

# Washington drives toward war on Iraq, Iran, N. Korea

## Iraq: British, U.S. forces move toward invasion

BY SAM MANUEL

U.S. and British warplanes have tripled their air patrols over southern Iraq to several hundred sorties a day.

Jockeying among the imperialist powers in the bitter contest for the purchasing of allies has sharpened. French president Jacques Chirac declared March 10 that his government would veto a U.S.-British-

## ‘Bring the troops home now!’

—See editorial p. 14

sponsored resolution at the UN authorizing war, while insisting that Iraq must be “disarmed.” U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell said, “I would not be surprised if they vetoed,” and warned that “France would not be looked at favorably in many parts” if it went ahead.

Near the Kuwaiti border with Iraq, final preparations for a U.S.-led assault have

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Protesters fill Cairo International Stadium in Egypt’s capital on February 27 to oppose drive to war against Iraq. Unions, opposition parties, and the Muslim Brotherhood organized the rally. Slogans oppose military strikes on Iraq.

## North Korea: U.S. mounts military provocations

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Maintaining Washington’s military threats and provocations against north Korea, U.S. secretary of defense Donald Rumsfeld confirmed the deployment of 24

long-range bombers to the Pacific island of Guam on February 28. Two days later north Korean fighter jets intercepted a U.S. surveillance jet flying near the country’s

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# Workers in Chicago join campaign against deportation of Róger Calero

BY BETSEY STONE AND CHESSIE MOLANO

CHICAGO—“The attack on immigrants is not just a Latino problem, an Arab, Somali, or Filipino problem—it’s really aimed at all workers,” Rafael Espinosa told the 90 people gathered at a fund-raising dinner here on March 1, sponsored by supporters of Róger Calero’s fight against deportation. Espinosa was one of a panel of speakers that included Calero, who is an editor of *Perspectiva Mundial* and a staff writer for the *Militant*.

The event at the Casa Juan Diego Youth Center was a highlight of Calero’s February 27–March 1 visit to Chicago—a visit that was part of a national tour to win support for his fight against attempts by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to deport him.

Those attempts date back to December, when Calero was jailed by INS agents on his return from reporting assignments in Cuba and Mexico. The immigration authorities said that a 1988 plea bargain conviction, waived when Calero was granted permanent residency 12 years ago, is grounds for deportation.

Espinosa was one of those at the Chicago event who expressed outrage at this injustice. A staff representative of Local 789 of the United Food and Commercial Workers union in Minnesota, he drove to the event with a carload of workers from Dakota Premium Foods, a meatpacking plant in South St. Paul. Calero had worked there and been part of a struggle for union

recognition that culminated in the gaining of a contract in October of last year.

“About two and a half years ago we united and began the fight in the plant,” Espinosa said. “Róger played a role in that struggle. About a month ago, we united again to support Róger in his struggle.” Espinosa was referring to a large and successful event at Local 789’s hall on January 11 that had built support for Calero’s campaign.

José Oliva, the Director of the Interfaith Workers Rights Center and chairperson of the national Róger Calero Defense Committee, shared chairing duties with Gerardo Sánchez, a meat packer and leader of the

defense committee in Chicago.

Jorge Ramírez of Casa Aztlán introduced the first speaker, Elvira Arrellano. An aircraft cleaner, she was one of 46 workers rounded up by INS agents at O’Hare airport on December 10. Ramírez has helped to organize opposition to this police sweep.

“Elvira was not at the airport when the raids took place on December 10,” he said. “She was at her home. Police came to her door at 8:30 in the morning, and dragged her out the way Nazis dragged out Jews during World War II.”

When the cops came, she said, they demanded to know if she had arms in the

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## ‘Militant’ launches fund appeal

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

As Washington and other imperialist powers move rapidly toward a brutal war in the Mideast, supporters of the *Militant* and the Spanish-language magazine *Perspectiva Mundial* around the world have launched a nine-week campaign to raise \$75,000 to help finance the two socialist publications. The drive goes from March 10 to May 12.

At a February 23 meeting in New York on “Capitalism’s Long Hot Winter,” supporters of the two publications raised nearly \$2,000 in cash and checks and made pledges totaling \$20,000.

The chart on page 5 shows the initial list

of local goals that supporters of these publications have reported so far. Next week the *Militant* will print a chart with the full list of local quotas. Supporters are urged to send in reports on their fund-raising plans, such as public meetings, fund mailings, phone call campaigns, and fund raising among co-workers.

The *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* are financed exclusively by the efforts of working people and others who value these socialist periodicals for truthfully presenting the facts and explaining a revolutionary working-class perspective. Raising the \$75,000 is necessary to help cover the

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## Washington targets Iran as ‘nuclear threat’

BY SAM MANUEL

As part of justifying its increasingly aggressive campaign against Iran, Washington has charged that the Iranian government is developing a secret nuclear weapons program under the cover of construction of nuclear power-generating plants.

Washington has made similar charges against the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, targeting those two countries, along with Iraq, as a supposed “axis of evil.”

Iran has for decades had a program to build nuclear power plants as part of industrializing the country and meeting the country’s rapidly increasing electrical consumption needs.

Last December State Department  
Continued on Page 11

# Wisconsin meat packers strike to reject Tyson takebacks

BY PATTIE THOMPSON

JEFFERSON, Wisconsin—Some 450 workers set up picket lines at the Tyson Foods plant here February 28, after overwhelmingly rejecting a long list of concession demands by the company. The last 200 workers marched off the job together at noon to be greeted outside the plant by hundreds of supporters. The rally drew solidarity from other unions in the area.

The proposed contract would cut wages, increase health-care costs, eliminate pen-

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# Washington seeks to send 3,000 combat troops to Philippines

BY PAUL PEDERSON

The U.S. government announced in late February its plans to send up to 3,000 troops to the Philippines. While the official reason is "fighting terrorism"—reinforcing an offensive by the Philippine government against a small guerrilla group operating in several southern islands—the troops would be deployed in a country of strategic importance to Washington's efforts to expand its military presence in Southeast Asia.

The announcement by Pentagon officials that the U.S. troops would play a combat role, however, prompted objections from the government of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, which faces widespread opposition to U.S. military intervention there. U.S. officials are now trying to smooth out an agreement with the Philippine government on how to label the troops and proceed with the deployment.

Last year Washington sent 1,300 troops on a six-month mission whose official role was to train government soldiers in fighting a guerrilla group known as Abu Sayyaf. U.S. officials justified the deployment by saying the group is tied to Al Qaeda.

On February 20 Pentagon officials reported that combat troops would be sent as early as the end of March—the first official use of U.S. troops in a combat role in the Philippines since World War II. They would include 350 Special Forces troops to the southern island of Jolo and 700 support troops to Zamboanga, on the mainland. Some 1,000 marines, armed with Cobra attack helicopters and Harrier AV-8B attack planes, would provide "medical" and "logistical" support, standing by as a rapid-response force aboard two ships off the coast of Jolo.

The Philippine government reacted to Washington's declaration by insisting the U.S. troops would be engaged in a "training exercise," not in direct combat, because, as Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes stated, such a role is outlawed by the Philippine constitution.

Washington, initially caught off guard

by this reaction, which was not part of the original script, refused to change its original description of the U.S. forces. "The Pentagon does not want to call one thing another thing when it's not," insisted a U.S. official quoted in the *Los Angeles Times*. "This is not an exercise. An exercise is a close thing, under controlled circumstances. This is a military operation."

Reyes flew to Washington February 28 to meet with U.S. defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld to discuss the plans. Afterward Rumsfeld reiterated that U.S. troops would be going to the Philippines but that the two sides were in the process of working out the definition of "training."

"They have a variety of things they do in training their people," Rumsfeld asserted, "including exercises that involve combat situations, which is kind of the end point of training.... And what they do is they end up with the end of that process putting their folks into combat—into a circumstance that conceivably could result in combat. You never know when you're dealing with terrorists."

## Strategic location

Many in the Philippines see Washington's moves today to set up a base of operations in the southern islands as part of its ambitions to reestablish a military foothold in its former colony and in the region.

"A successful U.S. operation in the southern Philippine islands could give the United States a forward presence in the Southeast Asian sea lanes," wrote Rene Ciria-Cruz, a journalist for Pacific News Service and editor of *Filipinas* magazine. "The passages are critical to the movement of U.S. forces from the Western Pacific to the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf."

A military presence in the Philippines, she noted, would give U.S. forces a staging point for intervening in other countries in the region such as Indonesia and Malaysia, branded by Washington as havens for "Islamic extremists."

Washington's announcement of a troop



U.S. Marines practice beach assault near Manila in February

deployment drew an immediate reaction in the Philippines. Among the 15,000 protesters who mobilized in Manila February 28 to protest against the U.S.-backed war on Iraq, a number held signs denouncing Washington's planned military buildup in the Philippines.

Underlying the dispute over what role the U.S. forces will play in the Philippines is a history of more than eight decades of U.S. colonial and imperialist domination, as well as the resistance to it.

## Decades of U.S. domination

"The wounds over the massacre of our forefathers by the American colonialists have not been healed," said Temojin Tulawie, a caller to a Philippine radio show.

Tulawie was referring to U.S. imperialism's brutality in conquering the Philippines from the Spanish colonial rulers at the end of the 19th century. Hundreds of thousands of Filipinos lost their lives resisting the U.S. occupying troops over the course of several years. Some of the most brutal atrocities by U.S. soldiers were carried out on the same southern islands that Washington plans to send troops today.

After the Philippines won its formal independence in 1946, the U.S. military maintained a large presence in the country for almost five decades. This included the two largest bases outside the U.S. borders—Subic Bay naval base and Clark air base. These played a strategic role during the Korean and Vietnam wars as well as the naval deployments to the Arab-Persian Gulf.

The U.S.-backed dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos was toppled by a mass upsurge in 1986. In face of sustained popular protests, the Philippine Senate voted in 1992 to close the U.S. military bases at Clark and Subic Bay, and the U.S. troops were removed. The Philippines constitution bars the stationing of foreign troops in the country without a Senate treaty approved by a two-thirds majority.

## 'War on terror' pretext

Washington's stated reason for sending troops is an effort to wipe out Abu Sayyaf, a guerrilla organization, with a few hundred combatants, that has primarily operated on the islands of Jolo and Basilan in the south. U.S. officials claim the group has ties to Al Qaeda.

Abu Sayyaf, a group of an estimated 200

combatants that originated as a split-off from the much larger Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), has largely devoted its activity to kidnapping for ransom. It has not advanced a political program aimed at addressing the national aspirations or broader interests of workers or peasants in the region.

Imperialist oppression and the fight for land have for decades fueled struggles by peasants in the Philippines, including rural guerrilla organizations. More than 12 percent of Filipinos are either subsistence farmers, tenants, sharecroppers, or farm workers. Some 70 percent of rural toilers do not own the land they work.

One of the main guerrilla organizations has been the New People's Army, which at times has been a large force drawing in thousands of peasants and others; it is historically tied to the Communist Party of the Philippines, a Stalinist organization of Maoist origin.

In the south, struggles have taken on a nationalist character, such as in Mindanao, an island in the south inhabited by the Moros, a national minority whose population is largely Muslim. About 5 percent of the more than 84 million inhabitants of the Philippines—an overwhelmingly Catholic country—are Muslim; the majority live in the southern islands.

In 1996 a guerrilla organization called the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) signed an agreement with the national government granting a degree of self-rule to Mindanao; it is currently abiding by a cease-fire as part of the self-rule agreement. At the high point of the rebellion it led in the early 1970s, the MNLF had tied down some 40 percent of the Philippine military.

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), a guerrilla force of an estimated 20,000 combatants that originated in a 1977 split from the MNLF, refused to sign the 1996 agreement and has continued to fight the government in the same region that U.S. troops have been stationed during exercises over the past year.

The unresolved social and national conflicts are fueled by the economic catastrophe. Saddled with an enormous debt to foreign banks and a growing world depression, the Philippine economy has been in a slump for several years. Just days after Washington announced its plans to send troops, the Philippine peso plummeted to a two-year low of 54.4 pesos to the dollar.

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# Gov't drug plan targets Medicare benefits

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

U.S. president George Bush has proposed that the government entice Medicare beneficiaries to quit the program by offering full prescription drug coverage to those who switch to private health plans.

Bush revised his previous scheme that would have restricted full drug benefits to those who signed up for managed care or private medical plans. The latest proposal offers limited drug benefits to those who remain in Medicare.

The president's shifts are part of the tactical maneuvering among Democratic and Republican politicians as they discuss moves that would put more of the costs of

health care onto the backs of working people. The framework of the bipartisan debate is to treat Medicare not as a social entitlement, but as one possible "choice" among other health-care plans.

"All seniors should be able to choose the health care plan that best fits their needs," said Bush in a March 4 speech to the American Medical Association (AMA). He proposed a yearly \$600 subsidy to "low-income" Medicare recipients to help pay for prescription drugs. He also recommended placing an annual limit on the out-of-pocket expenses they incur. Bush did not define that limit, although White House officials have previously stated that Medi-

care beneficiaries might have to spend up to \$7,000 of their own money to buy prescription drugs.

About 60 percent of Medicare recipients have some type of drug coverage. That includes the Medicaid program providing medical insurance for those considered to be earning low incomes; company-provided health benefits; individually purchased health insurance; and the Medicare option called Medicare+Choice.

The latter scheme, established under the Clinton administration in 1997, involves health-maintenance organizations (HMOs) and other managed-care plans. It covers about 13 percent of those receiving Medi-

care benefits. Over the past years, however, the HMOs have been dropping Medicare patients from their rolls with the explanation that the scheme is unprofitable for them, denying coverage to at least 2.2 million people.

## Medicare funds cut under Clinton

Clinton's Balanced Budget Act in 1997 called for chopping funds allocated to Medicare, including cuts in payments to health providers. Medicare cut payments to doctors by 5.4 percent last year. At the March 4 AMA meeting Bush called for a 1.6 increase in this amount. The American Academy of Family Physicians reported last year that 17 percent of family doctors have stopped taking on new Medicare patients.

Medicare is a government-funded health and hospital insurance system available to U.S. citizens age 65 or older, young people receiving Social Security benefits, and the disabled. It covers a total of 40 million people. Eligibility does not depend on income, while the coverage pays for medical treatment in hospitals, nursing homes, and home health services.

Medicare and Medicaid, which were signed into law in 1965, were won as byproducts of the mass civil rights movement and other social battles of the 1960s. Medicaid was passed as an amendment to the Social Security Act, enacted in 1935 under the pressure of a powerful upsurge in labor struggles.

Bush's Medicare "reform" proposals constitute an extension of the bipartisan assault on social entitlements spearheaded by Clinton, who signed the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act. That law eliminated Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), a federal entitlement under the Social Security Act that guaranteed cash assistance to poor families with children.

Meanwhile, a recent study released by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation estimated that 75 million people lacked health insurance at some time over the past two years. Last fall the Census Bureau reported that 41 million people went without medical coverage for all of 2001.

As a result of the economic slowdown and higher joblessness, a rising number of middle class and working people don't have health insurance. Even during the "boom" years of the 1990s, the number of people uninsured rose by nearly 10 million.

# Wisconsin strikers reject Tyson takebacks

Continued from front page

sions, and cut sick leave and vacations.

The workers are members of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 538. They had been working under contract extensions since June last year. In January, the company gave the union a 30-day notice, stating that it would terminate the extensions on February 25.

Two days before the deadline the workers voted by 400 votes to 9 to reject the proposed contract and to strike.

The plant produces sausages, lunch meats, and hot dogs. Tyson Foods acquired the plant in 2001. With 120,000 employees at 300 plants in 29 states and 22 countries, Tyson is the largest processor and marketer of chicken, pork, and beef in the world.

Strikers staffing the picket line on March 8, a cold and snowy Saturday, said that the company's demands—dubbed the "ten commandments"—went beyond what they were prepared to concede. "We had to let them know, we can't take that," said Jerry Staude, who has worked there for 28 years.

The company's demands would set up a two-tier pay scale cutting hourly rates for new hires from \$11.09 to \$9.00, and freezing pay for others over a four-year period; eliminate pensions for new hires and freeze benefits for the rest; increase health-care premiums by as much as \$40 a week and eliminate health-care supplements for retirees; cut sick leave and disability benefits by more than half; reduce maximum vacation by two weeks and eliminate two paid holidays for new hires; and remove rights to severance pay if the plant closes.

"Like most everyone else, I'm working for my future," said Debra Prust, a machine operator with 17 years in the plant. "And Tyson is trying to take that away."

