

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Ottawa, Washington widen use of detentions without charges

— PAGE 2

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Washington imposes an occupation regime in Iraq

Many Shiites, other Iraqis demand 'U.S. forces out!'

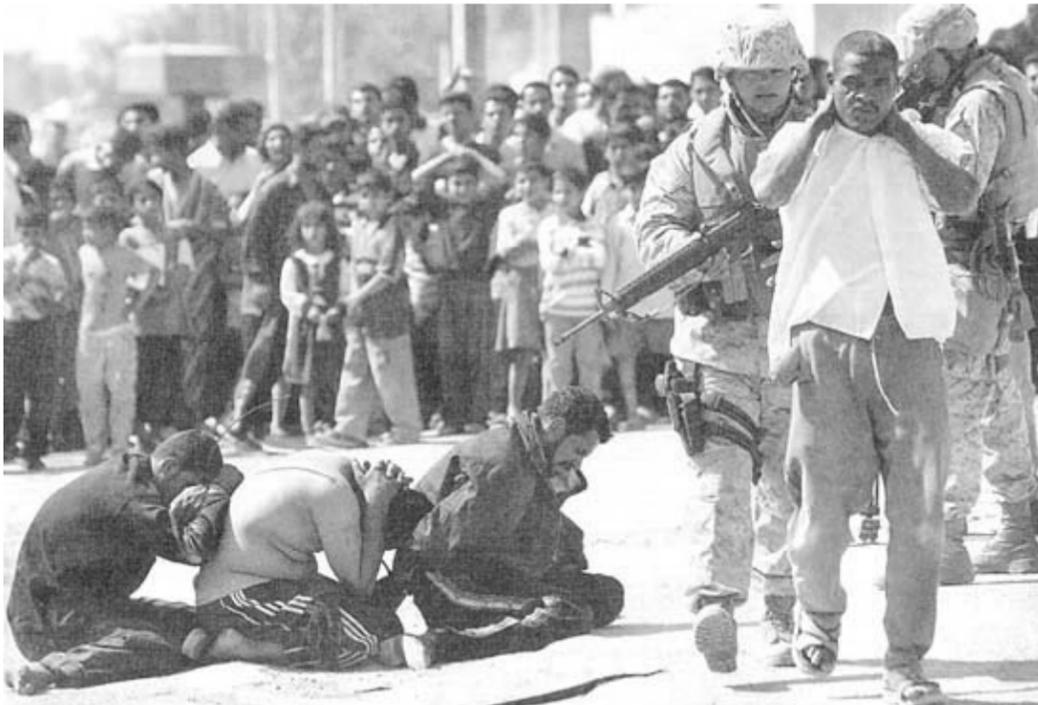
BY PATRICK O'NEILL

After hammering home their one-sided military victory over the armed forces of the Saddam Hussein regime and consolidating their hold on the country's oil fields, U.S. forces are putting in place an occupation government. Some of the key U.S. officials in the planned administration are already in Iraq. Infantry units have begun taking the place of Marines in Baghdad. The U.S. dollar has replaced the national currency.

The "civilian" administrator appointed by Washington, retired lieutenant general Jay Garner, set off on a victory tour on April 21 in a heavily armored caravan. "We will be here as long as it takes," he told reporters in Baghdad.

Garner ran the Pentagon's operations in northern Iraq following the Gulf War in

Continued on Page 6



U.S. troops detain men during April 14 patrol in Baghdad. "You are the masters today," said cleric Ahmed al-Kubeisi, speaking at April 18 congregation of thousands in the Iraqi capital, which turned into a march against U.S. occupation. "But I warn you against thinking of staying."

U.S. gov't threatens Cuba with new sanctions

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

U.S. government officials announced April 17 that Washington may impose new sanctions against Cuba, using the recent arrests, trials, and convictions of some 75 opponents of the Cuban Revolution there to justify these measures. This is another

Continued on Page 4

Defend the Cuban Revolution!

End all U.S. restrictions on trade and travel to Cuba!

Normalize diplomatic relations with Havana!

Repeal the 1966 Cuban Adjustment Act!
Free the Cuban Five!

Texas Machinists strike Lockheed



Militant/Jacquie Henderson

Machinists on April 21 picket line outside Lockheed Martin plant in Ft. Worth, Texas, where jet fighters are produced. Union members walked out April 13 against company demands for concessions in health care, retirement benefits, and wages.

Calero presents antideportation letters to Newark immigration office

BY SARAH KATZ

NEWARK, New Jersey—"We are here today to deliver hundreds and hundreds of letters and petitions that have been sent so far to the Immigration and Naturalization Service on behalf of Róger Calero, demanding that his deportation case be dropped," said John Studer, coordinator of the Róger Calero Defense Committee. He was speaking at an April 16 press conference in front of the Federal Building here.

