fight for safety and federal health and retirement benefits. It included photos of the coal miners' widows' walk currently underway to Washington. Other displays were on the five Cuban revolutionaries framed-

up and imprisoned by the U.S. government, working-class and social struggles that socialists have been part of in the region, and the Cuba-wide book fair and promotional events for *From the Escambray to the Congo*, a new Pathfinder title by Cuban revolutionary leader Victor Dreke.

Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press and member of the SWP Political Committee, was one of the keynote speakers on the Saturday evening panel. She spoke on advances in the Cuban Revolution and lessons to more effectively build a communist party in the United States. Waters and a team of other socialists spent a month in Cuba in February and early March where they participated in the Havana International Book Fair and a series of meetings to present *From the Escambray to the Congo*.

Waters said the experiences of the team helped them gain a better understanding of how working people in Cuba were able to crush counterrevolutionary bands backed by Washington that were centered in the Escambray in the first half of the 1960s. The most important accomplishment of the nine book launchings in Havana and central Cuba, she said, was the chance for Cuban revolutionaries and communists from the United States to share platforms and exchange views and experiences. Through these events, Waters said, Cubans who came to the meetings were able to learn that there are people like themselves who are carrying out revolutionary activity in the United States. In a similar way, tours to the United States by Cuban youth

leaders are an aid to revolutionary-minded workers and youth here, she said.

*From the Escambray to the Congo* presents an important contribution to the history of the fight against racism as fundamentally a class question, Waters said in her talk. Only after workers and peasants take power out of the hands of the capitalists can they also implement a course of action to confront the legacy of slavery. The conditions of blacks in much of Cuba were similar to those in the southern United States under Jim Crow, where beaches, health care, and education were segregated, and where the standard of living of Afro-Cubans was significantly lower than that of other Cubans.

Waters pointed out that the first acts of the revolution included outlawing segregation, implementing a land reform, and carrying through a literacy campaign. Blacks benefited most from these working-class affirmative action measures that were aimed at raising the conditions of life and opportunities for all working people.

The Cuban communist leadership is implementing an affirmative action program today, Waters said, to confront the inequalities and consequences of introducing the dollar into the Cuban economy. She pointed to initiatives such as setting up teacher education schools, a new television channel for the University for All programs, efforts to encourage unemployed school dropouts to go back to school, and schools for revolutionary social work. A centerpiece of the work of the young social workers right now is going door-to-door to work

with families to eliminate breeding grounds for mosquitoes that spread Dengue Fever.

"The Cuban Revolution and internationalism are inseparable," Waters concluded. "They always say that those who cannot fight for others cannot fight for themselves."

The fact that communists from the United States were at the book fair and in the Escambray is a statement of proletarian internationalism, she said. Socialist workers, Young Socialists, and party supporters in the United States made it possible for Pathfinder to take some 2,000 books to Cuba to sell in pesos, for about \$1 or less a book. Books such as that by Victor Dreke are part of the continuity of the communist movement. They contain as many lessons and as much education for Cubans as they do for working people in the United States, Waters concluded.

## Prisoners of the empire

Martin Koppel, the editor of *Perspectiva Mundial* and a participant in the Havana International Book Fair, told the meeting about the five Cuban revolutionaries now in U.S. prisons for defending their country and revolution by participating in an internationalist mission to infiltrate counterrevolutionary groups based in the United States. The five, named Heroes of the Republic of Cuba, were framed-up on "conspiracy" charges.

This frame-up is not only an attack on Cuba, Koppel said, but also on workers' rights in the United States. Koppel pointed out that "conspiracy" charges are commonly used by the rulers to victimize individuals in the workers movement because the cops and courts are unable to prove those they target have actually carried out any illegal act. Instead, conspiracy laws target "intentions" or "beliefs."

At the same time the five revolutionaries were being sentenced in federal court, Washington began building permanent cells for prisoners living under barbaric conditions on the illegally-occupied Guantánamo naval base. Koppel described in detail the conditions of prisoners there and called for communists to work with other class-conscious workers to expose this abuse, aimed primarily at setting a precedent to be used against working people in the United States. He called for condemning the outrageous treatment of the prisoners and for their unconditional release.

Linda Joyce, a volunteer in the Pathfinder Reprint Project who participated in the Havana International Book Fair, spoke about the serious political response that Pathfinder titles received among working people and youth hungry for communist literature and information about the class struggle in the United States.

Joyce said the work of Pathfinder at the book fair builds on the accomplishments of previous years. "People constantly came by looking for Pathfinder books—looking for certain titles and persons whom they had met in previous years," Joyce said. "Some would sit and read one or another book for hours."

By chance, on her last evening in Cuba, Joyce bumped into an "urban garden" in Havana—one of the many started since the sharp economic crisis following the fall of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s. Last year the gardens, cultivated by volunteer labor, produced 2,050,000 metric tons of vegetables and herbs to alleviate food shortages in the cities.

It turned out the volunteer Joyce met—Moisés Javier Sosa Rodríguez—is a member of the Association of Cuban Combatants and had fought in the revolutionary war with Dreke when he was 13 years old.

These experiences and the response at the book fair give a deeper meaning to the Pathfinder Reprint Project, Joyce said. The 150 volunteers in several countries involved in the project prepare Pathfinder titles in digital form ready to be printed by Pathfinders' printshop. They also set up and maintain the pathfinderpress.com website.

The project has now put into digital, ready-to-print form 66 percent of the more than 350 Pathfinder titles—241 books in all—toward their goal of 75 percent by the end of June, Joyce reported.

## Meeting maps out YS campaigns

BY OLYMPIA NEWTON

ATLANTA—Three people who decided to join the Young Socialists were among the 25 who participated in a "Meet the Young Socialists" event held in conjunction with the Southeast Regional Socialist Conference here. YS members and young people from across the Southeast, and from Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia, and Seattle attended the meeting. Representatives of the YS from Canada, Iceland, and Sweden also took part.

"The attacks by the U.S. ruling class against the prisoners that their military forces kidnapped and took to the Guantánamo naval base in Cuba, and the killing of workers in the streets by cops in the United States, are not disconnected," said Romina Green in a report to the meeting. Green is the organizer of the Young Socialists National

Leadership Council (NLC) and a garment worker in New York City.

"Our role as young revolutionaries is to convince people we meet—selling the *Militant* outside of a factory or in a working-class neighborhood, at plants and protests in Argentina, or at a book fair in Cuba—that the only way to fight the root cause of these attacks and win is to join and build a communist organization.

"The five Cuban revolutionaries held in U.S. jails are heroes of the working class," Green said. "They were in this country on an internationalist mission to defend the Cuban Revolution against imperialism by gathering information on right-wing organizations that have organized violent attacks against Cuba," she said. "We can use the *Militant* to get out the truth on this case and build support amongst students and

workers in this country."

## Algeria youth conference

Green pointed to the importance of the participation of an international delegation of Young Socialists in the World Festival of Youth and Students in Algeria last August. Since that time, the YS in the United States has increased the amount of work it has done internationally, from participating in a *Militant* reporting team to Argentina to sending delegations to the conventions and conferences of communist parties and youth organizations in Australia, Canada, Iceland, New Zealand, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

"We will continue to place central importance on building the international communist movement," she said, which is the only way to build a proletarian internationalist organization. YS leaders in the United States will travel to Cuba to join activities for the 40th anniversary of the founding of the Union of Young Communists, March 30-April 5. The following week Olympia Newton will be part of a delegation together with two leaders of the Socialist Workers Party to stand in solidarity with the people of north Korea on the anniversary of the founding of the Workers Party of Korea.

Christian Schmit, a leader of the Young Socialists in Gothenberg, Sweden, told the meeting about the political importance of international collaboration for the Young Socialists. "The YS in Sweden fused with the Communist League to strengthen the communist movement and to help integrate and train the younger members of our movement in communist politics," he said. "These moves would not have been possible without the international collaboration of YS and party members from other countries."

## Summer schools

"Over the summer," Green reported, "the YS will organize socialist summer schools in several cities across the country. These are opportunities for YS members to participate in a concentrated program of communist education and get jobs alongside socialist workers in industrial union fractions in the garment, meatpacking, and coal mining industries. The YS will also work with others to organize a speaking tour of colleges in the United States for two Cuban youth leaders. We need to begin talking with student organizations and professors

Continued on Page 14

## REGIONAL SOCIALIST CONFERENCE Chicago, Illinois April 6-7

**'From the Escambray to the Congo': Report from Cuba  
Join the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialists  
Build the world communist movement**

**Conference location:** Youth Center, 2020 S. Blue Island, corner of 21st St. and Blue Island, just east of Ashland, in the Pilsen community.

**Saturday, April 6, 4:00 p.m. Reception and dinner,  
5:30 p.m. Program, including question and answer period**

**Mary-Alice Waters**, Editor, *From the Escambray to the Congo* by Victor Dreke; member of Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party

**Jack Barnes**, National Secretary, Socialist Workers Party

**Arrin Hawkins**, YS leader and participant in Havana book fair

**Linda Joyce**, Pathfinder Reprint Project volunteer and participant in Havana book fair

Program chaired by: **Joel Britton**, meatpacker, one of illegally terminated AMPAC workers; leader of the Socialist Workers Party

## Sunday, April 7

**8:30 a.m. - Meeting of young socialists**

**11 a.m. - Class on 'Cuba and the Coming American Revolution'**

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 union.

# unist movement

Arrin Hawkins, a Young Socialists leader who is on her way to New York to volunteer in Pathfinder's printshop, reported on the interest in the work of the YS at the Havana book fair among Cuban and international students.

Hawkins said many students who came by the table were from the Latin American School of Medicine, a university primarily for youth from countries oppressed by imperialism to receive education that is either unavailable or unaffordable in their own countries.

"Young people were particularly interested in the fights that YS members are part of in our own countries, such as the one in Chicago of illegally terminated workers at the Ampac slaughterhouse to win severance pay, and protests against police brutality in Sweden," she said.

"Participating in this festival was part of the Young Socialists' work in building a new international today," she said. Hawkins reported that the team met young people from Brazil, Haiti, Venezuela, and other countries who had also participated in the youth festival in Algeria, making it possible for Young Socialists to continue discussion they had begun at that anti-imperialist event.

## War threats and world domination

Jack Barnes, the SWP national secretary, addressed the attempts by the U.S. imperialists to strengthen their position in the world and the devastation it has brought to millions of toilers as a result.

"U.S. imperialism is the mightiest, most brutal, and the last empire that will ever exist in history," he said. By its sheer military and economic weight Washington prevents any other imperialist power from rising up to replace it. The logic of U.S. imperialism is the attempt to dominate the world to try to maintain stability for its interests.

One brazen example is the preparation by Washington, blocking with a wing of the Venezuelan military, to carry out a coup against Hugo Chávez. The rulers will use their so-called "war against narco-trafficking" to justify their role in the accelerating war in Colombia. And they plan to let the Argentine peso continue its free-fall, devastating the lives of millions.