"When Tyson met our negotiating committee, they couldn't believe the seniority rights we had there," said Ron Krause, 57. "They're used to running operations with 200 percent and more turnover." He said that he and about 30 others felt forced to accept retirement in the last week instead of working until 65, due to the threatened reductions in benefits. All of these forced retirees "are coming by and helping out on the picket lines," he said.

"The community support has been unbelievable," said Ken Frank, picket captain, who has 22 years in the plant. "People are coming by all the time, picketing with us, bringing food." Consulting his clip board, he said, "We've had folks from at least a dozen unions—steelworkers, teachers, machinists, Southeast Wisconsin AFL-



Militant/Lisa Potash

Members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 538 in Wisconsin on strike against Tyson Foods. The company seeks cuts in wages, health care, and sick leave.

CIO. They have come by from other meatpacking plants in Madison, and Fort Atkinson." He mentioned visitors from towns four to five hours away.

"The union electricians who had a contract doing the electrical work in the plant have honored our picket lines. That work has stopped," said Randy Latsch, who works in the kitchen and has 29 years in the plant.

The company is attempting to run production with management and office staff and a few dozen people bussed in from Beloit, a town about an hour south. Strikers say that so far they seem to be only packing and shipping out the inventory produced before the strike. The gates are monitored by video cameras, but workers report no incidents to date.

Homemade signs supporting the strikers can be seen throughout the town in car windows, storefronts, front yards, and living room windows.

The Jefferson plant is located in rolling southeastern Wisconsin farm country, and several of the strikers own land they can't afford to farm. Jerry Staude is one of those. He pointed to the importance of their fight to other working people, especially workers in meatpacking plants in other states. "We're pretty sure we'll be out here for a while because the company won't budge," he said. "We know we may not even get back in, but this isn't only for us. Anyone else could be next."

The Wisconsin AFL-CIO invites supporters of UFCW 538 to a plant gate rally, Sunday March 16 at 1:30 pm. Directions available at [www.wisafclcio.org](http://www.wisafclcio.org).

*Pattie Thompson is a sewing machine operator in Chicago and member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE.)*

# Cuban revolutionaries held in U.S. jails thrown in 'hole'

BY SAM MANUEL

Five Cuban revolutionaries being held in U.S. prisons were thrown into solitary confinement March 3. Leonard Weinglass, attorney for Antonio Guerrero, one of the five, condemned the action as "completely unjustified." Prison authorities have refused to give an explanation for the measure or how long it will last. Noting that they have been "model prisoners," Weinglass urged supporters of the five men to write the Federal Bureau of Prisons and demand their immediate release from solitary confinement.

Guerrero, Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, René González, and Fernando González are serving prison terms of between 15 years and a double life sentence after being framed up and convicted in June 2001 in a U.S. federal court.

They were in the United States to gather information on the activities of counter-revolutionary groups in the United States that have a history of launching violent attacks on Cuba from U.S. soil.

Unable to prove any illegal acts by the five men, the federal government pushed through convictions on a series of conspiracy charges, including conspiracy to act as an unregistered agent of a foreign power, to commit espionage, and to commit murder.

The confinement of the five in the "hole" takes place as their attorneys are preparing for an April 7 appeals hearing in Atlanta. The attorneys became aware of the situation during a discussion in preparation for the hearing when one of them reported not being able to get in touch with his client. Weinglass called prison authori-

ties and was told Guerrero was in "isolation."

Prisoners in solitary confinement can be visited only by their attorneys. But Weinglass tried for two days without success to speak with his client. Supporters of the five Cuban patriots who attempted to visit two of the prisoners March 7—Labañino in the federal prison in Beaumont, Texas, and Hernández in Lompoc, California—were turned away. Those seeking to visit Hernández were told, "It is possible they will not get any visitors other than their family in the future."

Asked in an interview with Radio Havana if placing the five prisoners in solitary confinement could be related to Washington's war moves against Iraq, Weinglass explained that he believes it is related but that the confinement of the five men has no basis in any "real security concern" of prison officials.

In a move to isolate them following their conviction in a Miami court nearly two years ago, U.S. authorities ordered the five to be held in different prisons across the country. The fact that all five, in separate jails, were put in isolation, noted Weinglass, indicates it was an overall decision by the Federal Bureau of Prisons. For this reason defenders of the five Cubans are asking that protest letters be directed to the federal prison authorities.

Messages demanding the five Cuban patriots be released from solitary confinement should be sent to: Kathleen Hawk Sawyer, Director of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, 320 First St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20534; tel. (202) 307-3198; fax 202-514-6620; e-mail: [webmaster@bop.gov](mailto:webmaster@bop.gov)

## 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. \$13**

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# Washington, London accelerate drive toward Iraq invasion

Continued from front page

been moving apace. With U.S. helicopters buzzing overhead, "military logistics convoys clog the six-lane road stretching through the desert to the Iraqi border, which has been deserted by civilian traffic," a *Boston Globe* correspondent reported March 8.

UN soldiers monitoring the border have reported that U.S. marines had cut several large gaps in the electric fence along the border that were large enough to accommodate tanks.

Iraq reported that three civilians had been killed March 6 in air strikes by British bombers. A spokesman for the U.S. Central Command said the targets were mobile surface-to-air missile launchers and anti-aircraft artillery in the southern "no-fly zone." For more than a decade, U.S. and British warplanes have imposed a "no-fly zone" over most of northern and southern Iraq.

U.S. and British planes have been conducting a steady bombing campaign against Iraq's military and communications facilities. A U.S. airforce spokesman said that every known fixed air defense in southern Iraq has been hit over the past several months.

Pentagon officials have announced that U.S. and British troops in the region, now numbering about 300,000, are ready to launch an assault.

General Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, reiterated that the massive air attack has as its goal "shocking the Iraqi leadership into submission."

The plan calls for launching 3,000 "precision-guided" bombs and 600-800 cruise missiles in the first 48 hours, followed quickly by ground operations. That would be 10 times the number of missiles launched in the entire 39 days of the 1991 Gulf war.

U.S. officials said their goal was "a short conflict" with minimal U.S. casualties. Despite talk about "precision bombing," however, Gen. Thomas Franks, head of the U.S. Central Command, warned that "he cannot promise low numbers of civilians casualties" in Iraq, as one news dispatch put it.

## Turkish government under pressure

In recent days, U.S. officials have stated that a second front against Iraq from the north will be opened whether or not

Turkey's parliament reverses its decision not to allow use of its territory to U.S. forces to attack Iraq. Washington was caught off guard when the Turkish parliament rejected its demand to use Turkey as a staging area for an assault by thousands of U.S. troops on Iraq. U.S. ships had already begun unloading heavy equipment at Turkish ports in anticipation of the vote. Dozens of ships remain waiting off the coast to be unloaded.

In exchange for the use of its territory, Washington had agreed to provide Turkey with \$15 billion to cushion the impact of the war on the country's weakened economy. The U.S. government is now using the threat of withdrawing this offer of "aid" as a club against Turkey, if the parliament does not reverse itself. The new Turkish prime minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, said the legislature may rediscuss the issue after the UN Security Council meets.

Meanwhile, the Turkish armed forces deployed the 20th Armored Brigade toward the border with Iraq March 8. It was the largest of recent troop movements in Turkey, consisting of 300 vehicles including tanks, armored personnel carriers, jeeps, and ambulances.

In the event of a U.S.-led attack on Iraq, the government in Ankara has threatened to deploy thousands of troops into the Kurdish-administered area of northern Iraq. Their goal would be to prevent the establishment of an independent Kurdish authority and to occupy the oil-rich centers of Mosul and Kirkuk.

U.S. officials have been openly discussing the kind of occupation government they plan to install in Iraq after the invasion. Last month, in a blueprint leaked to the *Washington Post*, the administration said that it would take "unilateral control" of Iraq and the creation of a new government would be directed by some "yet-to-be-named American civilian."

Some commentators have reported that the choice could be a U.S. army general of Lebanese origin known by his colleagues as the "mad Arab." Lt. General John Abizaid has been appointed as second-in-command to Gen. Franks, who is heading the assault on Iraq. The post was specially created for Abizaid, who is fluent in Arabic and has made frequent "visits" to north-



U.S. Marines of the 15th Infantry Regiment conduct military exercises in Kuwait. Some 300,000 U.S. and British troops are in the region to launch invasion of Iraq.

ern Iraq before and after the 1991 war.

Abizaid commanded an army battalion during the 1983 U.S. invasion of Grenada. He also served in Iraq in the late 1980s and in U.S. occupation forces in Kosova and Bosnia in the 1990s.

## Sharpening imperialist rivalry

The diplomatic front has been marked by the competing interests between imperialist rivals—Washington and London leading one side, Paris and Berlin the other. This was seen in the sharp tone of the debate at the UN Security Council following a recently televised address by President Bush.

"Vitriolic" was how the March 8 issue of the London *Daily Telegraph* described remarks made by Britain's foreign minister Jack Straw aimed at French foreign minister Dominique de Villepin, during a Security Council meeting. Straw repeatedly addressed the French foreign minister in a patronizing way, using the familiar "Dominique." He dismissed the framework of the French position as "a false choice."

French president Jacques Chirac declared March 10 that his government would use its UN Security Council veto to block a U.S.- and British-backed resolution authorizing an invasion of Iraq. "Whatever happens, France will vote 'no,' he said."

The French and German governments have instead pressed for a resolution stating that UN "weapons inspectors" should be allowed more time to continue roving through Iraq, with the goal of forcing the Iraqi government to "disarm."

Paris and Berlin, while posing as favoring "peace" in contrast with the U.S. government, have huge stakes in Iraq, including lucrative oil contracts in that country that would evaporate if Washington took over Iraq.

In his televised address two days before the Security Council meeting, U.S. president George Bush declared that Washington would press for a resolution authorizing war against Iraq even if it might be defeated. "It's time for people to show their cards," Bush said. Asked if he was concerned about attacking Iraq without backing from the Security Council, Bush answered, "When it comes to our security we don't really need anybody's permission."

Meanwhile, U.S. officials have been "lobbying" hard to get the nine votes needed for a majority in a Security Council vote. The meaning of this euphemism was made clear when Bush remarked that if Mexico or other governments opposed Washington, "there will be a certain sense of discipline." Mexico is one of 10 rotating members of the Security Council.

A U.S. diplomat quoted in the British *Economist* warned Mexican officials that failure to support Washington's war effort could "stir up feelings" against Mexicans in the United States. He compared the situation to the detention of Japanese-Americans in concentration camps after the U.S. declaration of war against Japan during World War II.

## Anti-French chauvinism

One aspect of Washington's drive to war with Iraq has been increased expressions of anti-French chauvinism. An article in

the London *Telegraph* described French foreign minister Dominique de Villepin as "The Frenchman pointing a gun at America's back."

The March 1 *Boston Globe* ran a story about a restaurateur from California who opened a cooking school in France that caterers to students mostly from the United States. In early January its owner received a cancellation from a group in Arizona saying they "refuse to support anything French." Within a month the owner received 24 additional cancellations.

In West Palm Beach, a group of people poured French champagne in the streets. A Boston restaurant halted orders of wine from Bordeaux and Burgundy. Conservative columnist George Will denounced de Villepin as "oleaginous" (oily). In Beaufort, South Carolina, a restaurant owner changed the menu to list "freedom fries" instead of French fries. On one episode in the TV show "The Simpsons," the French were described as "cheese-eating surrender monkeys."

Such expressions of American nationalism have marked several recent pro-war demonstrations, pegged as rallies to "support our troops." The *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* described a March 8 rally of 2,500 in that city as "a sea of American flags and signs protesting everyone from Saddam Hussein to the nation of France." Rally organizers and many of the participants asserted that the rally was "neither for or against the war" but just in support of "our troops."

In Dallas, hundreds of people of Kurdish origin rallied in support of the U.S.-led war against Iraq. A "support our troops" rally of 5,000 was organized in Omaha, Nebraska. Former Democratic senator Robert Kerrey told the crowd that if "our commander-in-chief orders our sons and daughters into war... America will come together."

Kerrey responded to the ongoing peace demonstrations, whose predominant theme has been a pacifist "no war" slogan. "No one is here today because they like war," he said.

Similarly, when asked whether the massive peace actions around the world on February 15-16 would affect his decision to go to war, Bush retorted, "I don't like war," and argued that Iraq must be disarmed to "keep the United States safe." One sign in the rally in Pittsburgh read, "Give peace a chance! Get Saddam out of Iraq!"

Thousands have continued to turn out at peace rallies across the country, from a March 5 national day of student actions, to celebrations of International Women's Day on March 8. National demonstrations will take place March 15 in Washington, D.C., and San Francisco, and in New York on March 22 (see coverage of March 5 actions on page 5).

## Coming Soon

\$15

New International no. 12

### CAPITALISM'S LONG HOT WINTER HAS BEGUN

by Jack Barnes

"For the first time since the opening of the depression-ridden, war-ridden 1930s, all the evidence in the advanced capitalist countries points to the onset of something much more than a deep recession such as the three we've seen the past quarter century. What we're seeing today are the symptoms of a debt-deflation deadness that does not respond to the monetary or fiscal prodding that helps accelerate an upturn in a normal trade cycle. In short, we're in the opening stages of a world depression...."

"One of capitalism's infrequent long winters has begun. Given the accompanying acceleration of imperialism's drive toward war, it's going to be a long, hot winter. And, even more important, one that will slowly but surely and explosively breed a scope and depth of resistance not previously seen by the great majority of revolutionary-minded militants in today's world."

Jack Barnes  
July 2002

Also in this issue ...

Two reports from the 1921 congress of the Communist International

- V.I. Lenin: A Very Unstable Equilibrium
- Leon Trotsky: World Depression and the Tasks of Communists

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# Students rally in national peace protests

Below are reports on peace rallies held in several U.S. cities March 5 as part of actions sponsored by the National Youth and Student Peace Coalition.

BY NOAMI CRAINE

NEW YORK—Some 1,500 youth, many of them high school students who walked out of class, joined a noon antiwar rally at Union Square March 5. Hundreds then marched or took the subway 50 blocks to Hunter College for another protest. An evening action, including a march from the offices of Senators Hillary Clinton and Charles Schumer to Washington Square Park, drew more students and others. The protests here were part of an international day of student protests against the war.

Chiara Klaiman, a student from Beacon High School, said, "I'm out here because it has come down to the wire, we have to act now." The U.S. government "doesn't have the right to impose its views on a sovereign nation," commented Moira, a student from New York University.

At other schools, including Walton High in the Bronx, students were threatened with suspension if they left class to protest the war. Mayor Michael Bloomberg said that if students wanted to protest they should do it "after class."

The same day as the student protests, Bloomberg stated that the city administration would probably grant a march permit to United for Peace and Justice for a March 22 demonstration through the streets of Manhattan. The same coalition organized the February 15 rally, which city officials barred from marching claiming "security concerns."

BY MAGGIE TROWE

BOSTON—Hundreds of high school students and a number of university students throughout Massachusetts walked out of classes for the March 5 student strike called by the National Youth and Student Peace Coalition.

More than 100 students left classes at Newton North High School to march and drive in the pouring rain to a rally on the steps of the war memorial at Newton City Hall. They were joined by students at Newton South and Arlington High Schools.

The students held a several-hour teach-



Militant/Laura Anderson

Students rally in New York March 5 against U.S. war on Iraq

in with an open microphone. "For every U.S. soldier who dies, 300 Iraqis will die," said Hiro Tanaka, 16, a junior at Newton North. "We have no right to kill these people."

A handful of pro-war students dressed in camouflage T-shirts came to observe the rally on their lunch hour. They were asked to speak and engage in discussion and debate. When they declined, a number of antiwar students went over to talk to them.

Students also walked out at the high school in suburban Lexington when the school's principal threatened them with suspension if they spoke to the press. Many wore T-shirts that read "No War!" An overflow crowd attended an antiwar rally at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

On March 8 the weekly antiwar rally in Lawrence, Massachusetts, drew 35 people, including some members of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees who work at the Malden Mills plant there. Joining the protest were participants in a month-long Amherst-to-Boston march for peace sponsored by the Nipponzan Myohoji Buddhist Order.

BY DENNIS RICHTER

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina—A couple of hundred college and high school

students held a noontime antiwar rally at the University of North Carolina (UNC) at Charlotte. The rally was sponsored by the campus Green Party and Muslim Student Association. Many of the 50 Charlotte area high school students who took the day off from school and attended an earlier rally at a park in downtown Charlotte took part in the UNC action. They demanded "Books not Bombs!"

A small number of students supporting the war also came to the rally. A few of them with signs saying "Bomb Iraq" and "We want War" climbed onto a structure immediately above the rally and shouted pro-war slogans. This effort to disrupt the antiwar rally by shouting down the speakers was prevented by those who came to hear the speakers and have a civil discussion. Some of them, with signs opposing the war, climbed up next to the disrupters, jostling for space to make sure the antiwar signs became the backdrop of the rally.