Studer and Calero led a delegation that day to deliver these letters and petitions to Demetrios Georgakopoulos, Newark dis-

trict director of the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (BICE)—the reorganized Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). The group included Pamela Vossen, national grievance officer of the National Writers Union, and Moses Williams, a delegate in the Hospital Workers Union Local 1199J.

Calero recently won a victory transferring his case from Houston, Texas, to Newark, where he lives. A new hearing on the immigration authority's move to deport him has been set for September 10. With

Continued on Page 10

BY TONY DUTROW AND JACQUIE HENDERSON

FORTH WORTH, Texas—Some 4,000 Machinists struck the Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Co. and have deployed round-the-clock pickets at the facility. The company produces fighter jets for the U.S. military, as well as Israel, Greece, Japan, and other customers. On April 13, International Association of Machinists (IAM) District 776 members voted 2,835 to 426 to reject the company's final offer, and then voted 2,380 to 432 to strike as their contract was about to expire at midnight.

The Machinists walked out against Lockheed—the second-largest employer in the Dallas/Fort Worth area, and the largest U.S. war production contractor—in response to company demands that workers pay higher health-care deductions and prescription co-payments. Lockheed also demanded job combinations that will lead to layoffs.

"We will stay out one day longer than they can stand it," said Lonnie Walker, a 24-year journeyman machinist. Walker, a gate captain for the union pickets, said he was asked by an Associated Press reporter, "Do you think it's right that you guys are going out in a time of war?" He responded, "Yes. We have a right to do this. In fact we made the planes they are using in Iraq."

The unionists point out that the company's meager proposals for wage increases of only 4 percent, or 27 to 56 cents an hour in the first year, and 3 percent over the next two years, would be eaten up by the proposed medical and prescription co-payments.

"They pretend to give us little raises with one hand, while they have the other hand in our pockets," said Ruben Pérez, who was rehired last year after being laid off since 1994.

"The biggest thing for me was the increases they want us to pay for medical coverage," said George Baker, who is partially disabled. Baker has been laid off and

Continued on Page 15

EDITORIAL

U.S. out of Guantánamo!

We urge you to join with other opponents of the U.S. policy of aggression against Cuba in campaigning around these demands. The recent announcement—

Continued on Page 14

Students build 3rd Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange

BY OLYMPIA NEWTON

LOS ANGELES—"I want to go to Cuba because I am interested in its culture—which you can't find out much about in the United States," said Tony Travanty in an April 18 telephone interview with the *Militant*. "I am interested in Fidel Castro and how it is that the Cuban Revolution has survived for so long despite all the con-

Continued on Page 14

Also Inside:

Beijing, Washington begin talks with north Korea	3
Swedish rulers debate weapons exports to U.S., UK	3
Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin on imperialist war	7
How Iran's workers, farmers toppled shah in 1979	8
New York unions rally against cutbacks	11

Ottawa broadens use of secret trials

BY ROSEMARY RAY

TORONTO—At a March 28 public meeting here, Sophie Harkat demanded an end to secret trials in Canada. Harkat's husband, Mohamed, was arrested by undercover cops outside his home in Ottawa Dec. 10, 2002. He has been held in jail since then because the Canadian government alleges that he is linked to an Islamic "terrorist" group.

Harkat told the 70 people at the meeting that her life has been "one hell of a ride" since her husband's arrest. "All of my family's human rights have been violated. My innocent husband has been made to look like a terrorist and a killer without any evidence presented to him or his lawyer."

Mohamed Harkat, who is from Algeria, was given refugee status by the Canadian government in 1997 on the grounds that he faced political persecution if he returned home. Harkat is now detained in solitary confinement under a federal government Security Certificate. This is an arrest warrant issued by the minister of citizenship and immigration and the solicitor general. Canada's secret police agency, the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service (CSIS), recommends such arrests to the federal cabinet when it claims that an individual represents a "threat to the security of Canada."

Rocco Galati, a lawyer who represents immigrants held in jail, described the Security Certificate process at the March 28 meeting. Used only against refugees and permanent residents, the proceedings are cloaked in secrecy. The accused are brought before a secret court without access to, or the right to rebut, "evidence" against them. If found guilty they could be deported to their country of origin.

The request for refugee status for one of Galati's clients was denied by the Immigration and Refugee Board April 10. The board ruled that Mahmoud Jaballah, an Egyptian-born resident of Toronto, was "suspected" of being associated with the "terrorist organization Islamic Jihad." Jaballah has been held under a Security Certificate, in solitary confinement, since August 2001, said Galati. Responding to demands for Jaballah's release from jail, federal judge Andrew MacKay, who will

rule on whether Jaballah will be deported, is "uneasy about holding suspected terrorists indefinitely with no Canadian charges against them," the *Toronto Star* reported.

Galati estimates that up to 30 people are currently held in jail under Security Certificates.