The Pentagon's intentionally leaked "Nuclear Posture Review"—targeting China, Iran, Iraq, north Korea, Libya, Russia, and Syria with possible use of nuclear weapons—has increased the number of tar-

gets of U.S. imperialism, Barnes said. "Nobody even claims Iraq, Iran, Syria, or Libya has nuclear weapons, but Washington justifies its actions arguing that 'they may be researching how to make them,'" Barnes stated.

The U.S. imperialists also justify keeping 37,000 troops in south Korea by claiming the government in the north plans to build nuclear bombs. But the real purpose of Washington's massive military presence is to prop up the south Korean regime and keep the maximum pressure on the north to try to starve the population into submission, he said. The greatest threat in Korea right now is not an invasion from the north, Barnes pointed out, but the joint military exercises involving tens of thousands of U.S. troops stationed in Japan, Guam, and south Korea.

## Assault on workers' rights

Barnes explained that the U.S. government's barbaric treatment of prisoners in Guantánamo—justified by branding the detainees as terrorists—is no different than what the rulers are laying the groundwork to do in the United States. Anyone accused of terrorism, regardless of the country they come from, can be sent there shackled and held without a trial of their peers. U.S. defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld stated that the prisoners will not be released until the war on terror is over. But since the war will never "end," they could be held indefinitely, Barnes said.

The treatment of prisoners and the building of a prison camp at Guantánamo is directly connected to putting four-star generals in charge of "homeland defense" of different territories in the United States and the use of military tribunals against those who resist, he said.

The attempt to roll back workers' rights, however, is failing in this country, Barnes stated. To justify their assault on working people at home, Washington must convince Americans they have something to fear and must give up some of their rights in order for a titanic fight against terror to be waged.

But struggles like the widows' march, which stands on the shoulders of past struggles by coal miners for black lung benefits and the fight to democratize the United Mine Workers union, could not happen if the rulers were succeeding in beating back workers' rights, he said.

During the discussion period, a participant from Birmingham spoke about right-



Saturday evening panel presentation at the Southeast Regional Socialist Conference in Atlanta. Some 100 people participated in the weekend and three joined the Young Socialists. Speaking is Socialist Workers Party national secretary Jack Barnes.

ist attempts to introduce religion in the schools and place the 10 commandments in state institutions.

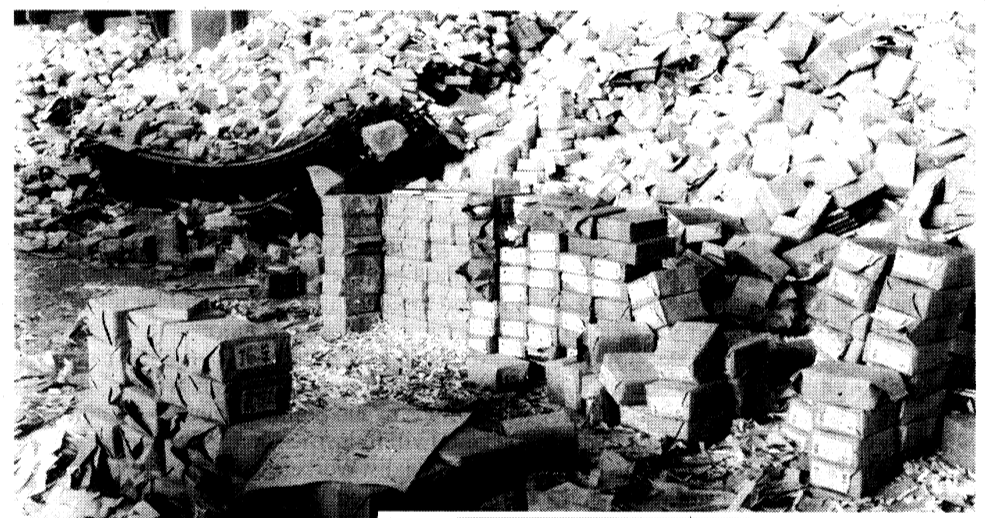
## Attempts to built rightist movement

Barnes said that there are ongoing attempts to build an ideological right wing in the United States and the battle against

teaching science in the schools is common across the country. Patrick Buchanan, an ultrarightist who attempts to build a cadre to fight in the streets, argues that people need more "discipline" and must adhere to a "religious foundation" in order to "save America" from the "deprivations of the

Continued on Page 12

## Youth snap up Marxist classics



Above, Militant/Doug Hord, Inset, Militant Above, warehouse in Moscow where volumes of Marx, Engels, and Lenin were being sold for pulp. Thousands of books were saved by a team of socialist workers and brought to the United States for use of working people and youth such as those at the conference on right.

## BY BILL ARTH

ATLANTA—Participants in the Southeast Regional Socialist Conference purchased more than 600 volumes of the *Collected Works of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels* and the *Collected Works of V.I. Lenin* during a special sale of these essential works of the modern working-class movement.

The writings by the communist leaders cover eight decades of the class struggle and lessons in building a proletarian leadership of working people, including those of the first socialist revolution in Russia led by the Bolshevik party. As imperialism once again drags humanity toward fascism and war, socialist workers and young socialists jumped at the opportunity to purchase these titles at sharply discounted rates. Conference participants found a chart listing which major works of the three communist leaders are contained in the collected volumes helpful in deciding what to purchase.

The books were rescued by a team of socialist workers in the early 1990s who happened to be in Russia. Ending any pre-

tense at representing the continuity of the Russian Revolution after the collapse of the bureaucracy in the Soviet Union, the publishing house that owned the volumes began selling them off to a pulp mill for the price of scrap paper.

Many young people attending the conference, as well as others with years in the communist movement, carried away boxes of books to build their libraries or replace titles worn out from use over the years. In all, 161 individual volumes by Lenin and 490 by Marx and Engels were purchased, for a total of \$1,383.50.

Tom Leonard from Houston helped staff the book sale table. "The most important thing was that the main purchasers were young people," Leonard said. "This was the biggest sale of Marx, Engels, and Lenin that I have been a part of in a long time. But I have had experiences locally where workers and young people have purchased Lenin off our book tables. So I wasn't surprised. The response is part of something a little bigger than what happened at the conference," he said.

## Participants study 'Cuba and the Coming American Revolution'

### BY RACHELE FRUIT

ATLANTA—The class on *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* held on Sunday of the southeast socialist conference was attended by some 50 people and became a highlight of the weekend.

Louis Turner, a textile worker in North Carolina and leader of the Young Socialists, introduced the book by SWP leader Jack Barnes. "Don't look at this book as something that tells a good story about a moment in history," he said. "Read it and reread it as a communist and devour every word and phrase." He pointed to the profound impact the opening years of the Cuban Revolution had on a generation of young people who were won to the communist movement for life.

Dennis Richter, from the Charlotte-area organizing committee of the SWP, described the campaign this spring by socialist workers and YS members to get the book into the hands of workers and youth coming into politics today. The book, he said, shows how working people in Cuba were transformed through their revolution and points to the need to emulate that example here. Richter quoted several sections, including the point on building a proletarian party, in which Barnes writes, "What is special is never the human material, but the times we live in and our degree of preparation."

Several young people attending the class pointed to sections in the book they thought

merited study and discussion.

Romina Green from New York noted the statement that "the transformation of nature by human labor, social labor, is not only the source of all wealth but the foundation for all culture." She asked if there is such a thing as an "American culture."

Rebecca Williamson, a member of the Young Socialists from Seattle, pointed to the lessons about becoming disciplined proletarian fighters. In capitalist society, Barnes says in the book, discipline is "something inflicted on us, aimed at breaking our spirit and making us submissive to the norms and values demanded by capital. But revolutionary discipline, proletarian discipline, is something that comes from within—something thinking and self-acting working people initiate and voluntarily submit to in order to advance common ends."

Michael Ellis said that the source of rightist reaction is not "backward U.S. workers," but the ruling class and the semi-hysterical middle class.

## Influence of the conference

The 400-mile walk by miners' widows, which was discussed at the conference and featured on one of the displays, struck a chord with Gladys Williams, a farmer from south Georgia and activist in the Peoples' Tribunal, an organization that fights police brutality and other injustices.

"I want to join the Widows' Walk," she

Continued on page 13

# Socialist campaign in Newark fights city's denial of ballot status

BY DON HAMMOND

NEWARK, New Jersey—"The decision by the city administration to exclude my campaign from the ballot is an attack on workers' rights that should be protested by working people and defenders of democratic rights," said Maurice Williams, the Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Newark.

"More than 2,350 working people signed up to put our campaign on the ballot, more than double the requirement," he said. "This decision is an affront to those who supported my right to be on the ballot. It is part of the many undemocratic restrictions imposed by the capitalist parties in order to keep a working-class alternative off the ballot so that the rulers' two-party shell game remains unchallenged."

Williams was notified by election officials March 22 that he was 158 signatures short of the requirement. Williams and his supporters visited the election offices to review petitions the officials said were rejected. One pile of 116 petitions—each includes one signature—was of registered voters who live in Newark but had recently moved to the city from elsewhere in the state. Another stack of more than 1,000 petitions was of those whom officials claim were not registered voters. A quick check of 50 signatures turned up four people who are registered to vote. In at least one instance, the names of 50 people in a row who signed up were simply disqualified.

Election officials denied the socialist campaign access to computer terminals where they could have quickly checked more names, and said that even if Williams could show an additional 158 qualified signatures he would have to appeal the ruling to the Board of Elections, and then overturn the drawing for ballot slots which takes place March 28.

On March 26 Williams spoke alongside other mayoral and city council candidates at a meeting sponsored by the Forest Hill Action Group, attended by 100 people.

"I explained that my fight to obtain ballot status is part of the broader struggle of working people to break from the politics of lesser evilism that is imposed on us by the capitalist rulers," said Williams. "One candidate for city council who spoke to me after the program said he opposed the ballot restrictions placed on candidates and believes that anyone who decides to run for public office should automatically be on the

ballot. He told me that the city clerk had ruled 500 of his petitions as invalid. He said he would send a message to the city clerk defending my right to be on the ballot. Another city council candidate said she also supported my right to appear on the ballot.

"A supporter of Cory Booker, the major bourgeois candidate challenging Mayor Sharpe James, approached me after the meeting. He said he agreed with my opposition to the U.S. war in Afghanistan and that he would send a note to the city clerk opposing my exclusion from the ballot."