Later in the day, 10 high schools students joined the rally, mostly from Charlotte's Northwest School of the Arts. They held a banner in festive colors opposing the war, which they made on the spot. A group of Muslim and Palestinian students hung a clothesline up with color copies of photographs of Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza and the

Palestinian people's resistance.

BY CINDY JAQUITH

PITTSBURGH—More than 60 high school students rallied here at the Board of Education March 6 to protest the effect of the U.S. war against Iraq on their schools. The rally followed walkouts at five local high schools.

The most effective strike was at the High School of Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA), where 28 youth walked out despite threats of one-day suspensions. CAPA students were welcomed as heroes at the rally, as was a student from Schenley High School who was expelled for her organizing efforts.

The students sent a delegation to meet with the head of the Board of Education. They returned to report they will be meeting with the entire board to request that body adopt a resolution which reads in part, "we...oppose any use of educational funds to support military action in Iraq. Since said use of educational funds would be impossible to prevent if war is declared, we oppose a preemptive U.S. military attack on Iraq."

The strike and rally were called by the Pittsburgh Association of Peacemakers and Proactive Youth (PAPPY).

BY LEA SHERMAN

WASHINGTON—More than 50 people, mostly high school students, rallied here against the war on Iraq on March 5. Juliana Ratner, 15, a student at Edmund Burke high school and an organizer of the umbrella organization D.C. Students for Peace and Justice, said she "believes that this war is wrong." On February 21, she said, several hundred students walked out of class marching down Connecticut Avenue to the Capitol to protest the war. She noted that students did not walk out of class today, but were planning to do so when the war started.

Zola Neal, 16, said that at Woodrow Wilson High School more than 100 students participated in the walkout February 21. The students were given a 20-minute detention period for their participation. She plans to be part of the walkout when the massive invasion begins.

## Protesters drawn to revolutionary ideas

BY NAOMI CRAINE

NEW YORK—Hundreds of participants in the March 5 student protests against war in Iraq were hungry for revolutionary ideas. This was evidenced by the sales of the *Militant* and books and pamphlets published by Pathfinder Press.

Before the start of the rally in New York City dozens of youth crowded around a table set up by the Socialist Workers Party to listen to a soapbox speech by Dan Fein. "There is no 'we' Americans. You and I, we're part of 'we' with the workers and farmers of Iraq, the Palestinian people, and workers and peasants throughout the world," Fein told the students to their applause. "The 'they' are the ruling capitalist families in the imperialist countries—here in the United States and also in France and Germany."

Participants in the protests bought 165 copies of the *Militant* throughout the day, and five students subscribed to the paper. One subscription to *Perspectiva Mundial* was sold along with about \$100 in books from Pathfinder Press.

A couple dozen students signed up for more information on the Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange that will take place in July, and to help build meetings for Cuban youth leaders Ernesto Fernández and Estela Zulueta in New York in April.

BY DENNIS RICHTER

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina—Participants in a rally at the University of North Carolina in Charlotte bought 34 copies of the *Militant*. Three books including

*Marianas in Combat: Teté Puebla and the Mariana Grajales Women's Platoon in Cuba's Revolutionary War, 1956-58*, and *Malcolm X Talks to Young People* were sold from a table set up by three socialist workers who work the night shift at two textile mills in nearby Kannapolis, and a Young Socialists member from Concord high school who took the day off school to join in standing against the war on Iraq.

More than a dozen participants in the rally signed petitions, and expressed interest in helping to build a March 17 meeting on campus to defend Róger Calero. The meeting is sponsored by the Feminist Union and Young Socialists. YS members also handed out a flyer and talked to several students about building a North Carolina contingent to the Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange.

## 'Militant' launches international fund drive

Continued from front page

weekly expenses of printing and shipping these publications.

With the accelerating imperialist war moves and the beginnings of a worldwide capitalist depression, the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* are essential political tools in understanding the unfolding world events and the way forward for working people.

They continue to explain the economic and political roots of the imperialist drive to war in the Mideast and elsewhere in the world, including the sharpening conflicts between the imperialist powers in Washington, Paris, London, and Berlin as they stake out competing claims for redividing the world.

The *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* will continue to report accurately on the

resistance by workers and farmers to the brutal offensive of the employer class—from the meat packers on strike today at Tyson Foods in Wisconsin to the Palestinian people fighting for national self-determination. And they will keep explaining a revolutionary course of action for working people, leading to the need to take political power and to join the worldwide fight for socialism.

The \$75,000 fund will make it possible to respond to political events internationally, such as the recent coverage on the Havana International Book Fair and what it showed about the hunger for revolutionary ideas among many working people and youth in Cuba, as well as the important efforts by the Cuban leadership to win the new generations to the revolution.

Supporters of the *Militant* and

*Perspectiva Mundial* are now detailing their plans on how to raise funds and meet their local quotas. The key to success is to approach the broadest number of people possible for contributions—including co-workers in garment shops, coal mines, packinghouses, and other workplaces, farmers fighting for their land, and young people who are just meeting the communist movement and for whom the socialist publications open up a new world of political understanding.

Public meetings in each city, built around a timely political topic, are needed early in the campaign as a focus for broad fund-raising.

Contributions to the fund should be sent to the *Militant*, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014, with checks made out to the *Militant*.

### \$75,000 Militant Fund March 10–May 12

	Goal
Atlanta GA	4,100
Birmingham AL	2,800
Boston MA	2,800
Charlotte NC	3,000
Chicago IL	4,200
Cleveland OH	
Des Moines IA	900
Detroit MI	3,000
Houston TX	3,200
Los Angeles CA	7,500
Miami FL	1,600
New York NY	7,500
Newark NJ	3,800
Northeast PA	
Omaha NE	900
Philadelphia PA	
Pittsburgh PA	3,000
San Francisco CA	7,000
Seattle WA	6,000
Tampa FL	1,800
Tucson AZ	
Twin Cities MN	
Utah	
Washington DC	2,200
Western CO	
<b>U.S. Total</b>	<b>65,300</b>
Australia	
Canada	
France	
Iceland	
New Zealand	1,500
Sweden	
United Kingdom	500
<b>International Total</b>	<b>67,300</b>
<b>INT'L GOAL</b>	<b>75,000</b>

# U.S. rulers mount military provocations against north Korea

Continued from front page

coastline. Pyongyang has repeatedly protested the violations of its airspace by U.S. spyplanes.

The two dozen B-52 and B-1 bombers are being sent to the region to provide U.S. president George Bush with “all the military options” needed “to order a strike on the North’s nuclear plant at Yongbyon,” the *New York Times* reported March 5.

While stating that the “military option is our last choice,” Bush said on March 3 that if the U.S. pressure tactics “don’t work diplomatically, they’ll have to work militarily.”

*Times* columnist Nicholas Kristoff noted in the February 28 issue that “contingency plans” being discussed in the Pentagon include a “range of military options from surgical cruise missile strikes to sledgehammer bombing.” There “is even talk,” he wrote, “of using tactical nuclear weapons to neutralize” the north’s artillery.

## U.S. spy plane tailed by Korean jets

In the March 2 incident Washington’s RC-135S spy plane was tailed for about 20 minutes by four north Korean MiG fighter jets over the Sea of Japan. One of the Korean pilots gestured to the U.S. flight crew to “get out of there,” a senior U.S. military officer reported.

U.S. officials said the incident occurred at a distance of 150 miles from the north Korean coast. However, the *Washington*

*Post* quoted “analysts in Asia” who said that “the plane may have been closer to North Korean airspace than the Pentagon reported,” given the fact that “U.S. spy craft routinely fly closer.”

South Korean president Roh Moo Hyun said the aerial encounter was “very predictable,” given the increased U.S. spy flights around north Korea.

One day before the incident the north Korean news agency reported that a U.S. RC-135S aircraft had “illegally intruded into the air above territorial waters in the East Sea almost every day from February 21 and made shuttle flights in the air for hours to spy on major targets in the east coastal area.”

The U.S. military flies “regular reconnaissance” flights, including high-flying U-2s, over north Korea, the *Financial Times* reported. The aircraft is loaded with surveillance hardware, including infrared telescopes and photographic equipment.

The incident marked the closest airborne confrontation between the two governments since April 1969, when a north Korean pilot shot down a Navy spy plane in the same area, killing all 31 crew members. Pentagon officials say they may send U.S. fighter jets as “escorts” on the next spying mission.

As these events unfolded the joint U.S.-south Korean “Foal Eagle” military exercises, simulating an aggression against the north and involving hundreds of thousands



Troops from the U.S. Army’s Second Infantry Division carry out military exercises in Paju, south Korea, near Demilitarized Zone at border with north Korea.

of troops, commenced on March 4. Some 5,000 U.S. troops have arrived to reinforce the 37,000 stationed in the south for the month-long maneuvers, which have been held each year since 1961. The exercises will involve a U.S. Navy aircraft carrier and will last until April 2.

The north Korean news media warned against the use of the military exercises—some of which will be located near the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ)—as a cover for a military strike.

Even before the drills began, thousands of U.S. soldiers carried out a warm-up mock battle near the heavily armed border. “This Foal Eagle exercise is escalating the danger of armed clashes on the Korean Peninsula,” warned *Minju Joson*,

a north Korean newspaper.

U.S. government officials and the capitalist media justify the military threats against north Korea by hurling accusations that the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (DPRK) plans to use its nuclear power plant to produce weapons-grade plutonium. “Once they start reprocessing, it’s a bomb a month from now until summer,” declared U.S. deputy secretary of state Richard Armitage on February 28. He told Congress that the north Korean government would sell plutonium to “a nonstate actor or a rogue state.”

North Korean officials explain that the reactor will help them deal with the country’s huge electricity generation shortfall. In late February, north Korea’s director of energy, Kim Jae Rok, told London’s *Sunday Telegraph* that his government also plans to build four nuclear power plants to “enable us to meet the urgent need for electricity supplies in our country.”

The government moved to restart the Yongbyon reactor after Washington cut off fuel oil supplies that had been guaranteed under a 1994 agreement. Construction of two reactors, part of the same deal, has also been halted.

Even before the current crisis, the country of 22 million people was functioning on 2 gigawatts of energy, less than the amount consumed by a U.S. city of 1 million people, according to a survey by a California-based research outfit. The study, conducted in 2000 by the Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainable Development, said that there is not enough power to run the electric pumps needed to irrigate fields, or to power factories to make fertilizer, tractor parts, and other essentials.

Before the breakup of the Soviet Union and the collapse of much of north Korea’s trade, the country had been “fully electrified,” said one of the authors of the study. The energy shortages that have dogged the country through the 1990s also exacerbated the impact of alternating droughts and flooding, according to the survey.

## Calls for direct talks

The DPRK’s calls for direct talks with the U.S. government to negotiate a nonaggression pact and the nuclear issue to defuse tensions have been repeatedly rebuffed by Washington. The Bush administration has instead insisted on “multilateral talks” involving other governments in the region.

Expressing differences with Washington’s approach, south Korean president Roh told Britain’s *Times* newspaper, “Ultimately this problem has to be resolved by President Bush and [north Korea’s] Chairman Kim Jong Il.”

Meanwhile, the Japanese government has announced plans to launch its first-ever spy satellites at the end of March, targeting the region.

Japanese officials have also “spoken of mounting a ‘preemptive strike’ against North Korea,” reported the February 23 *New York Times*. “Our nation will use military force as a self-defense measure if they start to resort to arms against Japan,” said Japanese defense minister Shigeru Ishiba.

“The ceaseless saber-rattling by the U.S.” is “creating an extremely tense situation where it may make a preemptive strike” at any time, said a DPRK foreign ministry spokesman on February 26. “This compels the army and the people of the DPRK to keep themselves in full readiness.”

# Chicago workers raise funds for Calero defense

Continued from front page

house. She was arrested, separated from her child, and detained for eight hours or more.

Arrellano now faces criminal charges of using a fake social security number, and is fighting INS attempts to deport her.

## Promise to continue fighting

Julieta Bolívar also spoke. She is an activist in Latino Unión, an organization of temporary workers and day laborers, and is also fighting deportation. She was arrested by state police in Pennsylvania while traveling to a conference of day laborers. “The police handcuffed me in front of my children as if I were a criminal,” she said, promising to “continue fighting.”

Miguel Ambriz of the Albany Park day laborers on Chicago’s north side urged support for their struggle to create a workers center there.

“This is an example of seeing fighters linking up with other fighters,” said Samuel Farley, a Local 789 shop steward at Dakota Premium Foods.

Calero discussed what is behind the government’s stepped-up attacks on immigrants. “Faced with a crisis in their economy, and worldwide depression conditions, employers are on the offensive against all working people,” he said. “They want to make us bear the burden of their crisis so they can maintain their profits. This is why we see the brutal conditions in the workplace, the police brutality, and the massacre they are preparing against the people of Iraq.”

The labor journalist stressed the importance of the resistance to these attacks, pointing to the examples of the strikes at Tyson Prepared Foods in Jefferson, Wisconsin, and at the Azteca Tortilla factory in Chicago, and the protests of immigrant workers who are being held in the prisons.

“They are not going to intimidate us. We are going to fight,” he said to applause.

Many supporters of Calero’s defense campaign pitched in to make the fundraising dinner a success. Workers who are part of the struggle against the American Meatpacking Corporation, which closed down in November 2001, helped on security and mounted a display on their fight to gain back wages owed by the company.

Marta Peña, who brought food for the potluck dinner, told the *Militant* that such events “motivate people to have the strength to continue to fight.” She is one of thousands of janitors, members of Service Employees International Union Lo-



Jorge Ramírez of Casa Aztlán introduces Elvira Arrellano at March 1 event in Chicago to defend Róger Calero. Arrellano is fighting immigration cops’ attempts to deport her. She was one of 46 airport workers rounded up by INS last December.

cal 1, who have held rallies in downtown Chicago to fight for a decent contract.

“This is an attack on workers and against us all,” said Carlos Hernández. “That is why it is important to be a part of these fights.”

## Calero meets students, workers

During his four days in Chicago Calero took up other opportunities to talk to students and workers.

He went by the strike picket line at the Azteca Tortilla factory to express solidarity with the workers, who have been out for more than five months, and thanked them for the four pages of petitions they had collected protesting the INS actions.

More signatures were collected among the 60 students who heard Calero speak at Prairie State College in Chicago Heights, Illinois.

Supporters of his fight at the campus pasted paper footsteps in the corridor leading up to the meeting room door. They read, “Stop the Deportation,” “Freedom of the Press,” “Immigrant Rights,” and “Labor Union rights.”

At the University of Illinois in Chicago, he spoke to a meeting of 20 people sponsored by the Chancellor’s Committee on the Status of Latinos, the Mexican Students of

Aztlán, and the Latino Cultural Center. Participants contributed \$44 to the campaign.

A total of \$1,200 was raised leading up to and during Calero’s visit. Supporters of the defense committee are charting plans to continue collecting signatures, fund-raising, urging people to write protest letters to the INS, and educating about the case.

## Hearing in New Jersey

The day after the meeting, Calero’s attorney in New York was informed that the INS would not contest Calero’s motion to move his case to Newark, New Jersey. The hearing had originally been set for Houston on March 25.

“This will encourage supporters of my defense campaign to step up their efforts,” Calero told the *Militant*.

“This decision marks an important gain,” wrote John Studer, the coordinator for the Róger Calero Defense Committee, in a letter to supporters. “It means that the hearing will be held in the New York area, where he lives and works, where his attorney is based, and where his defense is centered. It also means that the hearing will be postponed, giving us more time to force public attention on his fight and mount pressure on the INS.”

# Calero's fight goes to UK, Sweden, Iceland

In late January and February Lawrence Mikesh, a member of the Young Socialists in the United States, visited Sweden, Iceland, England, and Scotland to join with others in building support for Róger Calero's defense campaign. (See article starting on page one for the latest news on the defense campaign.) Below are reports on some of the highlights of Mikesh's tour.

## Sweden antideportation fight

BY DAG TIRSÉN  
AND ANITA ÖSTLING

GOTHENBURG, Sweden—Hagfors, a small community of 9,000 people in central Sweden, was placed on the national news last year when high school students joined a fight against the deportation of one of their classmates and her family to El Salvador. They blocked the entry of the house and prevented the immigration police from gaining access.

In late January the students welcomed Lawrence Mikesh to hear about Róger Calero and his fight against exclusion from the United States. Stefan Karlsson wrote a letter to the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) on behalf of the group, in which he stated, "We wanted to let you know that we support Mr. Calero, and that we protest against the highly unfair treatment that he has received."