The Canadian government has recently adopted several repressive laws, claiming they will protect citizens from "terrorist activities." These laws, in fact, undermine workers' rights. Bill C-36, the so-called Anti-Terrorism Act, gives the state sweeping new police powers to arrest people without laying charges, on mere suspicion of "terrorist activity." At secret "investigative hearings," those arrested lose their right to remain silent and can be forced to answer questions. This law also enables the federal cabinet to compile a list of banned "terrorist" organizations and individuals. So far, 26 groups are on this list. Membership in such organizations is illegal. Anyone dealing with their property or finances can face jail terms of up to 10 years.

The threat to the labor movement's right to strike and to the right of political dissent is evident in Bill C-36. This legislation defines "terrorist activity" as including a "serious disruption of an essential service, facility or system, whether public or private, other than as a result of lawful advocacy." But what constitutes lawful advocacy? This question was addressed by members of the Coalition of Muslim Organizations when they protested the bill's adoption at parliamentary hearings. Asserting that C-36 undermines the political right to dissent, the coalition gave historical examples of political struggles such as the civil rights movement in the United States and Mahatma Gandhi's opposition to British colonial rule in India. Either of these historic struggles could today be defined as "terrorist activity" because they protested unjust laws.

Hundreds of Arabs and Muslims have been jailed in Ottawa's "antiterrorist" campaign, which has mostly targeted immigrants. CSIS agents have visited immigrants' homes, conducting interrogations and attempting to pressure them into spying on their friends and workmates in the Arab community. The Canadian Arab Fed-

Portland protesters demand end to monthlong detention of Palestinian without charges



Above, supporters of Maher Hawash, pictured on the right with his daughter, protest April 7 outside federal courthouse in Portland, Oregon, to demand his immediate release. Hawash, 38, a Palestinian-American and U.S. citizen, was arrested March 20 by federal agents. Washington continues to imprison him without charges. The government claims he is a material witness in a secret "terrorism" case against six people accused of "conspiring" to join the Taliban and Al Qaeda to fight U.S. forces occupying Afghanistan.



In the last two years, more than two dozen people have been detained and held indefinitely on similar grounds, including several U.S. citizens. Washington refuses to give any information. If the government believes Hawash has committed a crime, it should indict him so he can have an open and public hearing, Hawash's supporters say. "Then we can defend him, or accept that he had done something wrong," said Zaha Hassan, a Palestinian-American lawyer. "If this could happen to him, it could happen to all of us."

Osama Awadallah, a Jordanian student who was detained as a material witness shortly after Sept. 11, 2001, was subsequently charged with perjury after denying he knew the names of any of the hijackers in the attacks on New York's World Trade Center. Last year, a federal judge threw out the indictment, saying the government's use of the material witness statute was "illegitimate."

eration has issued a manual, "CSIS and Your Rights," which states that CSIS agents don't have the legal right to compel people to answer questions nor to enter and search their home or workplace.

A new bill before the Canadian parliament, Bill C-18, or "The Citizenship of Canada Act," makes it clearer that the main target of Canada's rulers is all working people. Whether born in Canada or elsewhere, individuals charged with "offenses against national security" under C-18 could have their citizenship revoked by the minister of immigration and citizenship. This applies whether one was born in Canada or is a naturalized citizen.

Other laws that Ottawa is trying to enact include Bill C-17, the "Public Safety Act." It would legalize the maintenance of a database recording the names and travel itinerary of all plane passengers in Canada. George Radwanski, Canada's privacy commissioner, has spoken out against such a

collection of personal information, describing C-17 as an invasion of privacy. He condemned the Canadian government as having lost its "moral compass."

In a further move to broaden government spying, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police announced March 23 that it has set up a "toll-free terrorism tip line," where it encourages callers to report "suspicious activities." The government is also considering a national identity card that would include a person's biometric data, such as fingerprints or retina scans.

A vigil demanding Harkat's release and an end to Security Certificates will be held April 26, at 7:30 p.m., at the Human Rights Monument on Elgin and Lisgar in Ottawa, Ontario. For information call Direct Action Casework at (613) 786-1015.

Rosemary Ray is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 175 and works at Maple Leaf Pork.

THE MILITANT

Workers, farmers describe their struggles

From meat packers on strike against Tyson Foods in Wisconsin to Machinists in a walkout against aerospace giant Lockheed Martin in Texas—the 'Militant' brings you the news, including the side of the workers not heard elsewhere.

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Washington, Beijing set talks with N. Korea

BY SAM MANUEL

With the aid of the Chinese government, Washington has accomplished a key objective in its standoff with north Korea. Beijing will host trilateral talks with Washington and Pyongyang regarding charges by the Bush administration that north Korea is developing a secret nuclear arms program. Washington has rebuffed offers by Pyongyang for direct talks between the two governments on the issue.

A senior administration official characterized the upcoming meeting as “exchanging views” rather than “negotiation.” He added that there would be no substantive discussions until the governments of south Korea, Japan, and possibly Russia are involved in subsequent “multilateral” talks, which is Washington’s next objective.