## Statement of protest

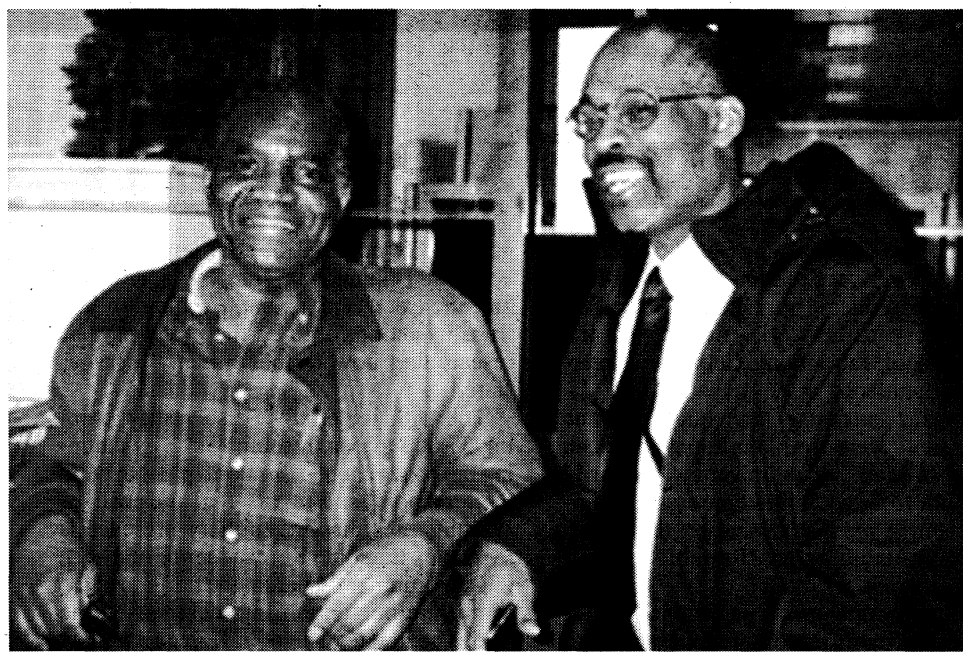
The socialist campaign has issued a statement of protest to the city clerk and Board of Elections. "We are demanding to be placed on the ballot and to be included in the March 28 drawing for ballot slots," Williams said.

In turning in his petitions at City Hall March 21, the socialist candidate was accompanied by Moses Williams, a hospital worker and one of his campaign managers, who remarked, "This is a chance to get a working-class message out. To raise the consciousness of working people. Consciousness is very important. That's one of the reasons I support this campaign."

A member of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 1199J, Moses Williams said he joined the socialist campaign because "it's another way to expose the Democrats and Republicans for the sham they are. For them after the election is over it's business as usual. That's why running as a socialist is to be encouraged. The vast majority of working people gain absolutely nothing from these elections."

During the effort to collect the petitions the mayoral candidate met another member of SEIU Local 1199, Linda Boykin, who works at a nursing home. At her invitation Williams spoke at a candlelight vigil organized by 1199 New Jersey. On March 14 the union held rallies at 17 nursing homes around the state as part of a fight for higher wages and the hiring of more staff.

In his speech, Williams told participants about Michael Italie, a garment worker who was fired for his political views by bosses at Goodwill Industries during his campaign as the Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Miami. When Williams mentioned how the employers at Goodwill attempt to pay workers below minimum wage, someone in



Militant/Don Hammond

Maurice Williams (right) with campaign manager Moses Williams turning in 2,353 signatures March 21 to meet requirement for ballot status for mayor of Newark.

the crowd yelled out, "slave wages!"

Boykin told Williams that because "of the low wages I get paid I work overtime every week—two double shifts a week, 16 hours a day—to pay my rent. I'm tired all the time and a lot of the women who work with me are doing the same thing. I have no time to spend with my family. If I was paid more I wouldn't have to work all this overtime."

Williams said the socialist campaign is fighting for the labor movement to demand that the minimum wage be raised to a livable level. "This needs to be universal, and would have the effect over time of raising all wages," he said. "Labor must also demand a shorter workweek with no cut in pay,

binding on all employers as federal law. This would help spread around the available work."

In addition to the low wages workers receive from the employers, they also face an official unemployment rate of 8.1 percent. "My campaign advocates a government-funded public works program with pay rates at union scale to rebuild housing, schools, hospitals, libraries, and other parts of the city's crumbling infrastructure," Williams said. "We fight for an expansion of Social Security to be a government-funded entitlement covering health care, old age pensions, and disability coverage for all, from the cradle to the grave."

## Why a party and a state?

Continued from Page 14

the oppressed nationalities in their struggle for self-determination. Emphasis should constantly be placed on the socialist alternative to capitalism, and transitional steps should be charted toward the workers' conquest of state power in order to reorganize society on a higher plane.

The party should apply a Marxist strategy developed on that basis to project a course of action in various concrete situations. At the same time, an irreconcilable political struggle should be waged against the reformists and centrists. The Marxists should patiently explain—again and again—the errors of such misleaders in theory, program, strategy, and tactics in order to help the workers avoid repetition of such mistakes.

If these tasks were to be carried out, Lenin stressed, the vanguard party had to strive for political homogeneity in its ranks, based upon adherence to Marxist principles. Its members were cadres, professional revolu-

tionists. They were not only active in the class struggle, but all their activity was carried out in a disciplined way under the direction of the party.

Moreover, the party constantly had to aim to be proletarian in composition and leadership as well as in program. Toward that end, party members should integrate themselves into the mass organizations, going through the workers' experiences with them, and in the process recruit the best militants into the revolutionary vanguard. Through such efforts, increasing numbers of proletarian fighters could be educated politically in the course of their assimilation into all phases of party activity. In that way they could develop both as competent leaders of mass actions and as candidates for the leading committees of the party itself—an interrelated process through which the party as a whole would become better equipped to win the workers' confidence by proving its capacity to guide them in their struggles against the capitalists.

## Goodwill withdraws objection to Italie's unemployment benefits

Continued from front page

Doelling said: "The claimant was discharged for violation of a reasonable and known policy. We feel benefits should be denied and we request relief of charges."

The State of Florida Unemployment Compensation Program had ruled last December that Italie "was discharged because of political views. Benefits are payable because the discharge was for reason other than misconduct connected with the work."

Attorney Ray Taseff, who agreed to represent Italie at the appeal hearing, was notified of Goodwill's withdrawal when he called the Florida Office of Appeals to institute discovery proceedings to get documents from company files on Italie's firing.

"Goodwill Industries backed down from its challenge of my unemployment benefits because the company doesn't want more attention drawn to its reprehensible action of firing me for my political beliefs," Italie said in an interview. "Goodwill feared paying the political price for being exposed at the hearing as a company that not only fires workers for advocating their political views, but also is trying to cut off my weekly \$177 unemployment benefits and starve me out."

"I will not be intimidated," said the socialist worker. "I will continue to speak out in defense of my rights and those of all work-

ing people. This week I plan on joining the walk by widows and coal miners' wives on its way to Washington as they continue their fight for black lung benefits. It is struggles such as this that point the way forward for all working people and strengthen fights such as mine for justice against Goodwill."

### Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium

By Jack Barnes

Read this book for a working-class viewpoint on a wide range of questions, including the deepening crisis of the Catholic Church and its political implications in U.S. politics today.

"The Holy Apostolic Church of Rome is today weaker than at any time in the modern period. But bourgeois propagandists have sought to create an image around John Paul of a new church militant, a church on the march. The first Central European pope, a Polish pope who allegedly brought down communism. A church that will not only speak its mind but will mobilize the faithful and wage a fight against abortion rights and contraception.

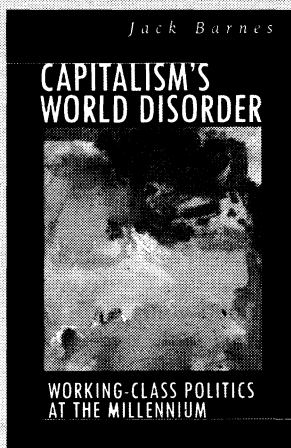
"But the truth is that the Catholic Church is weaker than ever in its modern history. Never before has there been such a gap between the real views, the real practices, and the real doubts of the faithful, on the one hand, and the doctrine of the hierarchy, on the other. The hierarchy cannot get a majority of the faithful to agree with their line on birth control or with their line on abortion. And this phenomenon is not limited to the United States; even in Ireland the grip of the hierarchy has slipped, and perhaps the greatest gap of all is in Italy, the Vatican's home base.

"Why is it, then, that institutions that are actually so weak can be presented as so strong? What allows such illusions to persist?

"The answer, above all, is that the international labor movement has gone for so long without any mass revolutionary leadership that speaks and acts in the interests of the working class and challenges the petty-bourgeois misleaders who parrot and trail after the bourgeoisie." From *Capitalism's World Disorder*. Also available in French and Spanish. \$23.95

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or visit [www.pathfinderpress.com](http://www.pathfinderpress.com). Please include \$3 for shipping and handling.

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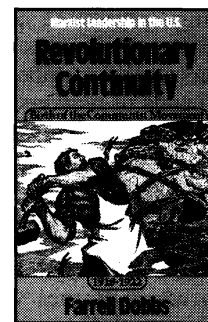


### Revolutionary Continuity Marxist Leadership in the United States

Farrell Dobbs

How successive generations of fighters took part in the struggles of the U.S. labor movement, seeking to build a leadership that could advance the class

interests of workers and small farmers and link up with fellow toilers around the world. Vol. 1 \$16.95, Vol. 2, \$18.95

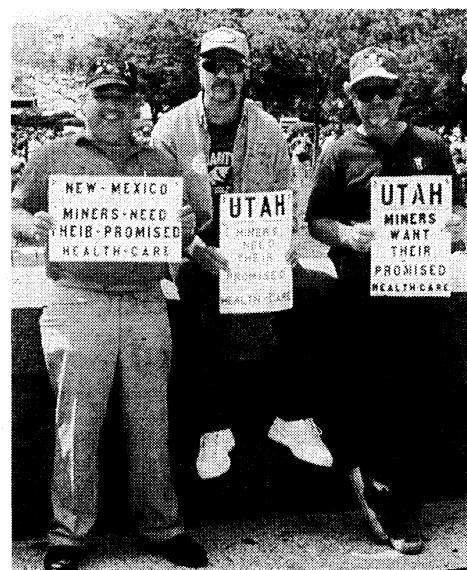


# Widows fight for black lung benefits

Continued from front page

federal legislation, some 225,000 miners were declared permanently disabled as the result of black lung. As well, 140,000 widows whose husbands had died from black lung were found to qualify for benefits under the new act. The 1969 law was the first time that federal health standards were established for any industrial occupation, setting an important precedent obligating the federal government to ensure health and safety of all workers. However, the past decades have seen nothing but backsliding by Washington.

Today, the hard fact is that widows are denied black lung benefits. Since 1982, when



Western coal miners join May 17, 2,000, demonstration in Washington to demand government keep its promise of guaranteed health care.

the federal black lung law was weakened, widows have had to prove that their spouse's death was "due to" his pneumoconiosis. The previous policy that allowed widows automatic eligibility was abolished.

## History of struggle

The Widows' Walk is part of a long tradition in the coalfields of working people fighting back against the coal bosses, the courts, bureaucratic government agencies, capitalist politicians, and the federal government. It is part of and inseparable from the fight by the ranks of the UMWA who

## UMWA blasts cuts to mine safety budget

Not being satisfied with ravaging black lung benefits, the federal government is determined to cut the Mine Safety and Health Administration's (MSHA) safety enforcement budget by 6 percent.