On February 1 Mikesh participated in a march of 100 people in the town of Filipstad. The action protested the deportation of a family that had immigrated from Chechnya. At the rally afterwards he spoke about the Calero campaign. A local newspaper mentioned his remarks in its coverage of the protest.

Mikesh was a guest on a student radio talk show in Gothenburg and spoke at public meetings there and in Stockholm. Ida Sundén, one of the young fighters from Hagfors, shared the speakers platform at the Gothenburg meeting.

Together with other supporters of the defense campaign in Sweden, Mikesh also staffed campaign tables at college campuses and high schools, meeting a lot of interest in the defense effort. Many stayed for extended discussions about the fightback against attacks on the rights of immigrants and workers in different countries.

Workers in one Stockholm meatpacking plant, most of whom were immigrants, were



Militant/Jim Spaul

Young Socialist Lawrence Mikesh campaigns in London to win support in fight against U.S. immigration authorities' efforts to deport Róger Calero.

ready to sign the petition. A couple said that the German government is also conducting sweeping expulsions of immigrants. Workers from Yugoslavia told about relatives living in Germany threatened with deportation.

Following Mikesh's visit supporters signed up people at demonstrations on February 14 against the war in Iraq. The actions drew 35,000 people in Stockholm and 25,000 in Gothenburg. One of those who signed was Medhi Ghezali, who is campaigning to get the Swedish government to demand his son's release from the U.S. concentration camp at the Guantánamo Naval Base in Cuba. A Swedish citizen, he has been held at the camp for more than year.

## In London, Young Socialist meets Irish fighters for justice

BY JULIE CRAWFORD

LONDON—On February 7, during his visit to London, Mikesh met with relatives of those slain in the Bloody Sunday massacre of 1972, in which British troops shot and killed 14 unarmed civil rights demonstrators in Derry, Northern Ireland.

The relatives were here to attend the Saville Inquiry on the massacre that is under way in Westminster. Mikesh sat through part of the testimony of one officer who had commanded a regular army unit in the area.

Over lunch Mikesh met Jean Hegarty, whose brother Kevin McElhinney was one of the victims. In a room with a video link set up for the relatives, he met others, including Linda Roddy, whose brother William Nash had been killed. In a previous inquiry, she said, their loved ones were labelled gunmen and nail bombers; one of the relatives' aims is to clear the names of the unarmed civil rights fighters.

Once the truth of the events is known the relatives want to establish where the responsibility for the killings lay, said Roddy.

Mikesh spoke about the Calero defense campaign, and extended solidarity to the relatives involved in the fight.

## Glasgow meeting: Calero's is 'a familiar story for workers'

BY PETE WILLIAMSON

GLASGOW, Scotland—"Isn't this just

America?" a Kurdish worker asked Lawrence Mikesh, speaking through an interpreter. Mikesh had just spoken on behalf of the Roger Calero Defense Committee to a February 9 meeting of the Glasgow Refugee Action Group.

"No," replied Mikesh. "I've just come from London and Stockholm, and found that what Calero faces is a familiar story for immigrant workers around the world."

The worker smiled in recognition and replied with one word in English: "capitalism."

The 10 participants included workers from Afghanistan, Iraq, and Zimbabwe. The group had been formed out of demonstrations two years ago that protested the murder of a Kurdish asylum-seeker on the Sighthill housing estate in Glasgow.

Mohammed Asif said that there are some 8,500 people in Glasgow who are seeking asylum. Last year tens of thousands of people came to the United Kingdom seeking work and residency. Most are denied the right to legally work and are expected to sustain themselves on miserly weekly state benefits. At any given moment up to 150 are being held at a jail in Dungavel, south of Glasgow, awaiting deportation.

The day after the action group meeting, Mikesh travelled 60 miles south of Edinburgh to the Barrie Knitwear plant at Hawick. Workers there had staged two strikes at the end of last year to protest the company's attacks on their conditions.

Several workers stopped to talk with Mikesh outside the plant after he was introduced by *Militant* sellers. Later he met union steward Rob Readhead, who endorsed the campaign and said that he would circulate the brochure and petition round the plant.

Back in Glasgow that evening, Mikesh spoke with members of the Volunteer Tom Williams Republican Flute Band. The band plays at marches in Ireland and Scotland in support of the fight to force British withdrawal from the north and for a united Ireland.

"What are Calero's chances?" asked band member Paul Steele.

"All we can do is try to make the immigration authorities pay the maximum price," said Mikesh.

The flute band members are protesting the banning of a January 25 Bloody Sunday march in Wishaw, a town near Glasgow. The action would have commemorated the massacre of 1972.

One participant in the discussion described how the Irish in Scotland are still given the derogatory name of "tattie (potato) pickers." Many Irish were forced to emigrate to Scotland some 160 years ago after the potato famine, to find the only work open to them was potato picking.

Kelly Phinn endorsed the Calero campaign on behalf of the band. She suggested that supporters return to the bar where the

Continued on Page 14

## 'Newsday' covers fight against deportation

The article below appeared in the February 9 New York *Newsday* under the headline, "Rallying immigrants over rights: Facing deportation, reporter speaks out to educate public."

BY MAE M. CHENG

Róger Calero of Newark, N.J., a reporter and editor for socialist publications, is used to disseminating information through the written word. But now, facing deportation, Calero has launched a passionate, personal 10-city speaking tour, trying to rally immigrants into action on his behalf and their own.

Calero, 33, a permanent resident of the United States for 12 years, was detained by immigration officials in Houston last month when he returned from a reporting trip to Cuba and Mexico. Calero had a marijuana sales conviction from 1988, when he was a high school senior in Los Angeles, an offense that makes him deportable. Immigration and Naturalization Service officials jailed him and are now looking to send him back to his native Nicaragua.

Calero, who has reported on a variety of issues from the labor movement to politics, was unaware that current immigration laws make him deportable from the United States because of his prior, one-time conviction, for which he received a suspended 60-day sentence and three years probation. But since his release from INS detention Dec. 10, he has waged a quick and furious campaign not only to learn about immigration law but also to make immigrants around the country aware of laws and policies that could have a negative impact on them.

"This is something a lot of people don't know about," said Calero, who is the asso-

ciate editor of "Perspectiva Mundial," a Spanish-language monthly news magazine, and a staff writer for the "Militant," a socialist news weekly, both published in Manhattan.

"My case is not an isolated one," Calero said. "We live and work in this country and we have rights. . . . It is a fact that we have only one choice, which is to continue to fight back."

Luisa Aquino, an INS spokeswoman in Houston, would not comment on Calero's case, citing privacy concerns. Calero's next court date there is March 25.

Since Christmas, Calero has traveled to cities like San Francisco, Omaha and Tampa, and has spoken at public gatherings to thousands of immigrants, trade union members and civil rights advocates, urging them to support his case and to fight to gain more rights for noncitizens. His last stop on this tour is the New York metropolitan area. He handed out leaflets in Hempstead and spoke at St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Manhattan earlier this month.

While he was detained at an INS jail in Texas for 10 days, Calero interviewed immigrants from Guatemala, El Salvador and Mexico who also found themselves facing deportation due to a prior minor conviction. Their stories were later published in the "Militant."

"People are often astonished how far the immigration laws reach in terms of criminal records," said Manny Vargas, director of the Immigrant Defense Project with the New York State Defenders Association based in Manhattan. "The assumption from the public is that it's only hardcore criminals being deported."

While Calero and his new wife, Sarah Katz, 30, have considered that he might be

forced to return to Nicaragua—the country he left in 1985—the couple remains optimistic that they will win the deportation case.

"This is a fight to win, to stay," Calero said.

## Róger Calero defense campaign tour

The Róger Calero Defense Committee is organizing a speaking tour for Calero in cities around the country to broaden the fight to stop his deportation by the INS. Below is the schedule for the next stops in the tour. Requests for additional tour dates can be made to the committee.

**NY: Sarah Lawrence College**  
March 12

**Boston** March 13–14

**Washington, D.C.** March 15

**Charlotte** March 16–17

**Atl./Birmingham** March 18–20

**Washington, D.C.** March 21–22

**Philadelphia** March 23–24

For more information or to send a contribution, contact the Róger Calero Defense Committee, c/o PRDF, Box 761, Church St. Station, New York, NY 10007; phone/fax (212) 563-0585.

• Send messages to INS district director Hipolito Acosta demanding the exclusion moves against Calero be

dropped. Messages can be faxed to (281) 774-5989 or mailed to Immigration and Naturalization Service, 126 Northpoint Drive, Houston, TX 77060. Copies should be sent to the Róger Calero Defense Committee.

• Sign and distribute petitions demanding the INS drop the exclusion of Calero. A brochure and petition are available from the defense committee (e-mail: calerodefense@yahoo.com).

• Funds are needed to meet legal and other expenses. Defense campaign backers in every city need to raise thousands of dollars for these needs. Organize phone calling for donations, seek honoraria for speaking engagements, and take collections at public meetings. The goal is to raise more than \$50,000 by March 25, the date of Calero's deportation hearing. Contributions are tax-deductible.

# How imperialist powers devastated Iraq through the UN

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

The United Nations has been the main tool used by Washington, London, Paris, and other imperialist powers in their assault on Iraq and efforts to dominate the Mideast. Since 1990, Iraq has been the target of brutal economic sanctions, a naval blockade, a six-week bombing campaign and ground invasion, and years of constant bombing attacks—all carried out with the stamp of approval of the UN Security Council.

The use of the United Nations to trample on Iraq's sovereignty is not new. From its creation after World War II, the major imperialist powers have used the UN banner—always in the name of “peace”—to carry out invasions and wars, from the 1950–53 Korean War, to the 1994 invasion of Haiti, to military intervention against Yugoslavia in the 1990s.

In August 1990, the imperialist powers seized on Baghdad's invasion of Kuwait to begin a rapid march to war. Under the pretext of defending Kuwait's sovereignty, Washington sought to impose a submissive pro-U.S. regime in Iraq and to edge out its imperialist rivals for dominance in the Mideast. The weaker imperialist powers, particularly London and Paris, aimed to get the biggest piece of the pie possible.

Between August and November 1990, the “permanent” members of the Security Council—the imperialist powers of France, the United States, and the United Kingdom, with the complicity of the ruling bureaucracies of China and the Soviet Union—unanimously pushed through a series of resolutions to legitimize a wide-ranging offensive against Iraq.

Barely four days after Saddam Hussein's regime invaded Kuwait on Aug. 2, 1990, the Security Council imposed a total economic embargo on Iraq. Washington's naval blockade against that country was immediately endorsed by the council. Three months later the council issued a January 15 deadline authorizing the use of “all necessary means” against Iraq.

Revolutionary Cuba, one of the 10 governments serving a two-year rotating stint on the Security Council at the time, was alone in condemning the imperialist moves toward war against Iraq. The UN deliberations, Cuban ambassador Ricardo Alarcón pointed out, will “be used as part of the designs of the United States to intensify its intervention in a part of the world that it appears to regard as its own property.”

Cuba refused to vote for the economic embargo and naval blockade on Iraq that was approved by the Security Council. Instead, it proposed an amendment exempting food and medicine from the sanctions, in a motion stating that “access to basic foodstuffs and to adequate medical assistance is a fundamental human right.” China, Cuba, and Yemen voted for the amendment, while the governments of Britain, France, Canada, Finland, and the

United States voted “no.”

On Jan. 16, 1991, the U.S. and British armed forces led a six-week bombing campaign against Baghdad and other targets in Iraq. Washington and its allies destroyed factories, bridges, electrical generation plants, irrigation works, and water purification facilities.

As many as 150,000 Iraqis were slaughtered in this assault. In the final 48 hours of the invasion, U.S. forces carried out a massacre of Iraqi civilians and retreating soldiers on the road from Kuwait to the port city of Basra in southern Iraq.

## ‘Means of life support destroyed’

Seventeen days after Baghdad's official surrender on March 3, a UN-sponsored fact-finding commission released a report on the conditions facing Iraq after the invasion. Nothing had “prepared us for the particular form of devastation which has now befallen the country,” wrote UN undersecretary general Martti Ahtisaari, who headed the commission. “Most means of modern life support have been destroyed or rendered tenuous,” he wrote, in “what had been, until January 1991, a rather highly urbanized and mechanized society.”

As part of the conditions for a ceasefire, the UN Security Council passed a raft of resolutions that institutionalized the imperialist powers' assault on Iraqi sovereignty. It kept the sanctions in place and decreed that Iraq must “unconditionally” destroy all kinds of weapons “under international supervision,” allowing “on-site inspection of any locations in Iraq” as decided by the Security Council. The conditions were broad enough to give Washington and its allies plenty of pretexts for military intervention in the name of “enforcing the UN resolutions.”

The UN-sanctioned economic embargo has had devastating effects on Iraq over the past 12 years. By 1993, noted an article in the October 2002 *Middle East Report (MERIP)*, the “Iraqi economy under sanctions stood at one-fifth its size in 1979, and then took a further nose dive in 1994.” It reported that the extensive infrastructural damage inflicted by the 1991 bombing had compromised “the provision of clean water, sanitation and electrical power to the Iraqi population.

“The resulting public health emergency, rather than hunger, has been and continues to be the primary cause of increased mortality, especially among children under five,” the *MERIP* article continued.

The Global Policy Forum, a UN-associated body, estimates that “at least 400,000 of these young children have died due to the sanctions.”

Nonetheless, Washington has insisted on maintaining the embargo. Madeleine Albright, U.S. secretary of state in the Clinton administration, insisted in 1997 that Washington would back sanctions “as long as it takes” to usher in a “successor regime” to Saddam Hussein.

Like a band of thieves who fight over the spoils, however, the seemingly united “coalition” of imperialist governments that carried out the 1990–91 war on Iraq began to visibly fray by the mid-1990s. Paris, whose influence in the Mideast had been dealt a blow by Washington through the Gulf war, attempted to compensate for this situation by expanding its trade with Iraq.

The government of the Russian workers state, economically battered, also saw advantages in trading with Iraq.

The French and Russian governments made proposals to ease or even lift the sanctions. In response to these pressures, Washington and London moved to establish what is known as the “oil for food policy,” implemented with Security Council backing in 1995 and 1996.

The program permits Iraq to sell specified amounts of oil during a six-month period. Held in a UN-controlled account, the proceeds are used to fill orders for “hu-



Downtown Baghdad after U.S.-led bombing, January 1991. Imperialists have used UN to legitimize that brutal assault and next 12 years of economic strangulation of Iraq.

manitarian” goods that UN officials sign off on. Until last year, a committee of all Security Council members supervised the operation of this program.

London and especially Washington have regularly placed “holds” on large orders—for example, some \$5.3 billion worth in early 2002—claiming that requested items might be suitable for military as well as civilian use. “Politically motivated blocks and ‘holds,’” commented the Global Policy Forum, have meant “there has been little repair and renewal of Iraq's badly-deteriorated infrastructure.”

According to the *Middle East Report* article, the oil-for-food scheme has “brought commodities into Iraq, rather than restoring Iraqis' purchasing power or the country's infrastructure to anything approaching pre-war levels.... Systems of public transportation, water, sanitation and electricity remain in a precarious state, the last two imperiled further by several years of drought.”

French imperialism has profited from the UN-sponsored sanctions regime. During what *MERIP* calls “the sanctions decade,” Baghdad signed a number of contracts with companies in France, as well as enterprises and government agencies in Russia and China. From 1997 to 2001 the three countries garnered nearly \$5.5 billion of the \$18.29 billion in contracts in the oil industry for exploration, maintenance, construction, and in other sectors.

French companies have signed 798 contracts for parts and equipment for the oil industry, second only to Russia, which has gathered 862 contracts. Capitalists in France have negotiated unsigned agreements to exploit the Majnoon and Nahr bin Umar fields.

In June 2001, Paris and Moscow proposed the removal of restrictions on foreign investments in Iraq's oil industry, only to meet opposition from Washington and London. As of September of 2002, Iraq was pumping oil at less than half its capacity, owing both to a pricing dispute with the Security Council under the oil-for-food program and to the industry's deteriorating infrastructure, a casualty of the imperialist embargo.

## ‘No-fly zones’ and UN divisions

As they strangled Iraq's economy with an embargo, the imperialists also suspended Iraq's territorial sovereignty. Washington, London, and Paris began to enforce a “no-fly zone” in northern Iraq in 1991, and one in southern Iraq the following year. While the Security Council resolutions do not specifically call for “no-fly zones,” they are sufficiently vague to allow Washington to interpret them as authorizing such measures.

Ostensibly designed to protect two oppressed groups, the Kurds in the north and the Shi'ite population in the south, from repression, the exclusion zones—covering more than half of Iraq's territory—have provided the imperialist rulers with a pretext for bombing Iraqi defense facilities and sowing terror in civilian areas.