The north Korean government has stated that Washington is responsible for the nuclear crisis on the Korean peninsula. The U.S. military has 37,000 troops stationed in south Korea. Early this year it deployed two dozen heavy bombers to Guam, well within striking range of north Korea. Washington maintains another 48,000 troops in Japan. The nuclear-armed U.S. Seventh Fleet patrols the area waters, the U.S. armed forces regularly conduct military “exercises,” including mock invasions of the north, with the 650,000-strong south Korean army.

Pyongyang denounced Washington’s demand for multilateral negotiations as an attempt to isolate the north. It has cited the declaration by U.S. president George Bush that north Korea is a point in an “axis of evil,” along with Iraq and Iran, as amounting to an invasion threat. Pyongyang’s con-

cerns have been heightened by Washington’s subsequent assault on Iraq and overthrow of the Saddam Hussein regime.

At an April 9 meeting of the UN Security Council, Washington pressed for an official condemnation of north Korea, which would have paved the way for UN-sponsored sanctions against Pyongyang. In face of opposition to such a move by Beijing and Moscow, the council issued a milder statement expressing its “concern” about north Korea’s nuclear program. Calling that action “acceptable,” Washington’s UN ambassador, John Negroponte, also expressed optimism that progress was being made towards holding multilateral talks.

The Bush administration has insisted on multilateral talks as a means to enlist the aid of Beijing, Moscow, and Seoul to apply greater pressure on north Korea to abandon its nuclear program. Underscoring Beijing’s central role in getting Pyongyang to accept a compromise, a senior Bush administration official said the White House decided to agree to the meeting because the Chinese government had taken “such a major role” in setting it up. He added that Beijing’s initiative came after “months of our telling them that they had to do more.”

In reporting on the north Korean government’s decision to participate in the talks, *Minju Joson*, a Pyongyang daily, said that the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) would not be stuck “to any particular dialogue format,” in order to settle the current crisis.

Washington stepped up its actions and threats against the DPRK last October. In the ensuing controversy, the U.S. government halted shipments of oil to north Ko-



Police assault March 29 protest against Seoul’s moves to send troops to Kuwait

rea, an action followed by the governments of Japan and south Korea. The shipments were part of the 1994 Agreed Framework, under which the three governments also promised to assist in the construction of nuclear power reactors in north Korea of the kind that could not reprocess weapons-grade plutonium. In exchange, Pyongyang agreed to freeze its nuclear weapons program.

In response, the north Korean government announced last December that it would restart a small reactor at the Yongbyon nuclear power facility in order to produce badly-needed electricity. Washington claims that the facility can also reprocess enough plutonium to manufacture one nuclear bomb a year.

On the same day as the announcement

of the planned three-way talks, Japan’s defense minister, Shigeru Ishiba, stated that Tokyo was interested in buying the latest-generation Patriot missiles from the United States in order to expand Tokyo’s missile defenses. North Korea has missiles capable of striking any point in Japan within 10 minutes of being launched. In January, Ishiba told the Japanese parliament that Tokyo would be justified in bombing north Korea’s missile sites if it threatened to attack Japan.

UN commission joins anti-Korea chorus

The agreement for the trilateral talks also came as Washington and European Union governments guided a resolution through the UN Human Rights Commission accusing the north Korean government of “widespread and grave violations” of human rights. The resolution urges Pyongyang to give free access to UN “human rights inspectors,” a condition that Washington has set for increasing food aid to the country.

Jong Song Li, north Korea’s representative to the commission meeting, refuted the accusations, calling the resolution “full of fabrications.” This was the first time the United Nations had considered such a resolution against north Korea in that body’s 57-year existence.

The resolution was passed by a vote of 28 to 10. The south Korean government was among those abstaining.

Sentiment continues to grow in south Korea for unification of the peninsula. The country has been divided since the end of the 1950–53 Korean War, during which U.S.-led United Nations forces were pushed back by north Korean troops, backed by China, to a stalemate at the 38th parallel.

Anger at the pervasive U.S. military presence in south Korea exploded in mass protests last fall after two south Korean youths were killed by a U.S. military vehicle.

Seoul dispatched 20 military officers to Kuwait April 17 as an advance team of 650 “noncombat” engineers and medics that will join the U.S.-led occupation forces in Iraq. There were widespread street protests in April when Seoul announced plans for the deployment. According to the Associated Press, a group of antiwar activists protested the officers’ departure at Incheon International Airport.

Swedish rulers debate continued weapons exports to U.S. and UK

BY CATHARINA TIRSE

GOTHENBURG, Sweden—The U.S.- and UK-led war on Iraq has led to a debate among ruling Social Democratic party circles and other political and peace organizations here on weapons exports by Swedish companies to the United States and Britain.

“We take for granted that export of Swedish weapons to the U.S. will be stopped after the statement of the foreign minister,” said Maria Ermanno, president of the Swedish Peace and Arbitration Society March 13, after Swedish foreign minister Anna Lindh criticized Washington’s military buildup against Baghdad.

Swedish companies export substantial quantities of weapons to the United States, amounting to 460 million Swedish kroner in 2002 (U.S.\$55 million), according to government figures.