The UMWA's safety director, Joe Main, recently blasted the move to weaken health and safety laws. In a letter to MSHA chief David Lauriski, Main wrote that the cuts were unacceptable and lax enforcement is costing "American coal miners their lives," reported the *Charleston Gazette*. "In the last 12 months, 49 miners were killed in the nation's coal mines. Through February of this year, eight have been killed in the nation's mines," said Main.

Main's letter demands that President Bush "send a strong message throughout MSHA and the mining industry by immediately beefing up enforcement of the Mine Act."

Main said it is less common for MSHA to use tougher enforcement rules, such as "significant and substantial" violations and unwarrantable-failure citations/orders. There are also less frequent mine inspections.

Main was also deeply concerned by what has been uncovered through an investigation of the mine explosion that killed 12 union miners and one boss at Jim Walters Resources No. 5 mine in Brookwood, Alabama. He cited at least seven areas where MSHA is backing off of enforcing safety laws. The union's investigation is ongoing. The September 23 disaster was the worst coal mining accident since the 1984 Wilberg mine fire disaster, when 27 were killed in a Utah mine. Interesting enough, Lauriski was the director of health, safety and training for Utah Power and Light Co., which owned the Wilberg Mine. —FF

began to confront the decline of their union in the 1960s. This is not the first time that widows have been on the front lines.

After the big class battles and strikes of the miners' union in the 1940s, working people in the coalfields for the first time won the right to free health care for miners' families, retirement pensions, cash aid for the disabled, death benefits, and maintenance assistance for widows and orphans. This victory for coal miners meant they no longer had to retire without a health card or a pension and be left dependent on the company doctor and hospital prepayment system.

These gains cut across the practices of the coal bosses, who, many miners remarked, "would rather lose a miner than one of the mules that pulled the coal cars." Through most of the last century it was common for a miner's widow to be evicted from company housing to make room for a new miner and his family. The widow had nothing; her only recourse was to remarry.

Following the pitched battles of the 1940s, miners received a \$100 monthly retirement pension for the first time. The union also set up a rehabilitation program for sick and injured miners, allowing them to be flown to hospitals all across the country. Funds from the new UMWA Health and Welfare Fund were responsible for rehabilitating an estimated 97,000 disabled miners, including many who had been bedridden for more than 20 years.

## Boone Report

One of the novel features in the 1946 UMWA contract was the commissioning of a study of the health conditions in mining communities. The U.S. Navy Bureau of Medicine was assigned to make the study, which became known as the Boone Report after Admiral Joel Boone.

Initially, the report was suppressed. The union forced it to be published and when the study was made public in 1947, "its findings shocked the nation," one report noted. Studying working conditions in and around 260 mines, the commission found that medical facilities in the coal regions were woefully inadequate, and coal companies had imposed some of the worst health and safety conditions in the country. The government study also contains numerous photos of the deplorable housing, sanitation, and living conditions in the mining communities. The Boone Report noted that fewer than 20 percent of the coal mines were served by modern hospitals.

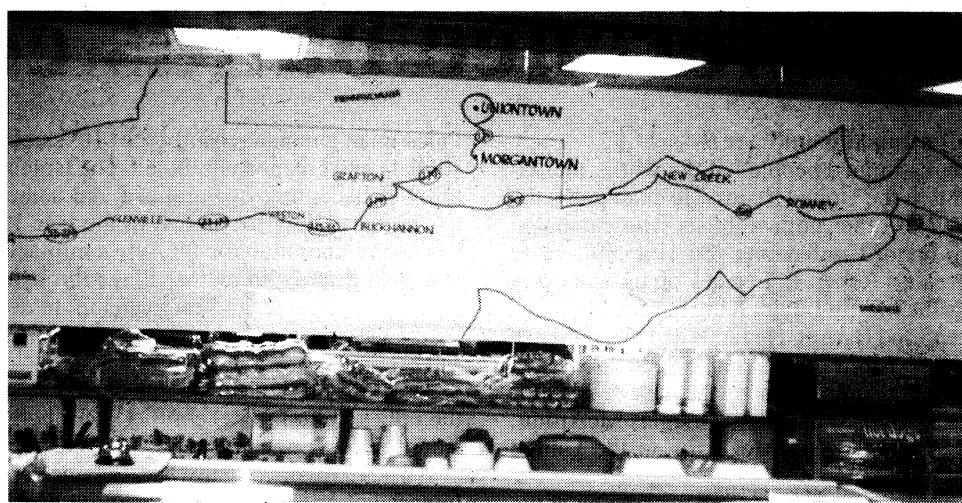
In 1952, the union announced its plan to build 10 new hospitals in the mining regions of West Virginia, Kentucky, and Virginia. All were finished in the next four years. At the ceremonies opening the facilities thousands of miners traveled to help commemorate what was in their eyes a victory for working people in the mining communities. These hospitals cost the fund \$30 million and made it easier to recruit doctors to practice medicine in the mountain regions of these three states.

However, all of this began to come apart in the mid-1950s. In 1954, the fund trustees—John L. Lewis being the most important—dealt a blow to disabled miners and widows by terminating cash aid. These miners were incensed because they thought these benefits were permanent. These two programs helped provide for more than 80,000 miners and 30,000 widows and their children.

## Renewed assaults on miners

At this time, the coal industry was in decline. Competition from new sources of energy such as oil and gas led to a decline in production. Between 1945 and 1965, union employment decreased by 75 percent, from 383,000 in 1945 to just over 100,000 just 20 years later. The Health and Welfare Fund, financed by a tonnage royalty, started showing million dollar deficits.

At the same time the coal bosses expanded mechanization in the mines but without taking additional measures to control coal dust. Output per man tripled over this period. Working under the worst dust conditions in the history of coal mining, thousands of miners faced the nightmare of black lung disease. The federal government ignored the increasing numbers of disabled and dying miners, even while miners in the United Kingdom were receiving compensation since the early 1940s.



Above, map of the route being followed by the widows and their supporters. The Widows Walk is part of a long tradition in the coalfields of working people fighting back against the coal bosses, the courts, government agencies, and capitalist politicians.

In another blow, officials of the fund announced in 1961 that the miner's health card would be cut off after one year of unemployment. In the same year the \$100 pension was cut to \$75. In 1962, the trustees announced without any explanation that the 10 coal hospitals it had dedicated six years before would be closed or sold. Today most remain open, but in the hands of private owners, and in various stages of bankruptcy.

Then the trustees announced in 1962 that benefits would be cut off to miners who had worked for coal companies whose owners had not been meeting their royalty payments. Miners soon learned that UMWA president John L. Lewis had signed "sweetheart agreements" with these companies by allowing them to withhold royalty payments. In 1965, the trustees restricted the 25-year service requirement for a pension by requiring miners to spend their final working year in a union mine. This meant that if a miner worked 30 years in a union mine, and was laid-off in his last year and started work at a nonunion mine, he would not be entitled to a union pension.

Growing discontent over these assaults led to an open rebellion in the coalfields by 1964 and 1965. With wildcat strikes and calls by rank-and-file miners for more democracy, the corrupt officialdom of the union led by Tony Boyle resorted to hooliganism and thuggery. At this time, 19 of the 23 union districts were under union trusteeship.

Miners who resisted faced reprisals from the union bureaucracy, such as blacklisting, having their pensions cut off, or being accused of "dual unionism."

In response to the 1968 Farmington mine disaster, in which 78 coal miners were killed, UMWA miners began mobilizing. It was the worst disaster since 1951, when 119 miners were blown up in a mine near West Frankfort, Illinois. The disaster received widespread media attention, including pro-company statements by UMWA president Boyle, who praised Consol as "one of the best companies to work with as far as cooperation and safety are concerned." Boyle failed to mention that Consol's No. 9 mine had a terrible safety record.

Referring to Boyle, one of the Farmington widows said: "I hated him right then. I couldn't believe someone could say that right there in front of the mine where all our husbands were buried alive." The 78 widows formed a Farmington Widows committee and began a drive for mine safety. Their testimony before Congress helped secure passage of the 1969 Mine Health and Safety Act.

## Black Lung Association

The Farmington disaster and Boyle's anti-human response served as a catalyst to action in the southern coalfields of West Virginia. The Black Lung Association (BLA) was born in southern West Virginia in 1968. It became the dominant insurgent group and waged a successful wildcat strike in 1969, involving 40,000 miners and virtually shutting down coal production for three weeks in that state.

About 3,000 miners and their families marched on Charleston, West Virginia, and refused to leave until the governor signed a black lung bill. The legislation was the first making black lung a compensable occupational disease under the state workmen's compensation law.

Describing the work of the BLA in an article in the October issue of the *UMW Journal*, Raymond Wright, who was one of the rank-and-file leaders, said, "We were after something and we got it. At one time we had 5,000 to 8,000 people involved. Everyone was sober, everybody was serious. We were so orderly and respectable, we

came out on top. We were all rank and file. There was no District or International officials or representatives in that march."

The work of BLA, which had dozens of chapters in a seven-state area, was reinforced by other militant organizations like the Disabled Miners and Widows of Southern West Virginia (DMW), who exploded on the scene by calling strikes against the abuses of the UMWA Welfare and Retirement Fund. Another group, Association of Disabled Miners and Widows, pressed legal challenges against the UMWA and eventually forced the removal of Boyle from the fund, as well as winning a lawsuit exposing the "willful defrauding" of some \$75 million from miners.

In many ways the revolution in the union was propelled forward by the "discards of the coal industry"—UMWA miners forced out of the mines because of black lung, disabled and retired miners, and their widows and children. Many of the leaders of this movement were Black, reflecting the fact that in the 1960s southern West Virginia had the highest concentration of Black miners in the country. For example the first president of the BLA was Charles Brooks, a Black coal miner and president of a UMWA local. The president of the Disabled Miners and Widows was Robert Payne, a disabled Black miner from Itmann, West Virginia.

The DMW fought tenaciously against the coal bosses and the UMWA bureaucracy. In 1970, the DMW and rank-and-file UMWA miners shut down 120 mines in three states, idling more than 15,000 miners. The DMW fought off violent attacks, court injunctions, and even a murder plot against Payne.

## Involvement of women

Many women held leadership positions too, both as miners' wives and as widows. Widows had special problems getting benefits, and they made sure their demands were heard. Social Security Administration (SSA) officials would often deny benefits to widows based on the death certificates, which rarely mentioned black lung as the cause of death. At one mass meeting of 800 in 1971 in Logan, West Virginia, the BLA presented a list of demands to officials of the SSA. Heading the list was a demand for respect: "Treatment of claimants like people not like dogs."

Widows and disabled miners organized mass protests across the coalfields against the SSA, the government agency that administered black lung claims. In 1971, shotgun-wielding police broke up a rally of disabled miners and widows at Big Stone Gap, Virginia. The widows also played a big role in the fight to establish black lung clinics, and for clinics that tested fairly and had modern diagnostic medical equipment.