In 1996 French planes stopped joining their U.S. and British counterparts in the patrols and attacks in the north. Two years later they withdrew from the military patrols over the south, as Paris distanced itself from the U.S.-British bombing of Iraq in 1998.

Meanwhile, the U.S. and British planes have continued their bombing raids over the north and south of Iraq. According to the British Ministry of Defense, the average monthly release of bombs rose to five tons by mid-2000. Washington and London have picked up the intensity of their attacks since the second half of last year.

At first supposedly limited to attacking only Iraqi antiaircraft emplacements that fired on them, British and U.S. forces have steadily broadened their official range of targets to include major air defense installations and other military targets.

Combined with the ban on Iraqi imports of military equipment and the overall effect of the sanctions on the country's economy, the bombing raids have helped to greatly weaken Iraq's defensive military capacities.

## Provocative role of ‘UN inspectors’

In 1991, in the name of “verifying” Iraq's compliance with a UN resolution forbidding it from holding biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons as well as missiles of a certain range, the imperialist governments organized teams of “weapons inspectors” to snoop around Iraq. The UN Special Commission (UNSCOM) program was established to supervise these provocative teams that went around demanding access to any Iraqi facilities they wanted to investigate. Inspections by UNSCOM and the International Atomic Energy Agency, also a UN body, continued for the next seven years.

The leader of one New Zealand military contingent in the inspection teams, Major David Le Page, told the *New Zealand Herald* last September that the inspectors were not popular among Iraqis. “When you cross the road,” he said, “people would throw rocks at you, spit at you, and even try to run you down with their cars.”

The Iraqi government destroyed numerous military facilities at the demand of the “inspectors.” Nonetheless, Washington and London were never satisfied. In December 1998, U.S. and British forces launched four days of intensive bombing and missile attacks on alleged sites of development and construction of “weapons of mass destruction.”

The offensive, dubbed Desert Fox, followed the withdrawal of UN weapons “inspectors,” although it did not receive Security Council endorsement because of objections by Paris and Moscow.

## UN ‘inspectors’ withdraw from Iraq

By 1998, disputes over the activities of the “inspectors” grew increasingly frequent and sharp. Baghdad officially suspended cooperation with the UN units twice, in January and October of that year, before their withdrawal in December.

In January 1999, in face of public debate over the role of the inspectors, officials in Washington acknowledged that U.S. spies had been part of the inspection teams. According to the *Middle East Report*, “revelations of intelligence gathering” included a statement by UNSCOM head Rolf Ekeus on Swedish radio in July 2002 that U.S. inspectors had “sought information outside the organization's mandate, such as details on the movements of

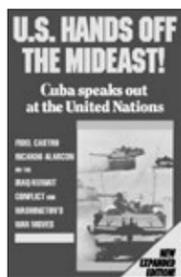
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# U.S., French rulers compete for Africa's wealth

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

The conflicts between Washington and Paris and their various allies and competitors, which have played such a prominent part in the drive to war on Iraq, are also playing an increasing role in the drive to exploit Africa's mineral and agricultural riches and the labor of its peoples.

Pressed by their U.S. competitors, the French rulers are using their connections with various regimes in their former colonies, and their established position as a major exploiter in the region, to gain leverage in this race.

Within two weeks of the February 20–21 Paris summit of 52 African heads of state—the 22nd such meeting—President Jacques Chirac traveled to Algeria to foster ties with the repressive regime there.

The French president was accompanied by the executives of 17 corporations, including Airbus, Michelin, and the oil company TotalFinaElf.

The country's oil and gas reserves are one area that might attract imperialist investment. Other potential investors, noted the *New York Times*, "complain that Algeria has largely failed to privatize its economy."

Chirac is the first French president to pay a full state visit to the country since 1962, the year Algerians won their eight-year independence struggle against the French colonial power. More than 1 million Algerians died in that war, which was a high point of the uprisings that spread throughout the former colonial territories in the decades following World War II.



U.S. Marines conduct target practice in former French colony of Djibouti. About 2,000 U.S. troops are now stationed there at Camp Lemonnier, once a French Foreign Legion base.

Chirac himself served as an army officer in Algeria during the independence war.

Hundreds of thousands of Algerians turned out to greet the French president in the streets of the capital, Algiers. However, "the cries from the crowd were not cries of 'Vive la France,'" noted the *Times*, but "Visa! Visa! Visa!"

Algerian citizens trying to move to France have reported long delays in receiving responses to visa applications in recent years. For many, emigration offers the only hope of finding work and escaping poverty, in a

## UN Security Council, Iraq

Continued from Page 8  
Saddam Hussein."

The so-called inspections resumed in November of last year, this time under the UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC). They assumed the "right" to enter any area and declare it a "no-drive, no-fly zone." Reports by chief inspector Hans Blix, a Swedish official, have been used by both Washington and London on the one side, and Paris, Berlin, Moscow, and Beijing on the other, as ammunition in their debates.

While today the competing interests of Washington, London, Paris, and other powers are more visible than a decade ago, these imperialist powers continue to use the United Nations to advance their respective predatory interests and to seek to fool working people into viewing it as a vehicle for "peace."

country where the official, understated unemployment rate stands at 30 percent.

### A record of colonial brutality

In the colonial period, in which European powers, including Britain, Belgium, Portugal, Spain, and Italy, directly ruled African peoples, the French authorities gained a reputation as among the most brutal of all the colonial administrators.

"In France's equatorial African territories" at the turn of the last century, writes Adam Hochschild in *King Leopold's Ghost*, a study of Belgian colonialism and the king who promoted it, "forced labor, hostages, slave chains...and the *chicotte* [whip] were the order of the day" on the rubber plantations. "Thousands of refugees who had fled across the Congo river to escape Leopold's regime eventually fled back to escape the French. The population loss in the rubber-rich equatorial rain forest owned by France is estimated, just as in Leopold's Congo, at roughly 50 percent."

The French territories, adds Hochschild, "were wracked by long, fierce rebellions against the rubber regime."

Another snapshot of the methods and character of French colonialism can be seen in their use of subject peoples as cannon fodder in World War I. During that war the French armed forces "recruited" some 200,000 West Africans into the imperialist army. In his book, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, Guyanese writer Walter Rodney said the techniques employed were "reminiscent of slave hunting."

Following the next world war, Paris used troops from its colonies in failed attempts to quell the revolutions in Africa and Indochina. Senegalese troops were used against the Algerian independence movement.

### French military intervention

As of 1997 France has some 9,000 troops stationed in Africa, and "military cooperation agreements" with 23 countries in sub-Saharan Africa. That year Paris initiated an African "peacekeeping" force named the Reinforcement of African Peacekeeping Capacities (RECAMP). The organization's military exercises last year involved 900 troops from 16 African countries, according to the French officials in charge of the maneuvers.

RECAMP notwithstanding, Paris has relied on its own armed forces to defend its interests on the continent. Since its 1964 assault on Gabon up to the late 1990s, French imperialism has intervened in Africa about once a year. Currently Paris has stationed some 3,000 troops in the Ivory Coast to back a settlement of the civil war, as it seeks to stabilize a pro-imperialist regime in Abidjan. This is the largest French military intervention in Africa since a similar number of troops were sent to Chad in the 1980s.

Hundreds of thousands protested in January against the French-imposed pact, with some carrying signs appealing to U.S. imperialism, saying, "Bush help us. Chirac is a Criminal, Terrorist, Murderer."

Ivory Coast is one member of the African Franc Zone, which involves 14 West and Central African countries. Formed in 1939, the grouping serves as a conduit for French capital into countries whose currencies are tied to the French franc, and now the euro.

French investment in sub-Saharan Africa involves some 1,500 French companies and affiliates. The region represents a yearly export market worth more than \$16 billion to these firms. They directly benefit from the \$8.4 billion in "aid" allocated by Paris to sub-Saharan Africa. One-quarter of the total amount is directed at the former French colonies of Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Senegal, and Morocco.

The majority of the money Paris spends on such programs worldwide is tied to the purchase of products from specific French corporations.

### Competition from the U.S. imperialists

As it presses its own predatory economic interests in Africa, the U.S. government—like its competitor in Paris—presents itself as a paternalistic benefactor of the African people. In his January 28 State of the Union address, U.S. president Bush announced an "Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief," stat-



French paratroopers protect headquarters of fascist group against protesters in Algiers, January 1960. Brutality of colonial rule in Algeria and other countries has won French imperialism hatred by millions throughout Africa.

ing that \$15 billion would go to sub-Saharan countries to combat the spread of AIDS that has become a social catastrophe for the people of the region. Some 30 million of the world's 42 million people diagnosed with the disease live in Africa.

The program will not cover some of the worst-affected countries like Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Swaziland, and Malawi, which have some of the highest AIDS rates in the world. It also follows years of attempts by Washington to block the production or purchase of low-cost generic versions of expensive AIDS drug treatments in Africa. It does cover some countries, like Algeria, where competition between Washington and Paris over oilfields and other resources is fierce.

Meanwhile, the U.S. rulers are already well-advanced in their push into Africa. Under the guise of aiding the economic development of the countries below the Sahara, Congress passed the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) in May 2000. It is under this measure that U.S. exports to sub-Saharan Africa reached record levels in 2001. Imports from the region dropped, however.

A central target of the AGOA is the African clothing industry. Touted as a program that would help "millions of African families find opportunity to build prosperity," the act only provides duty-free and quota-free access to the U.S. market for African-produced apparel that are made with U.S. materials.

Eligibility requirements for AGOA include "a market-based economy that protects private property rights," and a government that "does not engage in activities that undermine United States national security or foreign policy interest...and cooperates in international efforts to eliminate...terrorist activities."

### Africa's oil wealth a big prize

One of the biggest prizes for the competing powers is the continent's oil re-

sources. South Africa's *Business Day* newspaper reported on December 10 that "the rate of discovery of new oil reserves in Africa has been the fastest in the world in the past five years, according to the U.S. Corporate Council on Africa. Most of these new proven reserves have been found around the Gulf of Guinea."

At present, some 15 percent of U.S. oil imports come from West Africa—mainly Angola and Nigeria. U.S. officials estimate the number will rise to 25 percent by 2015.

The Johannesburg-based paper noted that "a key factor in U.S. calculations is the role played in West Africa by the quota-setting Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) or, more accurately, the lack of a role. The only OPEC member in West Africa is Nigeria."

In penetrating these new fields, the U.S. oil companies face competition, including from TotalFinaElf. Fully 70 percent of the French company's production comes from Nigeria, Angola, United Arab Emirates, and the North Sea. The operation of new fields off the coast of Angola has expanded its capacity by 200,000 barrels per day.

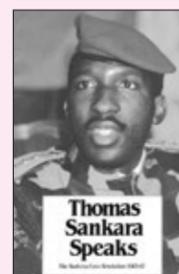
Nigeria is the largest oil producer in sub-Saharan Africa and the fifth-largest exporter to the United States. Other West African nations are expanding production. A pipeline now under construction linking southern Chad to Atlantic ports is the largest single investment project on the continent. Equatorial Guinea, where U.S. oil companies have increasing investments, is expected to double its production within three years.

Alongside its growing investments, Washington has also stationed troops on the continent, deploying 2,000 U.S. forces in Djibouti. Paris already has some 2,700 troops there.

Pentagon officials have held discussions on stepping up military exchanges with West African countries and possibly establishing a military base on the island of Sao Tomé.

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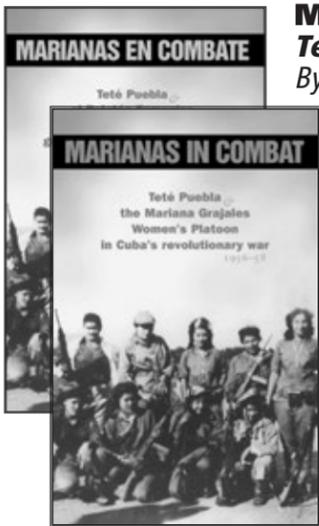
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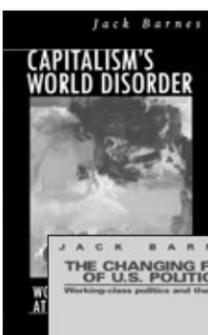
By Teté Puebla

Brigadier General Teté Puebla, the highest-ranking woman in Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces, joined the struggle to overthrow the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista in 1956, when she was fifteen years old. This is her story from clandestine action in the cities, to serving as an officer in the victorious Rebel Army's first all-women's platoon. For nearly fifty years, her life has been intertwined with the fight to transform the social and economic status of women, a course of action inseparable from Cuba's socialist revolution.

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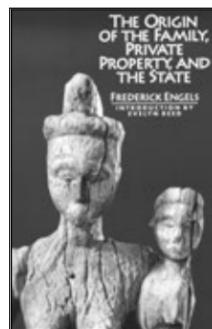
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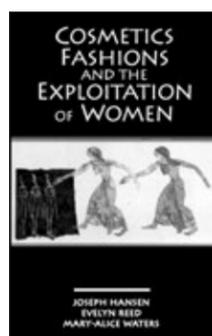


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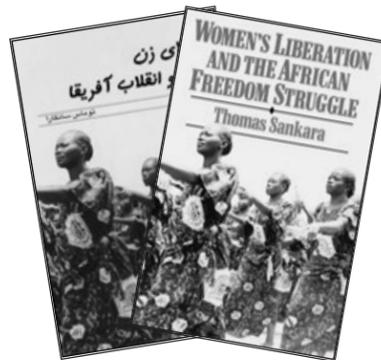


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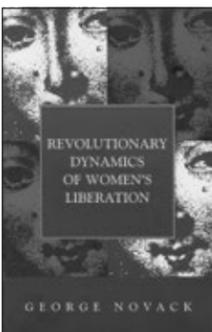
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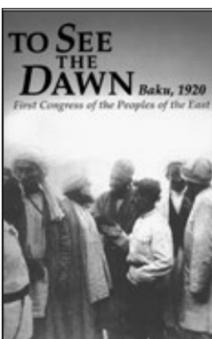


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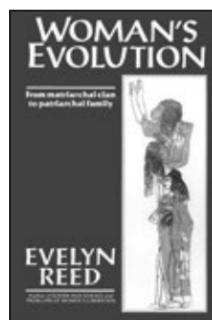


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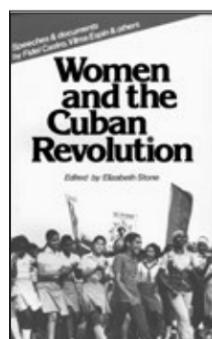


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# Washington targets Iran 'nuclear threat'

Continued from front page

spokesman Richard Boucher alleged that "satellite imagery" showed some structures at one of the nuclear plants were being covered with earth, claiming that Tehran was building "a secret underground site" where it could produce weapons-grade material.

At the end of February, Mohammed ElBaradei, head of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), took time out from his "weapons inspections" snooping in Iraq to lead a team to nuclear plants and facilities under construction in Iran. Unable to find any violations to report, ElBaradei tried to put the onus on Iran to disprove the allegations by the imperialist powers.

The IAEA chief said Iran could only dispel concerns about its nuclear "ambitions" by signing on to the agency's "Additional Protocol," requiring Tehran to give IAEA representatives broader and freer access to the country's nuclear facilities and territory, including with no prior notice. It would also require Iran to give the agency "early notification" about the design of a nuclear facility as soon as a decision is made to build it. Current agency rules only require such notification at least 180 days before nuclear material is installed in the facility.

U.S. officials had the gall to advise Iran that its vast oil and gas deposits make a nuclear power program "unnecessary."

Boucher argued that Iran's production of enriched uranium only made sense if it was in support of a nuclear weapons program. Tehran responded that it needs to generate 6,000 Megawatts of electricity from nuclear power plants by 2022 to meet the growing energy demands of a country of 65 million.

## Obstacle to imperialist aims

The war drive by the various imperialist powers against Iraq is not only aimed at Baghdad. It also sets the stage for the drive against Iran, a bigger target of the imperialist offensive. Iran remains an obstacle to the efforts by Washington, London, Paris, Berlin, and other imperialist powers to control the Mideast and its resources.

Washington's hostility to Tehran dates back to the popular revolution of 1979, when an upheaval by millions of workers and farmers overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of the shah. The revolution toppled one of imperialism's strongest and most reliable henchmen in the region—the other one being Israel. The Iranian revolution marked a historic shift in the relationship of forces in the region in favor of working people, from Tehran to Palestine—and beyond.

Because of the living legacy of the revolution and the identification of millions of working people in Iran with it, Washington and the other imperialist powers know they face much bigger prospects of popular resistance to any assault on Iran than from other countries in the region.