On March 18, Swedish prime minister Göran Persson distanced his government from Washington’s decision to launch the assault on Iraq. “We think decisions like that should be taken in the United Nations,” he said. “Now the U.S. is breaking international law and we think that is a serious thing.” The Swedish government wanted weapons “inspections,” led by former Swedish foreign minister Hans Blix, to continue.

Swedish law prohibits the export of weapons to countries involved in a war, or to countries embroiled in an international conflict that may lead to war.

So far, not a single member of the Social Democratic government here has favored cutting weapons exports to the United States.

“If we apply our rules strictly, we break all collaboration with the U.S.,” said Leif Pagrotsky, minister of industry, at a meeting of the Social Democratic Party in Uddevalla. “But then we will have to turn the JAS Gripen into a glider.” He was referring to the most modern Swedish military aircraft produced by SAAB in Linköping. The U.S.-based General Electric is providing the engine for the plane. Breaking working relations on weapons production and exports with the United Kingdom would be even more difficult, the minister said. “This is a collaboration among countries who don’t feel comfortable with the lead the U.S. is having.”

“The position of the Swedish government on this question is unacceptable,” said Mikael Damberg, Social Democratic Youth president. “There are no reasons from a defense or security point of view.”

“It is possible that halting exports may lead to Swedish weapons-producing companies and their stockholders losing money in the short run,” said Lars Ångström, member of parliament for the Environmental Party. “But in the long run it will strengthen the democracy in our country.”

“This is a hard question,” Minister of Foreign Affairs Anna Lindh stated, answering a question on this issue by high-school students during a visit here April 7. “But we live in a very unstable world now and we need to export in order to be able to import weapons.”

At its March 26 meeting, the parliament’s Exports Control Committee took this issue up. Eight of the ten members of the committee were against stopping the exports. The body with decisive power over weapons exports, the Inspection of Strategic Products, has not brought the issue to the cabinet for a vote, as is customary on such matters. The Swedish Peace and Arbitration Society has complained to the chancellor of justice that this procedure has violated the law on export of weapons.

After Washington toppled the Saddam Hussein regime April 9, Prime Minister Persson congratulated the Iraqi people for the “victory.”

“It is wonderful,” he said. “No one would want this war to go on a day longer.”

Since the launching of UN weapons “inspections” in Iraq, representatives of the Swedish ruling class have played a prominent role. They first assigned social democrat Rolf Ekeus, and later former foreign minister and member of the liberal Peoples’ Party Hans Blix, to lead the “inspection” teams. Maintaining this regime was part of protecting Stockholm’s growing trade and investments in Iraq during the last 12 years of the country’s devastation by UN-authorized sanctions and bombardments by U.S. and British fighter jets in the so-called “no fly zones.”

On April 7, a few days before the Moscow meeting of the heads of state of Russia, Germany, and France, French foreign minister Dominique de Villepin had requested a meeting with his Swedish col-

league Lindh. Flying to the small city airport Sæve in Gothenburg, the ministers met for about an hour to discuss the reconstruction of Iraq after the war.

Swedish exports to Iraq had grown in recent years to Swedish Kroner 550 million annually (U.S. \$66 million), mainly from companies like ABB, Ericsson, Scania, and Volvo. Now the owners of these capitalist monopolies are worried about what will happen to their business in Iraq as Washington consolidates a protectorate there.

“With Washington pushing the United Nations to the sidelines, Swedish imperialism has lost its main tool,” said the Communist League in Sweden in a March 22 statement. “To working people and youth in Sweden it doesn’t matter—the war is imperialist regardless of under whose name it is being carried out. It is the position of the Communist League that working people need to denounce the Swedish rulers’ profiteering and plunder of Iraq over the last 12 years behind the mask of UN ‘inspections,’ as much as the imperialist assault and occupation of Iraq.”

U.S. pensions lose \$340 billion

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

U.S. corporate pension plans invested in the stock market lost nearly a quarter of their value over the last three years. The 100 largest retirement plans fell to a \$157 billion deficit in 2002 from a \$183 billion surplus two years earlier. The pension plans of auto manufacturers have taken the biggest hit.

A Milliman USA review of these 100 plans states that 87 of these companies recorded a deficit in their retirement accounts, compared with 60 in 2001 and 20 in 2000.

The steady decline in the stock market, along with falling interest rates has created “the perfect storm” for sinking the monetary value of such schemes, said John Ehrhardt, one of the study’s authors. During the 1990s, big business used employee pension funds to make a killing in the stock market, boosting company profits. The decline in the stock market has had the opposite effect.

The pension plan of General Motors—

the largest in the country—racked up total losses of \$25 billion in the past two years. The plans of GM and rival auto giant Ford are in the red to a total of \$40 billion. IBM’s retirement funds are in a similar state.

The 100 biggest companies moved \$34 billion into their pension accounts last year, more than triple the \$9 billion paid out in 2001, to keep them solvent. The business report expects this trend to continue into 2003.