In 1972, the mass pressure from the BLA, including the threat of a national strike, forced President Richard Nixon to sign a strengthened black lung bill.

Together with the rank-and-file Miners for Democracy, the insurgents from the southern coalfields carved out enough space to oust Tony Boyle from the leadership of the union. The ranks dealt a blow to hooliganism and to cold-blooded murder that was aimed at subduing the ranks. Boyle was eventually convicted of murder, and imprisoned.

The Widows' Walk comes out of this rich history of struggle. Their walk sets an example for the kind of determination that is needed today. One can be assured that the coal bosses and the government hate every step Chapman, Tipton, and their supporters take as they move confidently on to Washington.

Frank Forrestal is a member of UMWA Local 1248 in southwestern Pennsylvania.

# Conference builds communist movement

Continued from Page 9

dark-skinned people" of the world, including in the United States. He champions the call of other ultra-rightists who campaign to honor Confederate war veterans and to create a Robert E. Lee day on the same day as the Martin Luther King national holiday, reported Barnes. He reminded the audience that Buchanan's three heroes are Generalissimo Franco, the fascist dictator who ruled Spain, Gen. Douglas McArthur, and Sen. Joseph McCarthy in the United States.

In their attempts to roll back gains of the working class, and advances in rights of Blacks and women conquered through massive struggles, the U.S. rulers run into the fact that it will not be easy to turn back history. The gains won since the 1960s are historically recent and are defended by working people.

## Palestinian struggle and Israel

The imperialist-backed Israeli regime is not succeeding in beating down the Palestinian people, Barnes stated. He pointed to several facts. In the first intifada, the ratio of deaths was 35 Palestinians to one Israeli Jew. In this war, the ratio is about three to one. In the first, no Israeli tanks were blown up; so far two have been destroyed. One

Palestinian gunman recently shot 10 Israeli soldiers and escaped unscathed. The Israeli army is becoming demoralized and some troops are calling for an end to the war. It has been impossible for Tel Aviv's military forces to destroy an entire village through bloody brute force, and each attempt to do so creates more people who are ready to fight.

In the discussion period one person said the only solution to the conflict is for both sides to broker an agreement.

Barnes explained that what was once an imperialist conquest is now coming apart and pointed to the Socialist Workers Party's stance toward the struggle. There is no viable solution to the conflict short of the total immigration of the Palestinians back to their land and the abolition of the Israeli state. The question is not of "resolving" the "violence" but of defending this just struggle.

The imperialists are trying to cobble together an agreement, he said, but whatever they end up with, if anything, will be shorter-lived than the previous attempts. And the next struggle will explode even more violently, he said. Unless the people of Israel in large numbers become politically won to the Palestinian struggle, the state of Israel becomes an even greater death trap for the Jews.

Barnes said communists put forward the only solution for both the Jews and Palestinians, that of a democratic, secular Palestine. Communists call on Jews to join the

Palestinian people in their struggle to topple the Israeli state.

Jews in the United States will also divide, Barnes said, as a growing number begin to question long-held views about Israel and draw the conclusion that whether the Jews will survive or not is a historically open question. The unfolding conflict in the Middle East means communists will find a greater interest in Pathfinder's books and pamphlets, such as the title *How Can the Jews Survive?* by George Novack.

## Catholic church's greatest crisis in U.S.

The Roman Catholic church faces its greatest crisis in the United States and is weaker than at any time in its modern history, Barnes said. While it is taking the form of growing revelations about pedophile priests and the long delay by the pope in making any statement condemning their acts, the roots of the crisis can be found in the oppression of women and the fact that the Catholic church includes the most reactionary doctrine of any major Christian religion today.

Never before has there been such a gap between the real views, the real practices, and the real doubts of the faithful, on the one hand, and the doctrine of the hierarchy, on the other, he said. The hierarchy cannot get a majority to agree with their line that using contraception is a sin in the eyes of God, for example. In order to survive and reverse its decline, the church hierarchy will be forced to carry out a radi-

cal transformation.

Barnes said that communists support and draw strength from all battles that defend the interests of the toilers around the world. They also recognize all gains are partial and fundamental questions such as the threat of nuclear war, wage slavery, oppression of Blacks or women, anti-Semitism, environmental devastation, and others can only begin to be confronted once working people and all of those who ally themselves with the workers movement take power out of the hands of the capitalist exploiters.

To that end, the communist movement is accelerating the international scope of its work as part of building a world communist movement. Socialist workers and Young Socialists will participate in several gatherings in the next couple months, Barnes announced. This includes trips to the 40th anniversary celebrations of the founding of the Union of Young Communists of Cuba; events in north Korea celebrating the founding of the Workers Party there; the Tehran, Iran, book fair; the Midwest Regional Conference in Chicago; the conference founding the Young Socialists in Haiti; and trips to Iceland and Britain to work with communists in those countries to deepen the proletarian character of their work.

## Sinn Fein leader speaks in Ohio

Continued from Page 16

concluded. "We have the people, we have the project. What is needed is the determination. If we get that right, many of us will see a united Ireland in our lifetime."

During the discussion that followed, McGuinness acknowledged the prospects for solidarity from British workers, citing the response to the killing of the Catholic postal worker. Some 300,000 postal workers in Britain held a two-minute period of silence at the time of the funeral. "The solidarity from English workers was significant, and I think the prospects are good for winning both loyalists and English people to the cause of a united Ireland."

"Ten years ago no one would've believed you if you said Northern Ireland would make the progress it had," he said. "The same held true in the years leading up to the end of apartheid in South Africa."

## MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

### NEW JERSEY

#### Newark

Hear Maurice Williams, Socialist Workers Candidate for Mayor of Newark, on Building the Communist Movement Today. Sat., Mar. 30, 7:30 p.m. 506 Springfield Ave., 3rd Floor. Donation: \$4. Tel: (973) 643-3341.

### NEW YORK

#### Brooklyn

Defend the Five Cuban Revolutionaries in U.S. Jails. Speaker: Róger Calero, Militant staff writer. Fri., Mar. 29, 7:30 p.m. 372A 53rd St. (at 4th Ave.) Donation: \$5. Tel: (718) 567-8014.

#### Garment District

Israel's War Against the Palestinian People: Why Israel Can't Win. Speaker: Douglas Nelson, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Mar. 29, 7:30 p.m. 545 8th Avenue, 14th Floor. Donation: \$4. (212) 695-7358.

#### Manhattan

The Iranian Revolution: Its Legacy for Today. Speaker: Ma'mud Shirvani, Farsi editor of Pathfinder Press. Fri., Mar. 29, 7:30 p.m. 599 W. 187th Street, 2nd Floor. Donation: \$5. Tel: (212) 740-4611.

### AUSTRALIA

#### Sydney

Women in Combat: the Role of Women in the Vietnamese Revolution. Sun., April 7, 4:00 p.m. 1st floor, 3/281-287 Beamish St., Campsie. Donation: \$4. Tel: (02) 9718-9698.

### 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.

### NEW ZEALAND

#### Auckland

Palestinian Resistance Deepens Israeli Regime's Crisis. Fri., April 5, 7:00 p.m. 7 Mason Ave., Otahuhu. Donation: \$3. Tel: (09) 276-8885.

## 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 Peoples 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, Jack Willey, members of the SWP Political Committee.

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Protest in New York to demand:

## U.S. Navy out of Vieques and all of Puerto Rico

Mon., April 1, 4:30 p.m.

At the Office of Federal Affairs in Puerto Rico, 3 Park Avenue (between 33rd and 34th Streets), Manhattan

### Vieques Support Campaign

Tel: (212) 677-0619 or (718) 601-4751

**No comment**—Responding to the mounting Catholic challenge to the rule of celibacy for priests, a Vatican spokesman declared: "The



Harry Ring

pope has spoken to this. He has said celibacy remains. It is a great gift to the church."

**They do get big crumbs**—Be-

tween World War I and II, "experts" promoted the notion that global arms dealers, not imperialism, promoted war. This came to mind with a headline in the *Financial Times* of London on the India-Pakistan confrontation: "Arms dealers see bonanza in stand-off."

**The can-do society**—Initial findings are in on gas stations that have complied with a nationwide federal order to replace storage tanks leaking a "possible" carcinogen. In California, a check found that two-thirds of the new tanks also leak.

**'Can't you see we're busy?'**—In the United Kingdom, the National

Health Service keeps cancer victims waiting up to eight months for radiology treatment that should begin within four weeks. The criminal delay is attributed to a shortage of radiologists.

**What else is new?**—"UK's rich are getting richer, report says"—Headline, *Times* of London.

**...meanwhile**—"The [Labour Party] New Deal program, which promised work for 250,000 young people, has resulted in 20,000 jobs at most in its first two years."—*Times*, London.

**Recollections**—During the 1930s

depression, Franklin Roosevelt's "New Deal" scraped up a relative handful of make-work jobs under the WPA (Works Project Administration.). It took WWII to relieve the jobs crisis.

**And also**—Heads of families on welfare who got WPA jobs found their monthly wage was lower than their welfare check. In some areas, union-type organizations of the jobless fought for and won supplementary relief. That is, the difference between their welfare and their WPA checks. (No, brainy Bush didn't dream up the idea of shoving people from welfare into an even lower income bracket.)

**You haven't read it yet?**—Not to be a pest, but the news of the day bears frequent testimony to how rotten the education system is. And *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning*, by Jack Barnes, offers an incisive explanation of why it's so, as well a look at the inspiring alternative offered by socialism. Order it at the new Pathfinder web site: [www.pathfinderpress.com](http://www.pathfinderpress.com).

**As we were saying**—"Financial ills plague public colleges. Stung by the recession, state systems nationwide hike tuition, cut course offerings, limit enrollment and reduce faculty."—*Los Angeles Times*, March 17.

## Cuts to Medicare are an assault on retired workers

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The year-by-year slicing of federal Medicare payments to health providers is bringing about a quantitative shift in the ability of retired working people to receive medical attention. Recent press reports show an alarming increase in the number of doctors who are refusing to take on new patients covered by Medicare. In some cases they are refusing to treat some of their regular patients once they reach age 65.

This trend is the result of a bipartisan assault on both Medicare and Medicaid, social entitlement programs for the elderly and poor that were won through working-class struggles and the rising Black rights movement in the 1960s.

Through his Balanced Budget Act in 1997, for example, former president William Clinton projected slashing spending for Medicare by \$115 billion by 2003. Cuts now total \$200 billion, and President George Bush is projecting further spending reductions. Medicare currently covers 40 million people, and the number of beneficiaries is expected to double by 2030.

Medicare cut payments to doctors by 5.4

percent this year. According to a March 17 *New York Times* article, "The government estimates that under current law, the fees paid for each medical service will be reduced in each of the next three years, for a total decrease of 17 percent from 2002 to 2005."