During the 1980–1988 Iran-Iraq war, Washington, while feigning neutrality, backed the assault by the Saddam Hussein regime in the hope of dealing a blow to the

Iranian revolution. Many of Iran's power generators were destroyed by Iraqi air strikes.

## Long-standing nuclear program

Washington's accusations notwithstanding, Iran's intentions to develop its nuclear resources have been no secret over the years.

Iran's nuclear power program began in the 1970s, under the regime of the U.S.-backed shah, which had planned to build as many as 20 nuclear power reactors. Work on the Bushire nuclear power project—an object of imperialist scrutiny today—was begun in 1974 by the German company Siemens. The reactors were viewed as necessary for industrialization of the country. The project was left unfinished after the revolution, and resumed with Russian aid in the 1990s.

More than a decade ago, Iran declared its intention to develop uranium mines, and invited the International Atomic Energy Agency to inspect them in 1992. In September, Iran told the agency of its plans to enrich uranium for use in a nuclear power plant.

Iran ratified the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty in 1970 and since 1992 has allowed the IAEA to inspect any of its nuclear facilities. None of the agency's inspections have ever revealed a single violation of the terms of the treaty.

To Washington, Iran's technical and military strength represents an obstacle to its war aims in the region. In the early 1990s Iran made modest but important improvements in its airforce with the purchase of new Russian planes and added several hundred tanks to its armored units. It has purchased T-72 tanks, Kilo-class submarines, and ballistic missiles from Russia, China, and north Korea.

The submarines and modern missile patrol boats, combined with reinforcement of the southern Arabian Gulf islands, strengthen Tehran's capability to cut off strategic sea-lines-of-communication and impose its control over these critical shipping passages in the region.

Last month Defense Minister Ali Shamkhani announced that Iran had developed the capacity to produce composite solid fuels used to power missiles. Following the inauguration of a solid fuel manufacturing plant, Shamkhani noted that the fuel could be used for "any kind of missile." Iran currently has the capability to produce medium-range missiles, anti-tank missiles, air-to surface and surface-to-surface guided missiles.



Iranian soldiers celebrate overthrow of U.S.-backed shah. Washington's continuing hostility to Tehran stems from 1979 revolution, when upheaval by millions of workers and farmers toppled one of imperialism's most reliable henchmen in the region.

Washington is also alarmed at Iran's deepening economic relations with Russia and other workers states. Iranian and Russian cooperation is motivated both by economic needs and by a shared concern for Washington's expanding political and military presence in the region.

For years Washington has sought to prevent Iran from developing a 1,000-megawatt nuclear reactor at the port city of Bushire. It has pressed Russia, which is helping to build the facility, to end its cooperation with Tehran.

In a visit to Iran, Russian atomic energy minister Alexander Rumyantsev refuted Washington's charges that the plant is a possible ruse for developing nuclear arms. "Iran is using nuclear energy exclusively for peaceful purposes," he said. He added that Moscow was "extremely interested" in Iran's nuclear power plants. The Bushire plant will provide much-needed income for Russia, which has agreed to provide fuel and expertise for repair and maintenance. Moscow is willing to build up to six more reactors in Iran.

As a condition of its assistance Moscow has required Tehran to return all spent nuclear fuel rods. But in early February Iranian president Mohammad Khatami said that Iran would begin mining uranium for use in nuclear power plants and would reprocess the spent fuel itself.

## War on Iraq

As it masses its troops to invade Iraq, Washington has objected to the deployment in northern Iraq of an Iranian-backed bri-

gade of Iraqi fighters opposed to the Saddam Hussein regime. Iran has provided the Badr Brigade, as the unit is known, with training, weapons, and logistical intelligence according to a March 2 *New York Times* report. Advanced elements of the estimated 15,000-member brigade began setting up a base camp 11 miles inside Iraq from the Iranian border in an area controlled by Iraqi Kurds.

Representatives of the Bush administration have held private talks with Iranian officials in Europe in hopes of preventing Tehran from intervening militarily in Iraq or to giving safe haven to Iraqis who might oppose a U.S.-backed regime in Baghdad. In February State Department spokesman Boucher said, "We think any Iranian presence or Iranian-supported presence in that region is destabilizing and not positive."

A spokesman for the brigade said they are also prepared to join with Kurds to resist deployment of Turkish troops in the Kurdish-administered regions of northern Iraq. Ankara fears the Kurds may seize on the anticipated fall of the Baghdad government in an imperialist invasion to declare an independent Kurdish state. The Turkish regime plans to deploy up to 70,000 troops in northern Iraq as part of a U.S.-led war against Baghdad.

Ironically, the Badr Brigade is the military wing of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, a member of the Iraqi National Council. The council is an umbrella group of fractious Iraqi opponents of the Hussein government that has been propped up by Washington.

# BBC fires Arab journalists at London office

BY CELIA PUGH

LONDON—Journalists Adli Hawwari and Abdul Hadi Jiad were fired from the Arab section of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) World Service February 19. Denied union representation or the

right to appeal, Hawwari and Jiad were marched under escort and without prior notice from their workplace in London.

Hawwari, a Palestinian, is a member of the National Union of Journalists (NUJ) national executive council. Jiad, born in Iraq, has worked for the BBC Arab Service for 12 years. He won a court of appeal hearing on January 30 for a case of racial discrimination to be heard in full tribunal.

The BBC accused Hawwari and Jiad of making too many complaints about bullying and humiliating treatment meted out to employees by managers of the Arab Service, the largest section of the BBC World Service.

Hawwari issued an immediate statement declaring, "Anything we can fight back with, we will fight. We will not take it lying down." He accused the BBC of intimidating staff "not to rock the boat," and added, "The whole press machine of the BBC was turned on us.... The reason why they did this was to scare the hell out of everyone in Bush House," referring to the BBC World Service London base.

Jiad described it as "a political dismissal due to my Iraqi origin and my union activity in equal opportunity and antidiscrimination." Referring to an official BBC e-mail circulated to producers and journalists, Jiad said, "It is also motivated by biased political attitudes concerning Iraq." He said staff were instructed not to participate in a peace demonstration.

The NUJ has demanded the reinstatement of Hawwari and Jiad. Support has come from members of the Broadcasting Entertainment Cinematograph and Theatre Union (BECTU) employed at BBC.

Dozens of unionists joined a picket of Bush House organized by the NUJ Black Members Council on February 25. A March 4 support meeting in London of NUJ and BECTU members decided to adopt an international campaign of protest letters, information flyers, pickets, and other activities. International contacts will be made for solidarity.

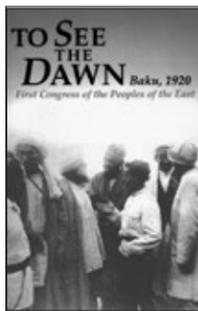
NUJ general secretary Jeremy Dear said, "The BBC has blatantly flouted all its own procedures, ignored its agreements with the unions, and denied natural justice in this case." The NUJ website notes that "for years there have been disputes...over the discriminatory treatment of Arab staff, and over the coverage of Middle East conflicts." John Fray, deputy general secretary of the NUJ, said the BBC "left itself open to accusations of the World Service being lackeys of the government" by sacking two journalists when there is a war with Iraq on the horizon.

BBC, whose World Service program was originally named Empire Service when it began in the 1930s, is owned by the British government. Messages of support for Adli Hawwari and Abdul Hadi Jiad can be sent to them at: The National Union of Journalists, Headland House, 312 Grays Inn Rd., London WC1X 8DP, U.K.

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# Capitalist drive for plunder led to World War II

Printed below are excerpts from *Writings of Leon Trotsky, 1933-34*, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for March. The excerpt is taken from the pamphlet "War and the Fourth International," published in June 1934 by Pioneer Publishers, the predecessor of Pathfinder Press. The document was adopted by the International Secretariat of the International Communist League, the worldwide organization of communist political organizations that led to the establishment of the Fourth International in 1938. Copyright © 1972, 1975 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY LEON TROTSKY

### Preparation for a new war

1. The same causes, inseparable from modern capitalism, that brought about the last imperialist war have now reached infinitely greater tension than in the middle of 1914. The fear of the consequences of a new war is the only factor that fetters the will of imperialism. But the efficacy of this brake is limited. The stress of inner contradictions pushes one country after another on the road to fascism, which, in its turn, cannot maintain power except by preparing international explosions. All governments fear war. But none of the gov-

ernments has any freedom of choice. Without a proletarian revolution, a new world war is inevitable.

2. Europe, the recent arena of the greatest of wars, continually heads toward decline, pushed by victors and vanquished alike. The League of Nations, which according to its official program was to be the "organizer of peace" and which was really intended to perpetuate the Versailles system, to neutralize the hegemony of the United States and to create a bulwark against the Red East, could not withstand the impact of imperialist contradictions. Only the most cynical of the social patriots (Henderson, Vandervelde, Jouhaux and others) still try to connect the perspectives of disarmament and pacifism with the League. In reality, the League of Nations became a secondary figure on the chessboard of imperialist combinations. The main work of diplomacy, now carried on behind the back of Geneva, consists in the search for military allies, that is, in a feverish preparation for a new slaughter. Parallel with it goes the constant growth of armaments to which fascist Germany has lent a new and gigantic impulsion.

### Chessboard of imperialist combinations

3. The collapse of the League of Nations is indissolubly bound up with the beginning of the collapse of French hegemony on the European continent. The demographic and economic power of France proved to be, as was to be expected, too narrow a base for the Versailles system. French imperialism, armed to the teeth and having an apparently "defensive" character, insofar as it is forced to defend by legalized agreements the fruits of its plunder and spoliation, remains essentially one of the most important factors of a new war.

Driven by its unbearable contradictions and the consequences of defeat, *German capitalism* has been forced to tear off the straitjacket of democratic pacifism and now comes forward as the chief threat to the Versailles system. State combinations on the European continent still follow, in the main, the line of victors and vanquished. *Italy* occupies the place of a treacherous go-between, ready to sell its friendship at the decisive moment to the stronger side, as she did during the last war. *England* is attempting to retain its "independence"—a mere shadow of its



Youth mobilize in December 1945 in Java, Indonesia, in fight for independence from the Netherlands. Dutch colonialists were supplied with U.S. bombs, tanks, and artillery.

former "splendid isolation"—in the hope of utilizing the antagonisms in Europe, the contradictions between Europe and America, the approaching conflicts in the Far East. But ruling England is ever less successful in its scheming designs. Terrified by the disintegration of its empire, by the revolutionary movement in India, by the instability of its positions in China, the British bourgeoisie covers up with the revolting hypocrisy of MacDonald and Henderson its greedy and cowardly policy of waiting and maneuvering, which, in turn, is one of the main sources of today's general instability and tomorrow's catastrophes.

### Volcanic eruption of U.S. imperialism

4. The war and the postwar period wrought the greatest changes in the internal and international position of the *United States*. The gigantic economic superiority of the United States over Europe and, consequently, over the world allowed the bourgeoisie of the United States to appear in the first postwar period as a dispassionate "conciliator," defender of the "freedom of the seas" and the "open door." The industrial and business crisis revealed, however, with terrific force the disturbance of the old economic equilibrium, which had found sufficient support on the internal market. This road is completely exhausted.

Of course, the economic superiority of the United States has not disappeared; on the contrary, it has even grown potentially,

due to the further disintegration of Europe. But the old forms in which this superiority manifested itself (industrial technique, trade balance, stable dollar, European indebtedness) have lost their actuality: the advanced technique is no longer put to use; the trade balance is unfavorable; the dollar is in decline; debts are not paid. The superiority of the United States must find its expression in new forms, the way to which can be opened only by war.

The slogan of the "open door" in China is proving powerless before a few Japanese divisions. Washington carries on its Far Eastern policy in such a way as to be able to provoke at the most propitious moment a military clash between the USSR and Japan, so as to weaken both Japan and the USSR and outline its further strategic plan depending upon the outcome of war. Continuing by inertia the discussion on the liberation of the Philippines, the American imperialists are in reality preparing to establish for themselves a territorial base in *China*, so as to raise at the following stage, in case of conflict with Great Britain, the question of the "liberation" of *India*. U.S. capitalism is up against the same problems that pushed Germany in 1914 on the path of war. The world is divided? It must be redivided. For Germany it was a question of "organizing Europe." The United States must "organize" the world. History is bringing humanity face to face with the volcanic eruption of American imperialism.

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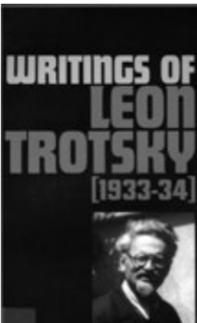
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**The great Society**—In 1985, the people of Bhopal, India, suffered the catastrophic escape of a



Harry Ring

deadly chemical at the Union Carbide plant there. Thousands of people were killed and even more were harmed. Two years ago, Union Carbide was taken over by Dow Chemical, the company that manufactured the infamous napalm used by Washington to torch Vietnamese villages.

Last December 200 Bhopal

women staged a peaceful two-hour protest at Dow, demanding that it finally take meaningful action to clean up the toxic pollution that continues to kill people. Dow's response? It filed a \$10,000 damage suit against the women, charging a loss in production during their demonstration.

**Free advice for some**—During one of the recent sieges of bitter cold and heavy snow in the eastern United States, the North Carolina *Charlotte Observer* had extensive coverage of the storm. There were two how-to articles—wear layers of clothing, etc. Also a prominent feature on the desperate plight of the estimated 5,000 homeless people in the area. No advice offered.

**How civilized can they get**—The Pentagon is building a “medium security” dormitory for some of the prisoners being held at the U.S. naval base at Guantánamo Bay, a piece of Cuba held by force for a century.

The prison currently holds some 600 people scooped up in various countries as “terrorism” suspects. They have been held, literally, in barbed wire cages. Nineteen of the “detainees” have attempted suicide.

**Read it and retch**—The boat races in Auckland, New Zealand, attracted super-yachts and super-rich. Among the latter was New York real estate shark Bud Schuyler and spouse Kiki, who he believes has a serious shopping problem. For the visit he put her

on a \$10,000 a day shopping limit. If she stayed under the limit, she got prizes—like a \$100,000 diamond necklace. If she stuck to the limit for a week, a matching set of diamond earrings and cuff links. We haven't heard the results.

**No prizes**—“Bankruptcy filings set records in 2002—Consumers high level of debt, lack of health insurance cited”—News headline.

**A win for living wage**—Daimler Chrysler reported that last year it more than doubled the pay of its 13 top executives.

**‘Nothing’s too good...’**—“Patients in the veterans health-care system wait an average of seven months to see a primary care doctor, the American Legion reported

after questioning its members.”—News item.

**That will learn them**—A new law in France will impose fines or jail terms for jeering at a performance of the national anthem and the flag. The law was sparked by an outburst of booing youth at a football match last year between French and Algerian teams. Prez Chirac was forced to leave his box until someone said sorry.

**They'd never do that**—“Bush administration officials are seriously considering that the United States tap Iraq's oil to help pay the cost of military occupation, a move that would likely prove inflammatory in an Arab world already suspicious of U.S. motives.”—*New York Newsday*.

## 1990-91 war exacerbated conflicts in region, world

The following are excerpts from “The Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq,” the lead article in issue no. 7 of *New Internationalist*, a magazine of Marxist politics and theory. The article is based on a talk given by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, in March 1991, just weeks after the U.S.-organized slaughter of the U.S.-led Gulf war. Copyright © 1991 by 408 Printing and Publishing Corp. Reprinted by permission.

BY JACK BARNES

The Bush administration presents the war against Iraq as the first triumph of the “new world order.” It points to the fact that Moscow not only gave public backing to the U.S. war drive, but also voted for every U.S.-initiated motion in the United Nations Security Council, right down to the April 2 resolution rubber-stamping Washington's stranglehold cease-fire conditions that in practice suspend Iraqi sovereignty. This enabled the U.S. rulers to use the UN as a fig leaf in a more brazen manner than any time since the opening of the 1950s during its war against Korea...<sup>1</sup>

The truth is that Washington's Gulf war and its outcome did not open up a new world order of stability and UN-overseen harmony. Instead, it was the first war since the close of World War II that grew primarily out of the intensified competition and accelerating instability of the crises-ridden old imperialist world order. It is the increasing internal strains within this declining order that drove Washington to launch its murderous military adventure. The irremediable social and political conflicts, and consequent instability, that existed before the Gulf war and that underlay it have all been exacerbated:

- between imperialism and the toilers of the Middle East and elsewhere in the semicolonial world;
- among the rival imperialist powers;
- between the various imperialist states and the oppressed nations;
- between exploiters and exploited within these oppressed countries;
- between the toilers and the bourgeoisified leaderships who speak in their name and claim to represent their interests;
- among the bourgeois states of the Middle East and other oppressed nations;
- between Washington and the governments of the deformed and degenerated workers' states, first and foremost, the Soviet Union;
- between the U.S. imperialist rulers and the two workers' states that pose the biggest problems for them, North Korea and Cuba; and
- between Washington and the revolutionary government and communist leadership right on U.S. imperialism's very doorstep in the Americas—that of Cuba....