U.S. retirement plans for private companies, public employees, and endowments together lost \$1 trillion over the last three years as a result of gambling on Wall Street, a decline of more than 15 percent.

Despite all this, the Milliman USA study claims the pension plans themselves remain “healthy.” The April 17 *Financial Times*, however, notes that Standard & Poor’s has placed 12 of the largest U.S. corporations on “negative credit watch” because of the billions of dollars of pension fund losses.

U.S. gov't threatens new sanctions on Cuba

Continued from front page

step in the escalation since last summer of U.S. government provocations, including the use of U.S. diplomatic personnel to funnel resources to individuals inside the Caribbean nation with the aim of undermining the Cuban Revolution, and de facto encouragement of a recent string of hijackings of Cuban planes and boats.

"Administration officials said they were preparing a variety of options for the president, and no final decisions have been made," said an article in the April 17 *New York Times*, where the threatened measures were first reported. "The harshest sanctions involve restricting or eliminating the transfer of cash payments, called remittances, to friends and relatives on the island.... Also being considered is a move to limit the number of Americans who travel to Cuba by ending direct charter flights between the countries. Thousands of travelers—mostly Cuban-Americans visiting family—board charter flights each month from Miami, New York, and other cities."

U.S. president George Bush is likely to make a public statement soon about these measures, the *Times* article said. The same information was reported shortly afterward by the Associated Press and other big-business media.

The United Nations Human Rights Commission, meeting in Geneva, passed a U.S.-promoted resolution April 17 calling on the Cuban government to allow a UN "monitor" to visit the island to investigate and report on Havana's handling of human rights. The document—presented by the governments of Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Peru, and Uruguay, and cosponsored by Washington—was similar to a resolution adopted last year. It was approved by 24 votes in favor, 20 against, and 9 abstentions. At the same time, in a 31-15 vote the commission rejected a U.S.-orchestrated amendment expressing "deep concern" about the "recent detention, summary prosecution and harsh sentencing of numerous members of the political opposition," and demanding that Cuba release them immediately. The defeated amendment was proposed by the government of Costa Rica.

During an April 17 press conference, Cuban foreign minister Felipe Pérez Roque

called the failure of the amendment a victory for Cuba.

He also criticized an April 14 statement by European Union foreign ministers who condemned the recent arrests and trials, and warned that Havana's actions could hurt its economic relations with the EU. Cuba's largest trade and investment ties are with countries in the European Union. The Cuban foreign minister said Havana is now considering withdrawal of a request it made in January to join the Cotonou Agreement, an EU-sponsored trade accord with its former colonies.

At the same time, Pérez Roque said his government will not allow a visit by a UN "human rights monitor." The Cuban government criticized the four Latin American sponsors of the resolution making this request. A Cuban official described these four governments as "repugnant lackeys" of Washington at the UN commission meeting in Geneva, according to the Associated Press. On April 18, the government of Peru issued a formal protest against this remark and recalled its ambassador to Cuba for consultation.

Arrests and trials of 75

In the last half of March, Cuban authorities arrested 75 opponents of the Cuban Revolution in Havana and other cities. At an April 9 press conference, Pérez Roque said the first 32 were arrested March 18 after having been involved in three meetings between December and March with U.S. diplomatic personnel at the U.S. Interests Section offices in Havana or at the residence of James Cason, chief of the U.S. diplomatic mission there.

The two governments have not had diplomatic relations since Washington broke them off in January 1961 in response to the victory of the 1959 revolution that brought down the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista through a popular insurrection and established a government defending the interests of Cuban workers and farmers, not the property interests of local capitalists and landlords or the U.S. ruling families. Each government's diplomatic personnel operates out of an Interests Section, hosted formally by a third country's embassy.

Pérez Roque stated that Cuban authorities indicted the 75 on criminal charges brought by government prosecutors for violations of the Cuban Penal Code and Law 88, known as the Act for the Protection of the National Independence and the Economy of Cuba.

Cuba's National Assembly adopted this law in 1999 to counter efforts by Washington to implement the so-called Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act, also known as Helms-Burton law after its initial congressional sponsors.

Both houses of the U.S. Congress approved the Helms-Burton act March 5-6, 1996, with large bipartisan majorities, and former president William Clinton signed it into law a week later. It codified all executive orders pertinent to the U.S. trade embargo against Cuba and required that U.S. sanctions remain in place until a "transitional government" approved by Washington is established in Cuba. Its passage registered a significant escalation of Washington's economic war on the Cuban people at the time, and a simultaneous trade offensive by the U.S. rulers against their imperialist allies, especially in Europe and Canada, who have growing investments in Cuba.

Pérez Roque said the prosecution charged those arrested with violations of Article 91 of the Cuban Penal Code, which states that whoever "executes an action in the interest of a foreign state with the purpose of harming the independence of the Cuban state or the integrity of its territory shall incur a sentence of 10 to 20 years of denial of liberty or death."