The American Academy of Family Physicians reports that 17 percent of family doctors are not taking new Medicare patients. According to Martha McSteen, president of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, "Many of our members across the country have told us that they are having difficulty finding a physician who accepts Medicare." A number of them are now seeking care among those involved in doctor-training programs.

The *Times* article interviewed a number of doctors around the country who are shunning new Medicare patients. "At current payment rates," noted Dr. Paul Buehrens, medical director of a clinic in Kirkland, Washington, that has specialized training in geriatrics, "Medicare is almost charity care."

Dr. Baretta Casey, 48, a family physician in rural Pikeville, Kentucky, commented, "For the last five years, I've watched my income go down and my expenses go up. About 60 percent of my practice is Medicare patients. I decided not to take any more Medicare patients in January, when the reimbursement rate was cut." She added that many private insurers base their payment rates on the amount reimbursed by Medicare.

Health maintenance organizations (HMOs), which began dropping Medicare patients from their coverage four years ago, have denied coverage to a total of 2.2 million people so far. Many elderly people have sought HMO coverage because Medicare provides no benefits for purchasing prescription drugs. As recently as three years ago, 70 percent of HMOs charged no monthly fee for Medicare plans. Today, the majority of Medicare patients who retain HMO coverage are being charged. One company in southern Ohio charges around \$100 a month.

Dr. Abraham Rogozinski, 47, an orthopedic surgeon in Jacksonville, Florida, decided last year not to operate on Medicare patients or see them in his office, including a woman whose knee he replaced 10 years ago. At 68, she wants him to perform the same necessary operation on her other knee.

Dr. Robert Hogue, 51, president-elect of the Texas Academy of Family Physicians, told the *Times* that not only does he not take any new Medicare patients; "in fact, I don't take any new patients over the age of 60 because they will be on Medicare in the next five years."

### Blacks, Latinos get inferior care

In another development, a study released on March 20 by the Institute of Medicine documents the fact that racial and ethnic minorities in the United States receive lower quality health care than whites, even when their insurance and income are the same.

"The differences are pervasive," commented Martha Hill, director of the Center for Nursing Research at John Hopkins University School of Nursing, who helped compile the study. "It cuts across all conditions of health and across the entire country, and we think this is a very serious moral issue."

After reviewing more than 100 studies conducted over the past decade, the report's authors concluded that the disparities contribute to higher death rates among members of oppressed nationalities from cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and HIV infection. "Members of minorities were less likely

### Pickets in Georgia support strike of 2,700 against Lockheed Martin



Militant/Linda Joyce

Some 2,700 members of the International Association of Machinists went out on strike March 11 against the Lockheed Martin plant in Georgia. Strikers are fighting the Pentagon contractor's outsourcing of work and for improved benefits.

to be given appropriate medications for heart disease, or to undergo bypass surgery, and are less likely to receive kidney dialysis or transplants than whites," reported the March 21 *Times*. "But members of minorities are

more likely to receive certain less desirable procedures." A study of Medicare beneficiaries, for instance, found that Blacks were 3.6 times as likely as whites to have their lower limbs amputated as a result of diabetes.

### Class at socialist conference

Continued from Page 9

said, "because I support what they are doing. I don't think their husbands should have worked in the mines all those years and gotten this terrible lung disease. And then they don't get any compensation."

Nineteen-year-old Rah-ed Ghuma has been part of Arab student organizations and Palestinian solidarity organizations in Baltimore. "As an Arab, I always identified with the Palestinian struggle," he said. "The struggle symbolizes the oppression of all Arabs by imperialism. I always wanted to explain the Palestinian struggle from a class perspective, not as a religious or ethnic question, in order to explain the fight to defeat Zionism. That way you cannot be accused of being anti-Semitic."

Rah-ed said that he found the remarks by Jack Barnes on Palestine helpful in clarifying a working-class point of view on the struggle of the Palestinian people. "The information about the Havana International Book Fair helped educate me more about the Cuban Revolution," he added.

Michel Watts, 26, came to the conference from Richmond, Virginia. "I learned about the Socialist Workers Party when I decided to get a subscription to *Granma* while visiting Cuba," he said. *Granma* is the paper of the Communist Party of Cuba. Subscriptions to its weekly edition can be purchased through Pathfinder Press. "A friend told me about Pathfinder and the SWP," Watts explained, "so I looked up the nearest SWP headquarters when I returned."

"Three of us stayed up until 5:00 a.m. this morning discussing the presentations," he said, referring to the panel at the Saturday evening session of the conference. "We couldn't get enough information. I was particularly interested in the points on the Palestinian struggle and the report by Mary-Alice Waters that confronted the myth that nobody in Cuba supports the revolution. I thought I was all alone until I met this movement, with all politically-minded people standing together, with a diversity of experiences, nationalities, and ages."

Jack Willey contributed to this article.

## —25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

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

April 8, 1977

This year on International Women's Day thousands said "no" to the recent barrage of attacks against their rights.

The response was slow in coming. The gravity of the assault was not at first recognized by the women's liberation movement.

But the protests held March 5-12 were an initial step in turning this around.

Ratify the Equal Rights Amendment. No restrictions on abortion. Defeat the Hyde amendment against Medicaid-funded abortions. End sterilization abuse. Full rights for pregnant workers. Implement affirmative-action plans. Restore child-care funds.

These were the demands raised by thousands of women in at least twenty-six cities.

In some places the actions protested a particular attack.

For instance in St. Paul at the last minute, the planned action was turned into a protest of an arson attack on an abortion clinic.

More than 300 people in Seattle demonstrated against an effort to rescind the ERA in Washington State.

These actions showed that women are beginning to see the need to defend their rights with a united response.

The women's movement should see the Hyde amendment as only the first attack on abortion rights. If the government is successful in denying poor and Black women abortions, it will try to outlaw abortions for all women.

The stake that Black, Chicana, and Puerto Rican women have in the fight against the attacks on women's rights was reflected by their participation in the International Women's Day events.

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

April 7, 1952

Another step toward establishing thought-control in the United States was completed last week when six persons were convicted in Baltimore on charges of violating the Smith Act.

The trial followed the same pattern as the previous political frame-up proceedings against the Communist Party, except in one respect: The judge took it on himself to give the jury a new interpretation of the Smith Act, ruling that mere membership in the Communist Party constitutes a crime under the Act.

Up to now, the government has been under the obligation to prove that Smith Act defendants actually and individually committed the offense charged—namely, that they "conspire to advocate" the overthrow of the government by force and violence.

If the new interpretation is allowed to stand, then the witch hunt would get a new impetus and speed, for the government would no longer have to show anything but membership in the Communist Party or any other organization arbitrarily accused of violating the Smith Act.

Part of the blame for the acceleration of the witch hunt rests on the labor movement, especially those sections who understand the menace of the Smith Act and have called for its repeal.

Today the victims are members of the Communist Party, tomorrow it will be members of other organizations on the government's "subversive" blacklist, and the day after it will be members of the organizations that will be added to the blacklist by the police-statesmen in Washington.

# End all U.S. aid to Israeli regime

**Continued from front Page**  
resulting enclaves are surrounded by fortified Israeli settlements, military installations, and army-controlled roads. The Palestinian people are at the mercy of Israel for jobs, funds, and even water.

Future cease-fires and "peace agreements" based on concessions from either side will be more short-lived than the Oslo, Wye, or other accords, and the explosion of new intifadas and resulting Israeli assaults will be more fierce.

Today the Palestinian struggle is having an immense and deepening impact inside Israel. War-weariness has affected many; in this highly militarized country such moods have even infected the army, some of whose soldiers have rejected their assigned role as assassins and jailers of an entire people.

The Israeli military is being used as a police force, causing even further demoralization among troops. From the other side of the growing polarization, voices are calling for all-out war and the total expulsion of all Palestinians.

Suicide bombings and increasingly effective guerrilla attacks are wreaking a real toll inside Israel. One in four of those who have died in the current conflict have been Israelis. Fifteen years ago, during another period of heightened struggle, the proportion was one in 25. In a boost to Palestinian morale and an equal blow to Israeli confidence, Palestinian fighters have destroyed two "invincible" Merkava tanks. Meanwhile, researchers predict that within eight years Palestinians will outnumber Jews in the area west of the Jordan river.

In this situation, some Jews in Israel are drawing far-reaching conclusions. A growing number are asking themselves, "can the Jews survive," as they see the jaws of the Israeli death trap opening further. In explanation for his refusal to serve in the occupied territories, one military reservist 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."

The young soldier's words illuminated the perpetual state of Israel, founded on the dispossession of the Palestinian people who have never stopped fighting for their land. For the peoples and countries of the Middle East, the existence of this garrison state means permanent war, including a number of full-blown conflicts with surrounding countries.

In spite of the myth that it provides a refuge for the

Jewish people from the horrors of fascism, Israel is in fact a death trap for the Jewish people.

Both history and contemporary experience show that there is no possibility of ending anti-Semitism while capitalism holds sway. Only the overthrow of this rotten system will end the ever-present scourge of Jew hatred fostered under capitalist rule.

While some Jews may nurture illusions of assimilation, such dreams are quickly shattered as sharp economic and social crises develop and rightist movements are sponsored by the leading capitalist families. Fascist gangs, used by the bosses as battering rams against the labor movement, inevitably scapegoat the Jews to divert mass anger from the capitalist system and the unemployment, ruin, and brutality it brings with it.

The national struggle of the Palestinians is an important front in the worldwide fight against the imperialist order. They and the great majority of Jewish people in the Middle East have a solid basis for common action. The Israeli state and its imperialist backers are the enemies of both. It will suffer the same fate as Rhodesia and apartheid South Africa, other racist colonial-settler states established by the imperialist powers.

Through their struggle, the toilers of the region will determine the shape of a democratic, secular Palestine, including the fate of regimes and countries like the majority-Palestinian territory of Jordan, and the pro-imperialist monarchy that rules it. Already the deepening Palestinian struggle is destabilizing the imperialist order throughout the Middle East, and putting bumps in the road of Washington's preparations for war against Iraq.

Working people in the United States and around the world need to get out the truth about the Palestinian struggle and its historic line of march. Pathfinder books, the *Militant*, and *Perspectiva Mundial* are invaluable tools in this effort.

Public forums and discussions about revolutionary perspectives for the Middle East, and how the anti-imperialist struggle there intersects with the fight against capitalism around the world, are also needed today. As we engage in this discussion, working people should demand: End U.S. aid to the Israeli regime! Stop the Israeli assaults! Israel out of the occupied territories! Self-determination for the Palestinian people! For a democratic, secular Palestine!

## Young Socialists discuss perspectives

**Continued from Page 8**  
about this opportunity now, before colleges let out for the summer," she said.

Jason Alessio, an underground coal miner and member of the United Mineworkers of America in western Colorado, urged participants in the meeting to join the widows' walk for black lung benefits taking place in the Eastern coal fields.