### Acceleration of interimperialist conflict

The assault against Iraq was the first of Washington's wars since World War II in which it sought to use its military might to deal blows, indirect but palpable, to U.S. imperialism's rivals, especially in Bonn, Tokyo, and Paris. The Gulf war exacerbated the conflicts and divisions between

Washington and its imperialist competitors, as well as between these rival powers themselves. While we know these sharpening conflicts already existed (every working person has been deluged by protectionist propaganda from the U.S. government, bourgeois politicians, trade union bureaucrats, and their radical hangers-on), the war brought them to the surface with greater force and accelerated them to a degree not seen in world politics for some time.

Coming out of World War II, U.S. imperialism emerged the dominant power in the world imperialist system, both economically and militarily. For a substantial period following that war the rate of profit, and for even longer the tempo of growth of the mass of profits, was rising in all the imperialist countries. As a result, competition between the imperialist powers over markets for commodities and capital and over sources of raw materials was buffered.

Since the mid-1970s, however, the combination of the declining rate of profit, halting growth in the mass of profits, and relative slowdown in economic expansion has precipitated growing, sometimes sharp rivalry among the imperialist ruling classes. The years 1974–75 saw the first worldwide recession since 1937, as economic interdependence among the major capitalist powers grew alongside their competition and conflict. Although the sheer size and output of the U.S. capitalist economy remains enormous, and while it remains the largest market in the world, its position as an industrial and trading power has slipped substantially in recent decades in the face of growing challenges from German, Japanese, and other rivals. U.S. strategic military power remains unchallenged, however, and is the main lever the U.S. rulers have to compensate for their relative decline....

The relationship of forces that existed prior to the Gulf war among the capitalist powers in Europe has not been altered, but the national and state conflicts between them have been exacerbated. The war underlined the limits of the European Community's modest steps toward greater “economic integration” (lowered barriers to trade, investment, and travel). The U.S.-engineered war drive exposed beyond doubt that these measures do not translate into a “common European” foreign policy, a “common European” military policy, let alone steps to build up a “common European” armed forces. Nor do they even translate into a “common European” economic policy, let alone a common currency; in fact, strides in this direction were set back.

Instead, the rival capitalist classes in the European Community (EC) were further propelled toward defending their separate state interests, whatever their common stake in a trading bloc in face of U.S. and Japanese competition.

<sup>1</sup> At the start of the 1950–53 Korean War, the United Nations Security Council adopted a series of resolutions providing diplomatic cover for U.S. imperialist military intervention on the side of the landlord-capitalist regime in the south. The Soviet Union, which as a permanent member of the Security Council could have vetoed the measures, was boycotting Security Council meetings at the time to protest the UN's refusal to seat the People's Republic of China.



U.S. troops in Saudi desert prepare for 1991 assault on Iraq. Gulf war was first since World War II that grew out of acceleration of conflict between imperialist powers.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

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

March 24, 1978

Striking on a forty-mile front, the Israeli army invaded Lebanon March 14. Preceded by artillery barrages and air strikes, at least 10,000 Israeli troops, led by columns of tanks, crossed the Lebanese border. Others landed by sea on the Lebanese coast.

The massive terror assault was unleashed with the knowledge of the U.S. government. An Israeli official in Washington told the *New York Post* that there “was a communication” between Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and President Carter before the attack began.

The Israeli high command described its attack on Lebanon as “a purifying operation,” claiming: “The Israeli Defense Forces do not intend to harm the population, the Lebanese army or the Pan-Arab [Syrian] force, but rather the terrorists and their helpers....”

It insisted that “the goal of the operation is to root out the bases of the terrorists.”

But the truth is that what the Zionist command calls “terrorist bases” are villages and refugee camps housing tens of thousands of people.

One Israeli soldier explained how he dealt with Arabs he encountered when Israeli forces invaded Lebanon in January 1975. He told *Time* magazine reporter Daniel Droot:

“If they can get their hands up faster than I can pull the trigger, then I'll take them prisoner.”

A U.S. Embassy official in Tel Aviv told reporters, “I won't say we had advanced knowledge of this, but we have been consulting constantly with the Israelis.”

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

March 23, 1953

The recent decision of the U.S. Supreme Court in upholding a union-busting Virginia anti-picketing ordinance underscores the three-pronged assault upon the organized labor movement by the boss-controlled organs of state power: legislative, executive and judicial.

By a 7-2 decision, the highest court in the land deprived the unions in the State of Virginia of their constitutional right to conduct peaceful picketing in a labor dispute. The rabid union-haters are gleefully hailing this decision as a precedent to be used in other states and are calling for a national law based on the Virginia “Right to Work” statute.

There was no question of the use of coercion. There was no mass picket line. No one tried to prevent anyone from working. There was one or at the most two union men, with one picket sign that simply said: “This is not a union job.” But even this, according to the learned judges of the highest judicial authority in the country, constituted a violation of the “right to work.”

The Supreme Court, like Congress and the Administration, functions as an agency of Big Business. In this game the corporation hold all the trump cards. Their representatives in Congress and the State Legislatures enact the slave-labor laws. Their judicial arm, the courts, up to and including the Supreme Court, give these laws their legal sanction. And their executive arm in Washington and the various States enforce and police these laws. And the workers? They, you see, have the “right to work.”

# Bring the troops home now!

*Bring the troops home now! UN inspectors out of Iraq!  
End the imperialist trampling of Iraq's sovereignty!*

We urge working people and youth to join the peace marches of March 15 and March 22 planned for many cities, and campaign on college campuses and high schools, street corners, door-to-door in working-class communities, on the job, and at factory gates with the above demands. The struggle is not just against Washington and London assaulting Iraq but against the entire imperialist system and its wars.

The war is already on. Washington is rapidly winning public opinion at home for unleashing its military might on Iraq, no matter how any votes at the UN Security Council turn out. It is also making propaganda gains in winning acceptance for targeting the other two components of its "axis of evil"—Iran and north Korea.

This is not just a war for oil. It is about *which* among the competing imperialist powers will control the mineral and strategic Mideast platform that Iraq sits on. It is part of a wider conflict over the redivision of the former colonies in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East among the "civilized hyenas"—as Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin aptly called the imperialist powers. This inter-imperialist conflict, with Washington-London on one side and Paris-Berlin on the other as the main unstable poles, is at the center of the ongoing UN-sanctioned assault on Iraqi sovereignty and the imminent U.S.-led invasion. This war is the first of a number of imperialist wars in coming years, as the capitalist system worldwide sinks deeper into a prolonged depression.

Far from being "Bush's war," as the current situation is described by many critics of the current U.S. administration, this course has the full support of the entire U.S. ruling class. If U.S. forces succeed in taking over Iraq, Washington will have massive ground forces in place along the Afghanistan-Iran and Iraq-Iran borders. It will exercise domination of the Arab-Persian Gulf region and be in a much stronger position to threaten the ruling monarchy of Saudi Arabia to not take any steps that contradict U.S. interests in the Middle East. Such an outcome would mean a significant economic and military shift in the relationship of forces in the world in favor of Washington.

That's why the U.S. government is after "regime change" and an American protectorate in Iraq. Paris, on the other hand—the most aggressive of Washington's rivals—is pushing for regime continuity and no American protectorate in that country.

At the end of the imperialist slaughter of the Iraqi people in 1991, U.S. forces were the unambiguous military victor. Washington stopped short of marching on Baghdad, however, in the face of opposition from its allies, especially those in France and Germany. That clash threatened to blow up the imperialist coalition. Over the next decade, the French rulers built a massive profitable relationship with Iraq in industrial products, and oil exploration and extraction, while Washington got zero such contracts. Paris wants to build on this success, while Washington is seeking to reverse it to its advantage.

This is the real conflict. This is what the debate in the

UN Security Council is all about.

That's why it's important to do away with the myth that the governments of France and Germany are the "peace party." As the *Militant* explains this week, these predatory powers have had as big a hand as Washington in devastating Iraq for the last 12 years through their support for draconian sanctions and other measures codified in UN resolutions.

On the same basis, backing demands to "let the inspections work" and for disarmament—promoted by many Stalinists, social-democrats, and bourgeois-liberals as part of their antiwar posture—lends support to the ongoing violation of Iraq's sovereignty. It provides further justification for the use of the United Nations as the tool of imperialism it has been since its inception.

The U.S. rulers and their allies are serious about pursuing the "axis of evil." Iran and north Korea are now clearly in their sights. As part of opposing this disastrous course, working people need to reject all the rationalizations presented by the rulers, including their calls for so-called nuclear nonproliferation. We need to defend the right of oppressed nations to defend themselves by any means necessary. We should emulate the stance of the revolutionary leader Malcolm X. Malcolm took pride when the Chinese people developed the atomic bomb in 1964. "I had to marvel at that," he said. "It made me realize that poor people can do it as well as rich people."

On the front lines of resistance to imperialism are strikes and other working-class actions showing refusal by trade unionists and others to subordinate their class interests to support for "our country" and "our troops." Many class-conscious workers join these struggles to show their solidarity. As they do so, they will find fertile ground for explaining that the best approach towards the U.S. soldiers and other troops in imperialist armies deployed in the Middle East—most of whom are workers and farmers in uniform used as cannon fodder by the enemy class—is demanding to bring them home now.

At most antiwar rallies around the world today pacifist demands predominate. At the same time, these actions *are* against the strongest imperialist power on earth assaulting Iraq. They are also wide open to banners, signs, and participants who start with Iraq's sovereignty, and demand not only "Bring the troops home now" but the withdrawal of all imperialist forces claiming extraterritorial rights in the Mideast.

Most young people taking part in these protests have not yet learned the facts hidden behind the demagoguery of the competing imperialist rulers, and often have many illusions in the UN or the possibility of taming or reforming imperialism. The spirits of many of these protesters, however, will not be broken when the massive bombing of Iraq begins or the imperialist war extends to other fronts. The communist movement will have an even better chance of getting a hearing among thousands of these youth. A hearing on the necessity of building proletarian parties capable of leading the toilers to take the power out of the hands of the imperialist war makers—American, French, or any variety—establish a government of workers and farmers, overthrow capitalism, and join the worldwide struggle for socialism.

# Calero backers tour Europe

Continued from Page 7

band regularly plays and put up a table and display to win further support.

## Iceland: 'No justified reason' for deportation threat

BY GYLFI PÁLL HERSIR

REYKJAVIK, Iceland—Lawrence Mikesch visited Iceland in mid-February. Since Calero's arrest around 250 signatures have been collected here in support of his fight at political gatherings, on street corners, in front of supermarkets, and at demonstrations protesting imperialist aggression against Iraq.

During his stay in Reykjavík Mikesch got the opportunity to visit three local high schools. At lunch breaks, he briefly recounted the facts of the case. Students listened carefully, and afterward gathered around the table of revolutionary literature to talk.

"It is important that things like this are being made public, because I know they happen everywhere," said a student at Kvennó high school while signing the petition.

A young woman at MH-high school said she thought it was "unbelievable that a supposedly highly civilized country could deport someone for no obviously justified reason."

As well as signing the petition, students bought copies of the *Militant* and donated money to the defense campaign.

Mikesch also addressed a public meeting on the case, and talked about the fight with Hjalmar Jónsson, the president of the Union of Icelandic Journalists.

He also met Sigurdur Bessason, the president of the Efling trade union, and Thrainn Hallgrímsson, the editor of the union's paper. The two men were particularly interested in Mikesch's account of the fight for a union at the Dakota Premium meatpacking plant in St. Paul, Minnesota—a fight in which Calero participated while working at the plant, before taking the position on *Perspectiva Mundial*. Mikesch explained how the union local has led the way in building support for Calero's defense. Bessason decided to send a letter to the INS to protest the deportation threat.

Efling organizes unskilled workers in Reykjavík, including food workers, and has a membership of around 20,000, some 2,000 of whom are immigrants. Immigrant workers in Iceland have increased 46 percent from early 1998 to early 2002, when they reached 4.6 percent of the workforce. Recently the parliament passed a law saying that immigrants must study Icelandic to be eligible for a residency permit.

At the close of his tour, Mikesch went with two other supporters of the campaign to meet Katrin Sigurdardóttir, who had participated in a January 10–11 sit-down protest at a health clinic in Keflavík to demand improved health services (see article in the February 17 *Militant*.) After signing the petition, Sigurdardóttir said good-bye to Mikesch by raising her fist and saying, "we must fight, fight, and fight!"

Young Socialist Claudia Overesch contributed to this article.

# Let the Cuban 5 out of the 'hole'

Throwing five Cuban revolutionaries into solitary confinement is the latest attempt by the U.S. government to isolate them and intimidate others who dare to stand up to Washington.

The five men—Antonio Guerrero, Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, René González, and Fernando González—were framed up and convicted in June 2001 on spying and other conspiracy charges. What was their real "crime"? Gathering information on the activities of ultrarightist groups that, operating on U.S. territory with the knowledge and complicity of Washington, have a record of carrying out violent attacks on Cuba. In other words, defending their country in face of attacks that are the result of the U.S. government's four-decade-long campaign of aggression against the Cuban Revolution.

All five men are examples of revolutionaries who have

devoted their lives, not only to the defense of Cuba, but to the worldwide fight for liberation from imperialist oppression. Prior to taking on their mission in the United States, three of the five carried out missions of international solidarity in Angola. There, tens of thousands of Cuban volunteer combatants fought shoulder to shoulder with Angolan freedom fighters and helped crush the invasion of that African country by the apartheid regime in the 1970s and '80s.

Consistent with their lifelong records, the five Cuban patriots have set an example from within prison walls, refusing to bend their knees to Uncle Sam despite the draconian sentences imposed on them. And they have been "model prisoners," as their attorneys point out.

After sentencing them on frame-up charges, the U.S. authorities, in one of their many efforts to isolate them, dispersed the five men to separate penitentiaries thousands of miles from each other. The latest assault by federal prison authorities, throwing the five simultaneously into the "hole," is an inhuman denial of elementary rights. It deprives the five of normal access to their lawyers and visits by family and friends. It impedes the legal appeal of their convictions.

This attack is part and parcel of the broader war on workers' rights as the U.S. imperialist rulers accelerate their drive toward an all-out military assault on Iraq.

We urge you to join the campaign to send letters to federal prison authorities demanding that the five Cuban patriots be released from the "hole" immediately (see article on page 3). Defenders of the five Cubans can do many other things as well, such as organizing public forums and other activities to get out the facts about this case and win a broader hearing for the longer-term campaign to win their freedom.

# Difference between peasants, farmers?

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

In his letter printed on the opposite page, reader Tom O'Brien from St. Paul, Minnesota, asks what the difference is in the use of the terms "farmer" and "peasant." Both refer to landholders. "Farmer" is a broad term for someone who owns or leases land. It can range from family farmers working with their own labor—exploited

## REPLY TO A READER

producers—to large capitalist farmers.

Peasants are farmers, but the term has a historical connotation, used mostly in countries with a sizable rural population as well as a feudal past. This is true in most semicolonial countries of Latin America, Asia, and Africa, as well as in some European nations such as France, where agriculture has substantial economic and social weight. In those cases, "farmer" and "peasant" can be used interchangeably in popular usage. But for largely historical reasons, agricultural producers (whether poor subsistence farmers or rich peasants like the Russian kulaks in tsarist times) in countries from Mexico to the Philippines commonly identify themselves as peasants, in contrast with the class of wealthy landlords who oppress them.

On the other hand, in countries such as the United States or Canada, where capitalist agriculture has long predominated, even small landholders identify themselves as farmers, not peasants.

### Cointelpro: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom

Nelson Blackstock

The FBI's spying and disruption against socialists and activists in the Black and antiwar movements. Includes FBI documents. \$15.95

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



# Socialist concludes successful campaign for mayor of Tampa

BY HENRY HILLENBRAND

TAMPA, Florida—Supporters of Rachele Fruit, the Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Tampa, celebrated the campaign at a gathering here on March 4, the night of the election. Participants included two of Fruit's co-workers at a meatpacking plant in Plant City.

Throughout the campaign, Fruit told the meeting, she had explained that the only way to end the horrors of war and economic depression is to organize a struggle to overthrow capitalist rule and replace it with a government of workers and farmers.