Prosecutors also cited violations of three articles of Law 88, Pérez Roque said. The first of these articles stipulates prison terms for whoever "seeks information to be used in the application of the Helms-Burton Act, the blockade, and the economic war on our people, aimed at disrupting internal order, destabilizing the country and liquidating the socialist state and the independence of Cuba." The other articles provide for charges against any individual who "gathers, reproduces, [or] disseminates subversive material from the government of the United States of America, its agencies, rep-



Some 660 men Washington has labeled "enemy combatants," including under-16-year-olds, are jailed indefinitely, without charges or rights, at Camp X-ray (above), a high-security torture facility in Guantánamo, Cuba, on land occupied by the U.S. Navy for decades against the will of the Cuban people.

resentative bodies, officials or any foreign entity to support the objectives of the Helms-Burton Act," or who "collaborates by any means with foreign radio or television stations, newspapers, magazines or any such media" to aid Washington in reaching the objectives of the "Liberty" act.

Pérez Roque did not detail the charges against each of the 75 individuals. The text of his April 9 press conference, which has been published in tabloid format and widely circulated in Cuba, is the main official explanation provided by the Cuban government so far on these cases. Rogelio Polanco, editor of *Juventud Rebelde*, the daily newspaper of the Union of Young Communists in Cuba, in an April 21 telephone interview from Havana told the *Militant* that the Cuban courts have not made public up to this point the exact charges on which the accused were convicted. He confirmed that charges varied for each of the 75.

Twenty-nine trials were conducted April 3-7, during which the 75 were convicted and sentenced from 6 to 28 years in jail.

At the April 9 press conference, Pérez Roque said "the oral hearings were open to the public," and that "nearly 3,000 people in all attended the proceedings," mostly family members of the accused and witnesses. The courts did not open the trials to the press, Pérez Roque stated. Answering charges in the big-business media that the trials violated the basic rights of the accused, Pérez Roque stated that all defendants and their attorneys had access to the charges against them prior to the trials; all had the right to legal counsel, and that 44 of the defense attorneys were appointed by their families; all have a right to appeal their convictions up to the country's Supreme Court; and none have been subjected to solitary confinement or physical or other coercion.

The Cuban foreign minister described some of the evidence presented to the courts, on which the convictions were based.

Some of the evidence made public

The evidence included receipts and bills used to show that at least five of the defendants named by Pérez Roque had received funds from U.S. diplomats or officials of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) ranging from \$30 to Iván Hernández Carrillo to more than \$7,000 to Oscar Espinoza Chepe.

One of the defendants, Osvaldo Alfonso Valdés, a member of a group called Todos Unidos (All United), reportedly testified, "We know that the resources we receive for our work come from funds approved by the government of that country. I recall an occasion, a meeting with an official from USAID, in his office, when he had come to verify if the resources from the office had reached us. At that time a number of alternative channels were being studied for getting these resources to us... be-

cause it would mean obviously demonstrating that we were supported by the Interests Section, something we denied. Some proposed that the money be sent through representatives abroad, so as not to give evidence of the direct link between the U.S. government and the opposition." Valdés said that Vicky Huddleston, former chief of the U.S. Interests Section, took part in that meeting. A videotape of this testimony was shown to reporters at the April 9 press conference in Havana.

USAID is one of the institutions described in the Helms-Burton law as responsible for channeling financial and other material aid to antigovernment "human rights" activists and others in Cuba. According to the Associated Press, it has paid some \$20 million to U.S.-based groups working to overthrow the Cuban government.

Testimony against the defendants also came from a number of Cuban state security agents who had infiltrated the counterrevolutionary groups working with U.S. government officials. Several of these agents reportedly had gained enough trust from U.S. diplomatic personnel that they had received open passes to enter the U.S. Interests Section in Havana and could use the computers and other equipment of the diplomatic personnel whenever they wished. Videotaped testimony from these agents was presented to journalists at the April 9 press conference. Néstor Baguer, one of the undercover agents, told the court that he had become head of the so-called Cuban Independent Press Association. Another agent, Odilia Collazo, had become president of the Human Rights Party in Cuba. Collazo said that she and other members of this antigovernment group received assignments from officials of the U.S. Interests Section. These included sending reports to the U.S. State Department, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and other organizations on alleged human rights violations in Cuba.

Referring to these undercover operations, Pérez Roque told reporters that James Cason and his superiors in Washington should know "that we have only revealed a small part of what we know."

Among the U.S. groups that channeled funds to some of the defendants is the American Center for International Labor Solidarity, a U.S.-government financed organization whose aim is to "persuade foreign investors not to invest in Cuba," Pérez Roque stated.