"As communists, we help get out the word about the widows' struggle," he said. "The *Militant* has the most coverage of this fight, and it helps to link miners across the country. No one in Colorado would know about this struggle without the *Militant* and the Militant Labor Forum. In the mine where I work, we're discussing how we can build support for this fight." Alessio also urged participants to spend a few days on *Militant* sales teams to the coal fields of Alabama, Colorado, and Pennsylvania that the YS and SWP are organizing coming out of the conference.

Arrin Hawkins from Chicago explained the fight by workers at the meatpacking plant where she worked. The bosses suddenly closed the plant, she said, but they "underestimated the potential of working people to fight back.

On Christmas Eve we held a protest to demand back wages, severance pay, and an extension of medical benefits," she said. "Since then we've had meetings of up to 100 workers to discuss how to fight the layoff. It's a small example of the resistance around the country where working people are gaining confidence in ourselves."

Mike Ellis, a YS member in Charlotte, North Carolina, and a high school student, said he looked forward to building the tour of the youth leaders from Cuba as part of building the YS.

Members of the Young Socialists also held a meeting to discuss the best way to organize the YS leadership in the months leading up to the next international gathering of the communist movement in Oberlin, Ohio, this July. An election of a new National Leadership Council brought on to the body a number of YS members who have stepped forward in the organization. Romina Green was elected as the NLC organizer, and Green and Newton were elected to a National Coordinating Committee. These shifts in the leadership structure will help the YS respond in a more effective and timely manner by drawing on the broader leadership of the organization.

## Do workers need a party?

In response to the letter printed on page 15 titled "Why a party?" we are reprinting an excerpt from *Revolutionary Continuity: Birth of the Communist Movement, 1918-1922* by Farrell Dobbs. The piece takes up the importance and indispensable role of a revolutionary party that would lead workers and farmers in a revolutionary struggle to "destroy the capitalist state and replace it with one defending the interests of the workers and poor peasants in order to move toward a socialist order," as Dobbs explained. The excerpt opens with a discussion of why Lenin in April 1917 proposed changing the official name of the Bolshevik party from the Social Democratic Labor Party to the Communist Party. Copyright © 1983 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.

BY FARRELL DOBBS

The Bolshevik leader presented several reasons for the proposed change in party name. The designation "social" was scientifically incorrect, Lenin said; it was too limited. Following Marx's explanation to German socialists in the mid-1870s, Lenin explained that in overturning capitalism on a world scale, the workers could first construct socialism; by this, Lenin explained he meant state ownership of the means of production under which "the distribution of products [would be determined] according to the amount of work performed by each individual."

That doesn't end the matter, however, Lenin said. "Our Party looks farther ahead: socialism must inevitably evolve gradually into communism." Society would then have the abundance and productive capacity to apply the motto, "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."

The term "democracy" as used in the party's name was also scientifically incorrect, Lenin added. Democracy had come to signify a form of bourgeois state, a parliamentary republic, used to consolidate capitalist rule by means of a police, army, and government bureaucracy as a repressive force over the people. The goal of Marxists is the eventual abolition of "every kind of state," Lenin said.

Unlike anarchists, however, Marxists recognize "the need for a state for the purpose of the transition to socialism," he explained. Even this will not be a state in the previous sense of "domination over the people by contingents of armed men divorced from the people." It will be a state in which the armed forces are "the masses themselves, the entire people," mobilized to crush all attempts at counterrevolution.

Such a state, Lenin said, would represent an "emergent new democracy, which is already ceasing to be a democracy, for democracy means the domination of the people, and the armed people cannot dominate themselves." Therefore, the emergence of soviets of workers and peasants as the sole power in a state would be "the harbinger of the 'withering away' of the state in every form...."

What the workers needed above all was a revolutionary party that would break unequivocally with the social democrats and expose the political conspiracy being hatched against the toilers; that would explain the imperative need to destroy the capitalist state and replace it with one defending the interests of the workers and poor peasants in order to move toward a socialist order; and that would teach them how to wield their power for that purpose.

There was no counterpart in Germany, however, to the Bolshevik Party that had led the Russian toilers to victory. In 1914 the ranks of the German Social Democratic Party had been thrown into political confusion and turmoil when the party leaders capitulated to the bourgeoisie and supported the imperialist war. At the outset most socialist militants were demoralized. Few were able to chart a revolutionary programmatic course on their own. It was thus not difficult for Karl Kautsky and other centrists in the party, who had pulled back from their initial outright support for the German imperialist war effort, to draw a minority of socialist workers into a pacifist campaign for a negotiated peace—which meant continued de facto support of the goals of German imperialism.

Revolutionary opponents of the war such as Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht managed to win some of the disoriented militants to their views. Slow but steady progress was made in building a nucleus of internationalists. By New Years Day 1916 the revolutionists had become strong enough to formally organize a left wing, which became known as the Spartacus League.

This represented an advance toward the creation of a revolutionary Marxist party that could challenge the reformist-dominated Social Democratic Party for political leadership of the German working class. To fully realize that objective something more was needed, however. The new party had to be built as a revolutionary combat formation along the political lines followed by Lenin in organizing the Russian Bolsheviks.

The vanguard working-class party, Lenin had taught, should make every effort to teach the masses, through drawing the lessons of their own experiences, that they must distrust the bourgeoisie and all its parties and petty-bourgeois agents. The vanguard of the working class had to provide clear answers and timely aid to its allies, above all the poor peasantry, and thereby win them away from petty-bourgeois misleaders to a common struggle against the exploiters. It had to champion and give leadership to

Continued on Page 10

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# SWP leader in 1950: U.S. troops out of Korea!

Printed below is an excerpt from *Notebook of an Agitator* by James P. Cannon. This is one of Pathfinder's April Books of the Month. The item quoted is "A Letter to the President and Members of the Congress" by Cannon, who was the national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party. The letter appeared in the July 31, 1950, issue of the *Militant*. U.S. troops invaded Korea in June 1950, beginning a three-year war that took 3 million lives. Cannon wrote two other letters on the war to the president and members of Congress, which appeared in the Dec. 4, 1950, and May 7, 1951, issues of the *Militant* and are also reprinted in the book. Copyright © 1958 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

BY JAMES P. CANNON

To the President and Members of the Congress:

Gentlemen:  
I disagree with your actions in Korea, and in my capacity as a private citizen I petition you to change your policy fundamentally,

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

as follows:

Withdraw the American troops and let the Korean people alone.

I am setting forth the reasons for this demand in detail in the following paragraphs. But before opening the argument, I beg your permission, gentlemen, to tell you what I think of you. You are a pack of scoundrels. You are traitors to the human race. I hate your rudeness and your brutality. You make me ashamed of my country, which I have always loved, and ashamed of my race, which I used to think was as good as any.

The American intervention in Korea is a brutal imperialist invasion, no different from the French war on Indo-China or the Dutch assault on Indonesia. American boys are being sent 10,000 miles away to kill and be killed, not in order to liberate the Korean people, but to conquer and subjugate them. It is outrageous. It is monstrous.

The whole of the Korean people—save for the few bought-and-paid-for agents of the Rhee puppet regime—are fighting the imperialist invaders. That is why the press dispatches from Korea complain more and more about "infiltration" tactics, increasing activities of "guerrillas," the "fluid" fighting front, the "sullenness" and "unreliability" of the "natives."

The Korean people have a mortal hatred of the Wall Street "liberator." They despise unto death the bestial, corrupt, U.S.-sponsored Syngman Rhee dictatorship that made South Korea a prison camp of misery, torture and exploitation.

The high morale and fearlessness of the North Koreans and the hostility of the South Koreans toward their U.S. "liberators" alike testify to the unity of the entire Korean people in this unflinching opposition to imperialistic domination.

The explosion in Korea on June 25, as events have proved, expressed the profound desire of the Koreans themselves to unify their country, to rid themselves of foreign domination and to win their complete national independence. It is true that the Kremlin seeks to take advantage of this struggle for its own reactionary ends and would sell it tomorrow if it could get another deal with Washington. But the struggle itself has the overwhelming and whole-hearted support of the Korean people. It is part of the mighty uprising of the hundreds of millions of colonial people throughout Asia against western imperialism. This is the real truth, the real issue. The colonial slaves don't want to be slaves any longer.



U.S. forces attacking village during Korean War of 1950-53. Inset: SWP leader James P. Cannon, May 1945. "The American intervention in Korea is a brutal imperialist invasion," stated Cannon in July 1950 letter to president and Congress. U.S. troops, he said, "are being sent 10,000 miles away to kill and be killed, not in order to liberate the Korean people, but to conquer and subjugate them."

This is more than a fight for unification and national liberation. It is a civil war. On the one side are the Korean workers, peasants and student youth. On the other are the Korean landlords, usurers, capitalists and their police and political agents. The impoverished and exploited working masses have risen up to drive out the native parasites as well as their foreign protectors.

### A class war unfolding in Korea

Whatever the wishes of the Kremlin, a class war has been unfolding in Korea. The North Korean regime, desiring to mobilize popular support, has decreed land reforms and taken nationalization measures in the territories it has won. The establishment of people's committees has been reported. These reforms, these promises of a better economic and social order have attracted the peasants and workers. This prospect of a new life is what has imbued a starving subject people with the will to fight to the death. This is the "secret weapon" that has wrested two-thirds of South Korea from U.S. imperialism and its native agents and withstood the troops and bombing fleets of mighty Wall Street.

American imperialism was quite willing to turn northern Korea over to Stalin in return for control over South Korea, which it ruled through the bloody dictatorship of Syngman Rhee. Now Washington is seeking, against the resistance of the Korean people, to reimpose its imperialist puppet

rule, to enforce the division of Korea and to maintain it as a colony and military base for future war on the Soviet Union.

There is not an iota of concern for the wishes and rights of the Korean people in this brutal invasion. The attempt to prop up the Syngman Rhee regime by armed force is part of Wall Street's planned program to dominate and exploit the whole world. Your undeclared war on Korea, Mr. President, is a war of enslavement. That is how the Korean people themselves view it—and no one knows the facts better than they do. They've suffered imperialist domination and degradation for half a century and they can recognize its face even when masked with a UN flag.

The right in this struggle is all on the side of the Korean people. Like the colonial peoples everywhere in Asia, they want no part of U.S. or even UN "liberation." They want the American troops to get out of Korea. They want freedom from all foreign domination. They want to decide their own fate.

The American people well remember the War of Independence that brought this nation its freedom from British tyranny. In the spirit of this revolutionary and democratic tradition of ours, I call upon you to halt the unjust war on Korea. Withdraw all American armed forces so that the Korean people can have full freedom to work out their destiny in their own way. I submit this to the Congress as a motion.

James P. Cannon

## LETTERS

### Warlords of today

About a year ago I read the story of *Eugene V. Debs Speaks*. What a joy it was to read this article again by our esteemed brother and comrade. This great man and his life continues to refresh and inspire us all today.