Campaign supporters had linked up with protests against the impending U.S.-led war against Iraq, and in actions opposing attacks on workers' rights, she said. They had joined a January 24 action in defense of Sami Al-Arian, a professor at the University of South Florida (USF), who had been fired from his teaching position and banned from campus for his

outspoken defense of the Palestinian struggle.

On February 20, Al-Arian and three others were arrested by the FBI and indicted as "terrorists." Fruit invited campaign supporters to attend a speakout in defense of Al-Arian sponsored by the Militant Labor Forum. "The U.S. government is painting the word 'terrorist' with a broader and broader brush every day, hoping eventually to include everyone who opposes their drive to war," she said. "In the eyes of the capitalist rulers, we are all Muslim terrorists."

Participants watched a video recording of a League of Women Voters debate involving Fruit and the other candidates, and an interview with the socialist candidate that had been screened on the local ABC Action News. They also listened to a 20-minute interview broadcast on WMNF-FM radio.

The *Oracle*, a USF daily, also interviewed Fruit. Its February 6 issue had reported a candidates' debate on the campus attended by about 200 people. The candidates also faced off in a February 18 debate at the Seminole Heights Baptist Church.

During these events Fruit explained that the nearly \$1 billion bond debt owed by this city of 313,600 people is a channel to transfer wealth from working people to the banks and other financial institutions.

## Trade with Cuba

Trade with Cuba was an issue during the campaign. Most of Fruit's opponents fa-



Militant/Sonja Swanson

**Socialist Workers candidate Rachele Fruit speaks at rally defending Palestinian professor Sami Al-Arian who was fired from his teaching post at the University of South Florida for his views and activities supporting the Palestinian struggle.**

vored such commerce, saying that the Port of Tampa should get in on the exchange in agricultural products that is currently allowed by the U.S. government.

For her part, Fruit called for an end to the U.S. government's economic sanctions against Cuba. At the same time, she said, "We do not see Cuba as a business opportunity, but as an example for workers and farmers. Cuba is the only country in the world where a revolutionary government is in power, representing the interests of workers and farmers, who are guaranteed the use of their land—something that family farmers in the U.S. are interested in learning more about."

University of South Florida student John Monroe told the *Militant* that the socialist campaign had made a lot of sense to him.

"For the first time in my life, I have been exposed to people that give me logical reasons for the world's problems," he said. "Rachele and the other socialists aren't afraid to stand up and speak out for what they believe."

There will be a run off election on March 25 between Pam Iorio, who until recently was the county supervisor of elections, and Frank Sanchez, a former member of the Clinton administration.

In the March 4 vote, a municipal referendum expanding the time period for petitioning to get a candidate's name on the ballot from 53 days to 130 days was passed. The referendum did not change the required number of valid signatures, which is 3,137 for mayor and 785 for city council.

## MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

### CALIFORNIA

#### San Francisco

**Bring the Troops Home Now! UN 'Inspectors' Out; Stop Imperialist Assaults on Iraqi sovereignty.** Speaker: Deborah Liatos, Socialist Workers Party, UFCW Local #120 Fri., March 21. Program, 7:30 p.m., Dinner 6:30 p.m. 3926 Mission St. (415) 584-2135.

### NEW JERSEY

#### Newark

**The Fight for Women's Emancipation and the Example of Cuba** Fri., March 14. 7:30 p.m. 168 Bloomfield Ave. 2nd floor. Donation: \$5, Tel: (973) 481-0077.

### NEW YORK

#### Manhattan

**The Opening Guns of World War III: Behind the U.S.-'Old Europe' Division over Iraq.** Speaker: Paul Pederson, Staff writer for the *Militant*, Fri., March 14., 7:30 p.m., 545 Eighth Ave. 14th floor, (212) 695-7358.

### PENNSYLVANIA

#### Pittsburgh

**Bring the Troops Home Now! The War Abroad and the War at Home: The Revolutionary Struggle Against Imperialism.** Speaker: Chris Remple, Pittsburgh Chairperson of the Socialist Workers Party, Fri., March 21. 7:30 p.m. 5907 Penn Ave. #225 (412) 365-1090.

## LETTERS

### Farmer or peasant?

First, the comment: The *Militant* deserves praise for its tradition of referring to capitalist politicians by their real names, not by their nicknames or titles of nobility. In the lead article of the March 10 issue (no. 7), however, there is a reference to "NATO secretary general Lord Robertson." His real name is "George Islay MacNeill Robertson," and he is a former trade union and Scottish Labour Party official, whom the Blair government rewarded by giving him a title appropriate to a feudal warlord. You can read all about him, probably more than you care to know, at <http://www.nato.int/cv/secgen/robert-e.htm>.

The question: In the article, "Mexican farmers defend right to farm," the words "peasant," "farmer," and "farm worker" are used. A farm worker would be a person who doesn't own a farm but works on one. But what is the dif-

ference (if any) between a peasant and a farmer? Are these synonyms, or is there a sociological difference implied by the use of the two terms?

Tom O'Brien  
St. Paul, Minnesota

### Appreciate the 'Militant'

Revolutionary greetings! I hope this letter finds you all well and hard at work proselytizing the toilers. My purpose for writing is to obtain a current [Pathfinder Press] 2003 publications catalog for my review and use in placing an order.

I'd also like to know if there is a discount offered to prisoners for a yearly subscription to the *Militant* newsweekly?

I appreciate your contribution to my understanding over the years and commend you all. Inevitably, we will prevail.

A prisoner  
Jamestown, California

### Subscription on strength

Revolutionary salutes. First, I want to extend my respects to you guys. I received a response and an issue of the *Militant*. Thank you, I appreciate that.

At this time I am without funds and really can't afford anything. I want to ask, is there a way that I can get a subscription on strength or donation? If not, it's no problem.

There's some good issues in the paper, and I love it. Well, I enclosed a poem I wrote, if you guys would like to take it. I just thought I'll send some words out.

A prisoner  
Corcoran, California

### Capitalist flattery

I would like to comment on [an article] in the *Militant* issue on January 13, "Mexico farmers resist U.S. trade assault" by Rollande Girard.

I [want to] raise the issue of flat-

age of \$25,000 each month.

In cities around the country, supporters of the communist movement have worked diligently to collect the monthly pledges and get them into the SWP national office by the deadline of the 5th of the each month.

"The current campaign to raise \$300,000 annually began in August and will end in July 2003," Gates reported. "This means we are right on schedule, and we must continue work to guarantee that our collection every month is over \$25,000."

"This campaign has been a big achievement for the communist movement," said Dave Prince, the party's financial director. "Since the campaign was launched in 1999, the supporters have met every goal they've set for themselves, so these funds can be confidently budgeted. Every accomplishment of this campaign contributes to the party's ability to carry out our political work," he said.

A steering committee of supporters in Seattle oversees the campaign. Ken Kawakubo and Stuart Crome, along with Gates, are the members of the committee. They send monthly reports on the progress of this effort

to supporters in 23 cities. They also work with supporters in each city who are responsible for organizing the collection.

"The key to success in this campaign is to keep up the steady and consistent pace over the next six months. We invite anyone who is not a part of the campaign to join us now in making a financial contribution that counts politically," said Gates.

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

Nan Bailey contributed to this article.

## CALENDAR

### WASHINGTON, DC

**Stop the Deportation of Róger Calero!** Speakers: Róger Calero; Gustavo Torres, Casa de Maryland; Macrina Cardinas, Mexico Solidarity Network; others; Sat., Mar. 22. 7:00 p.m., St. Stephen & the Incarnation Episcopal Church, 1525 Newton St. NW. (202) 374-2224.

**The *Militant* receives many requests from readers behind bars. The Prisoners Fund makes it possible to send them reduced-rate subscriptions. A prisoner can buy a six-month subscription for \$6 and a one-year subscription for \$12.**

**The Spanish-language monthly magazine *Perspectiva Mundial* offers a six-month subscription for \$3 and a one-year subscription for \$6. To help meet these requests, please send a check or money order, earmarked "Prisoners Fund," to the *Militant*, 410 West Street, New York, NY 10014.**

**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.**

## Health workers protest cutbacks in Vancouver

BY ANNETTE KOURI

VANCOUVER, British Columbia—More than 1,000 members of the Hospital Employees Union and their supporters marched here March 1 to protest plans by the provincial government to cut 5,000 hospital jobs. The HEU organizes the 46,000 health-care workers in British Columbia.

“It would be the largest mass layoff of women workers in Canadian history,” stated Chris Allnut, HEU secretary-business manager, to demonstrators at the concluding rally. Most of the hospital workers are women.

The Liberal government of British Columbia, headed by Premier Gordon Campbell, has been imposing sharp cuts in health and education funding in this province since its election in May 2001. On Jan. 28, 2002, the government introduced Bill 29, which shredded union contracts between

the HEU and the government.

The new law also allowed for privatization of jobs—that is, employing workers through private contractors—in hospitals and other health-care facilities. Laundry workers, housekeepers, and food service workers have already been told their jobs are being contracted out; the HEU notes there are a total of 32 sectors targeted.

The March 1 action was the most recent of several protests where members of the HEU have expressed their determination to fight for their jobs and defend health-care services in the province. In January, some 4,000 HEU members marched through downtown Vancouver and hundreds participated in job actions to mark the one-year anniversary of Bill 29.

At Vancouver General Hospital, the largest hospital in British Columbia, workers have staged outdoor picket lines before and



Militant/Monica Jones

Health-care workers in Vancouver rally March 1 to defend jobs and health service

after work, marches through the hospital at lunchtime, and rallies outside the offices of the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, the body in charge of administering the cuts.

His Lung Yeh, who has worked at Saint Jude's long-term care home for 11 years, said that in protesting, the unionists were

“not only protecting our jobs but protecting the quantity and quality” of health care.

Tina Desousa, a food service worker for 17 years at Vancouver General Hospital, said, “I believe it's a fundamental right to preserve health care.” Cesare, a transportation worker at the same hospital for 25 years, stated, “We're here to support each other, to fight for the future of our children. People before me fought!”

Jeffrey, who has worked in food services at Vancouver General Hospital for 12 years, said, “It feels like there's no respect. It's not about the money, not about benefits. It's a message to tell the government to treat us with respect.”

The stakes are considerable. The cleaning facilities for a small area of Vancouver General Hospital have already been contracted out to Compass International. Dietary, laundry, and housekeeping jobs are paid only Can\$9.50 an hour by Compass (Can\$1=U.S. 68 cents). HEU members doing the same jobs receive \$17.50 to \$18.30 an hour. Workers for Compass have no pension plan or extended health benefits and receive only the minimum two week vacation period required by provincial labor laws, no matter how long they have worked there.

Annette Kouri is a meat packer in the lower Mainland of British Columbia.

## UK metal workers strike for pay hike

BY TONY HUNT AND JIM SPAUL

HEREFORD, England—“We took management by surprise when we went out on strike,” said Phil Cogzell, at the picket line outside Special Metals Wiggin on February 22. “They thought we were bluffing.”

Cogzell is the senior steward for the General Municipal and Boilermakers Union (GMB) at the plant in Hereford, a town near the border with Wales. The Special Metals plant, which processes nickel, is one of the biggest employers in the area.

In the face of threats to their jobs, the 440 GMB members at the plant voted by an 84 percent majority to stage a six-day walkout from midnight February 19. The workers demanded a cost-of-living increase. They pointed out that the low wages paid by the company meant many workers with families received Income Support, a government-funded benefit.

The background to the strike is a series of derisory pay offers by the company, which were rejected by large majorities in union ballots. “First of all they put nothing on the table: 0 percent,” Cogzell reported. The union had asked for a pay increase in line with annual inflation, currently running at 2.9 percent.

The company then made a wage offer of 1 percent, which was rejected by the workers. The company demanded cuts in overtime and sickness payments for any larger increase, which they said had to be “self-generating.”

At the same time, the bosses were becoming more aggressive on the job, disciplining more workers for taking time off sick. News that the president of the U.S. parent company had been awarded a salary increase worth more than the cost of paying a 3 percent increase to the entire work force fueled the union members' anger.

The company pleaded poverty, blaming its financial difficulties on “September 11.” Personnel manager Robert Hunt told the *Hereford Times* that the strike “puts jobs at

risk in all sectors of the plant.” The U.S. parent company, Special Metals Corp., has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy proceedings, and there have been reports that the Hereford plant might be put up for sale. This did not deter the workers. “The lads here are so angry at the way they have been treated,” Cogzell said.

Workers interviewed by the *Militant* pointed out the broader assaults on workers' living standards that were part of the background to their fight. The press has reported a likely increase in the council tax, which funds services such as schools, road maintenance, and leisure facilities. In addition, the tax paid by workers out of their wages to fund the benefit system and the state pensions, known as National Insurance contributions, is set to rise in April.

Whilst *Militant* reporters were visiting

the picket line, firefighters going by in a fire engine sounded the siren in a gesture of solidarity, and many passing cars honked their horns in support. A man drove up with a sofa strapped to the roof of his car and donated it to the pickets to make the makeshift picket hut more comfortable. Cogzell reported that the drivers of several trucks making deliveries to the plant had refused to cross the picket line during the strike.

A one-day strike scheduled for March 7 was called off after the company tabled a new pay offer accepted by the GMB members at the plant in a 274 to 108 vote. Phil Cogzell told the *Militant* that he felt the union in the plant, which will put in a new pay claim in August, had come out stronger from this battle with the company.

Tony Hunt is a meat worker in London.

## S.F. police officials indicted in brutality cover-up

BY BERNIE SENTER

SAN FRANCISCO—Police chief Earl Sanders and six other high-ranking commanders were indicted here for obstruction of justice February 27 by a grand jury investigating an assault and subsequent cover-up by cops. Three other cops, including the son of the assistant chief of police, were indicted on felony assault charges.

On November 20, three off-duty cops—Alex Fagan Jr., David Lee, and Matthew Tonsing—were returning from a banquet celebrating the promotion of Alex Fagan Sr. to assistant chief of police. They accosted Jade Santoro and Alex Snyder in the middle-class Pacific Heights area of San Francisco. Not knowing it was cops who were brutalizing them, Snyder called 911 on his cell phone and told the dispatcher they had been beaten up by three men. “I need some cops fast,” he said, “I just got out of work, and they just started fighting us, over nothing.”

When the police arrived, Santoro and Snyder were bleeding and the assailants gone. The three cops who are now defendants later returned to the scene, but investigating police allowed them to leave without questioning them or securing any evidence. The indictment charges that top ranking cops subsequently thwarted any investigation from within the police force and district attorney's office.

The indictments have fueled infighting among capitalist politicians. The day after

the indictments, an indignant mayor Willie Brown said at a news conference, “I'm the commander and chief of this goddamn place, and there is no way the command staff of my Police Department is going to step down at this time.” Having indicted cop officials remain in their jobs, however, backfired on the police department. Two days later the cops all did step aside.

Allies of the mayor, such as Sen. Dianne Feinstein, criticized District Attorney Terrace Hallinan for the grand jury indictment, suggesting he is only trying to promote his own career.

The head of the Police Officers' Association defended the cops. “We are potentially targeted by terrorists. Do we have time for this?” he argued.

Some big-business commentators expressed “shock” that top police officials would be accused of conspiring to obstruct the investigation.

Similar police scandals have erupted in other cities where the cops' normal conduct of brutality has been exposed. In nearby Oakland, a gang of four cops, known as the Riders, are on trial for having planted evidence and falsely arrested and brutalized hundreds of people in Black neighborhoods. The Oakland city government recently settled a lawsuit filed by 119 plaintiffs against the police for \$10.9 million. The city of Los Angeles has paid out \$40 million in connection with crimes committed by police in the Ramparts divi-

sion; more than 100 convictions have been overturned there.

Prior to the November 20 street brawl, rookie police officer Alex Fagan Jr. has, according to his official record, been involved in at least 16 other violent attacks in just 13 months. One man, who reported Fagan threatened to shoot his “Black brains all over the sidewalk,” was hospitalized with broken ribs and a punctured lung. Another was beaten in his own home. Another was hogtied with his knees bent behind him—a police practice permitted in San Francisco but barred in other cities because of its links to suffocation.

Fagan, considered a “good cop” by the police department, was instructed to take “anger management” classes.

The Office of Citizens' Complaints in San Francisco, which investigates charges of cop brutality, reported that the police department delayed nearly 100 cases so long they have to be dropped because the statute of limitations has expired.

An article in the *San Francisco Chronicle* noted that the city police department “has treated serious officer misconduct leniently and promoted cops with troubling records to top posts.” One of the indicted cops, police captain Greg Corrales, accumulated 80 misconduct complaints by citizens and has been the defendant in 18 lawsuits.

Bernie Senter is a garment worker in San Francisco.

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