He attacked the warlords of his era in 1918 and he inspires us against the warlords of today, who are worse. Let all of us refuse Bush and the capitalist agents' war machine in Afghanistan and refuse their threats against N. Korea, the Philippines, Colombia, Iran, Iraq, and Libya.

To the end Debs vowed to stand up for the IWW (International Workers of the World) and their rights "even if my office is moved to the penitentiary." Praises always for Eugene Debs and for all our socialist strugglers today. We will not give up.

Lloyd Shank  
Ft. Lauderdale, Florida

### Why a party?

Why support a party? Aren't socialists against political power in the hands of a few? Why aim for state power rather than abolishing it? Isn't the state a patriarchal institution, based on violence?

L.D.  
Vancouver, British Columbia

### Al-Amin gets life

On February 12 some 150 people attended a forum on the trial of Abdullah Al-Amin (H. Rap Brown), at Howard University in Washington. Al-Amin was arrested two years ago and charged with killing a police officer in a shoot-out in Atlanta.

Edward Brown, Al-Amin's brother, said the police were initially looking for someone who had suffered gunshot wounds in the shoot-out. Al-Amin had no such wounds.

Al-Amin was a leader of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee during the 1960s and later became a leader of the Black Panther Party. He now heads one of the largest Black Muslim groups, the National Ummah.

In March, Al-Amin was convicted and given a life sentence with no chance of parole.

Glova Scott  
Washington, D.C.

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

Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

## April BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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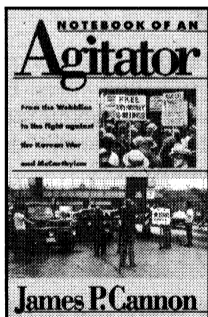
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JAMES P. CANNON

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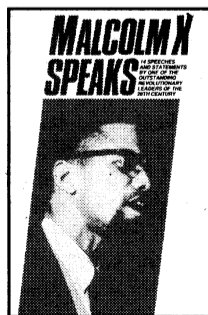
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## London march backs teachers' strike

BY SEAMUS SHERIDAN

LONDON—Thousands of teachers went on strike here March 14 and some 6,000 joined a march and rally to bolster their fight.

They are protesting a shortage of teachers in the schools and demanding an increase in their London allowance, which is supposed to make up for the higher cost of living in London, but is seen by teachers as totally inadequate. Teachers have not gone on strike over pay in London since 1972.

Members of the National Union of Teachers (NUT) voted to strike by an 86 percent margin in late February and early March. Currently teachers receive a London allowance that varies from £3,000 in the center of London to £765 for those who teach on the outskirts of the city (£1=US\$1.43). By comparison, Members of Parliament, who have voted to set the teachers' compensation, receive an £18,000 bonus. Teachers decided to strike after the government announced it would increase the central London allowances by a mere £1.62 a week, with smaller increases in other areas.

According to the Halifax building society, in February 2002 the average price of a house in London was £175,900. Assuming that a prospective buyer had a deposit of 10 percent, he or she would still have to earn £53,000 a year to get a mortgage. This is out of the reach of teachers and as a result many are leaving their jobs or moving to other parts of the country.

Teachers are angry that temporary teachers are increasingly being used to cover classes in London and qualified teachers are being asked to teach subjects in which they are not specialized. Many primary school children in the capital do not have regular teachers. The banner of one marcher read, "Like to meet new men and women everyday? Become a primary school pupil in London."

Young teachers find it particularly hard to survive in the capital city. Luke Branca, a 23-year-old art teacher, said that although he is married with one child and his wife is pregnant again he and his wife live apart as they cannot afford to get a house together.

History teacher Liam Russell said, "The problem for young teachers entering the profession has been compounded by the fact

that graduates are already saddled with debts due to the cutbacks in funding for higher education."

The government and much of the media have tried to turn working people against teachers, calling them "wreckers," and drawing attention to the fact that teachers are better paid than the parents of many of the children in their classrooms. Teachers on strike responded by saying that money was only one of the factors that led them to walk out.

An example of this was Jenny Mosely, a 25-year-old teacher of English and Media Studies who is leaving her job this year but who still went on strike. "It's not about getting a pay raise," she said, "it is about ensuring pupils have qualified teachers." Mosely is leaving London and said the government "must keep teachers of my age in London educating kids—that's what's important."

The March 14 *London Evening Standard* estimated that half of London's 1,000 schools were forced to close or send children home due to the strike. Many strikers said that if they were organized into one union they would have a stronger voice.

NUT officials, in a recent issue of the union's magazine *The Teacher*, called for talks with other teaching unions in England



Some 6,000 teachers rallied in London March 14 for increased pay.

and Wales to discuss the possibilities of forming one teachers union. The National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers, the second largest teaching union in England and Wales, has decided

to initiate debate among its members on the NUT's proposal.

Seamus Sheridan is a member of the National Union of Teachers.

## Immigrants in Greece lead rights protest

BY GEORGES MEHRABIAN

ATHENS, Greece—Close to 3,000 people rallied in central Athens and then marched to the Greek Parliament to demand the authorities grant immigrants legal status.

Contingents of immigrants from Albania, Bangladesh, Pakistan, the Philippines, Kurdish areas in Turkey, and countries in Africa made up more than two-thirds of the March 21 action, making it the largest mobilization of immigrant workers in several years.

"So many of us have come out now because our frustration has been building up," said Samsideen Iddrisu, in an interview with the *Militant*. Iddrisu emigrated from Ghana to Greece and is the president of the Greek branch of the European Migrants Forum. "We

have gone through two so-called 'legalization processes' and people thought that they would become permanent and legal. Now permits are expiring and we are going through another difficult process," he said.

The march was called by immigrant organizations and anti-racist committees to coincide with the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. It was supported by the civil servant's union, the Civil Servants' Supreme Administration Council, the Union of Public Secondary School Teachers, the Piraeus Labor Center, and several left-wing organizations.

The central demands put forward by the organizers of the action were "Legalize all immigrants now!" "Political asylum for all refugees!" and "Stop the deportations!"

Iddrisu said there are some 1 million immigrants in Greece of whom 350,000 previously gained temporary legal status. "Now even those people are in limbo not knowing the outcome of this new process," he said. "So people thought 'I have nothing to lose' and got off the couch and came to the march."

Immigrants are required to have both a residence and a work permit and to renew them every six months or year. Renewal requires a signed declaration by an employer and proof of their payment into the applicant's social security fund. Most employers are refusing to fill out the needed documents or to pay into the social security fund.

"The government is making this process very difficult," Iddrisu said. "People cannot meet the demands. This is because the forces behind the government are not interested in workers with documents. Companies profit from this situation. They want to keep us undocumented and illegal so that we are scared and can be threatened by police deportation," he said. "That way we work for low wages and without social security and health care. Their bottom line is not humanity but their profit margin."

Demonstrations were also held in Thessaloniki, Trikala, Hania, Zakynthos, and several other regions of the country.

## Food workers in British Columbia score 'huge victory' in second vote for union

BY JOE YATES

VANCOUVER, British Columbia—Workers at Purdy's Chocolates here won a second vote in four years in favor of being organized into a union by a margin of 61-57. Despite the best efforts of the company and the government to break the union, the members are continuing a fight for their second contract.

Penny Dean, one of the leaders of a five-month strike last year, told the *Militant* that the vote was "a huge victory. We knew it would be close but we figured we would win it." She ascribed the victory to "the strength of the people who stuck together."

Dean said the company installed 14 surveillance cameras around the plant, including one in the lunch room. "People were getting letters of discipline put in their files who have been here 20 or 25 years without getting a letter," she said of the company intimidation campaign. The union has filed complaints on these issues.

About 95 percent of the union members at the plant are women and a big majority are immigrants, mostly from Asia. Last April the workers, who voted in the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada four years ago, went on strike seeking a second collective agreement. Among the issues in the walkout were a guaranteed 40-hour workweek, a closed union shop, and improved benefits.

As the weeks passed, the issue in the strike more and more became the company's drive to get rid of the union.

Last October the Labor Relations Board

ordered the union decertified and an end to the strike because of alleged irregularities in card-signing during the organizing drive four years earlier. Despite this blatant attempt to break the union, the workers did not give up and the union reapplied for recertification. A vote was conducted on October 24.

But the labor board held months of hearings and organized another vote January 31 that included 21 casual workers who weren't allowed to vote in October because they were hired in November after the union members were forced to end their strike. Despite the time given to the company to intimidate the workers while union supporters were prohibited from expressing their views in the workplace, the union scored a victory in the final tally.

Negotiations around the new contract began February 26. Among the demands of the union are a 67-cents-an-hour wage increase and a two-year contract. The union has filed unfair labor practice complaints to reverse the firing of union members Sam Craft and Maria Silvestre, both dismissed by the company for alleged picket-line incidents. Hearings on the complaints are scheduled in May.

The British Columbia Liberal government is proposing changes to labor law that would make it easier for companies to decertify unions and harder for workers to get organized. The proposed changes would allow the bosses to decertify the union if the company has been inactive for two years or has gone bankrupt and been sold. The proposed rules would also allow employers

more access to workers in advance of union certification votes. British Columbia Federation of Labour president James Sinclair said the proposals "deliver a wish list to the employers."

## Sinn Fein leader speaks in Ohio

BY NATALIE CORVINGTON AND CAROLE LESNICK

CLEVELAND—Sinn Fein leader Martin McGuinness visited the Cleveland area March 14 where, in addition to media interviews, he spoke to 300 students at Oberlin College and to a very receptive audience at the West Side Irish American Club. Sinn Fein is the political party leading the fight to end British imperialist rule in Northern Ireland and to unify the divided country.

Sinn Fein is gaining support in both the north and south of Ireland, a fact registered in electoral advances by the Irish republican organization. "There can be no moving back for the British to the bad old days," McGuinness said, adding that Sinn Fein's growth is "sending a destabilizing message to Unionists."

The recent "disgraceful" statements by David Trimble, leader of the pro-British Ulster Unionist Party, "referring to the Irish republic as a 'pathetic, sectarian, mono-ethnic and mono-cultural state'" shows that "Unionism is in crisis," he said. "Trimble is not ready to support the peace process. There is a direct link between the bitter words spoken by Unionist politicians and

acts of violence by loyalist paramilitaries." Loyalists support the division of the country, union with Britain, and a continuation of the second-class status of the Catholic population.

Over the past year loyalist paramilitary forces have used bombs and guns in their widespread attacks on Catholics. In 2001 there was a 200 percent increase in such attacks over the previous year. A recent murder of a 20-year-old Catholic postal worker as he arrived at work was met with strikes by postal and other unions and large marches in several cities.

McGuinness blasted attacks by rightist loyalists against Catholic children attending Holy Cross school in North Belfast. "There should be no attacks on the Catholic community whatsoever," he stated.

"The British, in collaboration with the death squads, are responsible for hundreds of killings," the Sinn Fein leader said. "The British military has been in it up to their necks and it makes our case more eloquently than we could ever do."

"There is a ground swell for the peace process and a united Ireland," McGuinness

Continued on Page 12