Other evidence presented in the trials that substantiated the charges, according to Pérez Roque, was proof that a number of the defendants distributed a magazine called *Revista de Cuba*, which, he said, was printed at facilities of the U.S. Interests Section in Havana. Others among the accused, Pérez Roque stated, distributed another magazine, *El Disidente*, published in

Continued on Page 11

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

MINNESOTA

St. Paul

U.S. provocations against Cuba: What's behind the growing tensions? A benefit for the Militant Fund. Speaker: Elizabeth Stone, editor, *Women and the Cuban Revolution*; Socialist Workers Party. Sun., May 4. Program 2:00 p.m. Lunch 1:00p.m. 113 Bernard St. West St. Paul. (651) 644-6325.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

Defend Affirmative Action Speakers: Vinay Harpalani, BAMN, John Crysedale, Young Socialists Fri., April 25. 7:00 p.m. 5237 N. 5th St., (215) 324-7020.

Pittsburgh

Defend Revolutionary Cuba against U.S. Threats! Speakers: Tony Lane, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., May 2. 7:30 p.m. 5907 Penn. Ave. #225, East Liberty. (412) 365-1090.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Oppose the Imperialist War Makers! Fight for a Socialist Future! A Benefit for the Militant Fund and celebration of launching of Washington, D.C. Bureau of the Militant. Speakers: Argiris Malapanis, editor of the *Militant* and Sam Manuel, *Militant* Washington Bureau Chief. Sat., May 3. 7:30 p.m. Dinner 6:30 p.m. 3437 14th St. NW. Donation: Dinner \$5 Program \$5. (202) 387-1590.

ONTARIO

Toronto

Working class resistance and the fight against imperialism and its wars. Fund-raising program for the Militant. Speaker: Patricia O'Beirne, Communist League Candidate for Toronto Mayor. Sat., May 3. Program. 4:00p.m. Dinner 6:30p.m. 2761 Dundas St., West Toronto. Donation \$10. (416) 767-3705.

Coal miners, meat packers appreciate the 'Militant'

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

"I'm glad to see you back," said a miner in Elko, Nevada, to *Militant* supporters on April 19. He had met supporters of the paper in the past at the same venue—the parking lots for workers in gold mines at Elko and Carlin.

"These towns are gold mining centers," said Alice Kincaid, who joined a team that took the socialist newspaper to workers in the area, as part of efforts in the eight-week international subscription drive that began on April 5. At the end of March miners in the area waged a two-day strike, putting up informational pickets to get out the truth about their contract fight with the company.

"More than 900 miners work at the Carlin operation of Newmont Mining Corporation, the largest gold mining company in the world," Kincaid said. Some 550 are members of Operating Engineers Local 3. Unionists told team members, who hailed from Utah and San Francisco, that "Newmont wants to eliminate seniority, while the workers are determined to defend it," she said. "One of them said, 'In the last several contracts Newmont has taken a lot away. Now that the price of gold is up, we want some of it back.'"

"While many miners did not agree with the *Militant's* call for the withdrawal of U.S. and British forces from Iraq," said Kincaid, they "listened closely as we explained that the war was carried out for the same reasons as the rulers

attack workers in this country."

One miner from Mexico bought an introductory *Militant* subscription and a copy of *New International* no. 7, entitled "Washington's Assault on Iraq: Opening Guns of World War III," which was published shortly after Washington's first war against Iraq a dozen years ago.

The Nevada team is one of a number of special road trips planned as part of the drive.

Team will focus on sales to meat packers

Participants in a trip to sell the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* in the Midwest will hit the highway in late April, said Joel Britton from Chicago. "The team will have a special focus on selling at meatpacking plants," he said. "We expect that workers will want to read the *Militant* reports of the strike by meat packers at Tyson Foods in Jefferson, Wisconsin." Some 470 members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 538, rejecting the company's "Ten Commandments" of takeback demands, walked out of the plant on February 28.

"Team members plan to join strikers and supporters in Jefferson on Saturday, April 26," said Britton. Hundreds are expected to turn out that

day for a rally organized by the strikers to reach out for support. "From there the team will go to cities in Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, and Minnesota," he said. They will circulate the socialist press in areas where packing contracts are expiring this month or soon afterwards. "Wherever possible, the team will also set up literature tables on college campuses," Britton said.

Campaigners in Sydney, Australia, have also taken the campaign outside city limits. Bob Aiken told the *Militant* on April 21 that they made a "day trip to the Hunter Valley coal fields north of the city to meet miners who had been on strike earlier this year.

"The drive has gotten off to a good start here," Aiken said. "Co-workers on the docks and at a meatpacking plant have bought two subscriptions. Four more were sold at a protest against



Militant/Mike Tucker

Supporters of the *Militant* sell the socialist press in Christchurch, New Zealand, at March 15 antiwar demonstration.

the U.S.-led assault on Iraq." Australian troops participated in the attack. Protesters also bought an issue of *New International* and a copy of *Capitalism's World Disorder* by Jack Barnes. Both publications are part of the international goals.

Thanks to these efforts, supporters in Australia are among the leaders in this week's chart. Overall, sales of the *Militant* are close to being on track, but more attention needs to be given to setting a brisker pace in sales of *Perspectiva Mundial*, *New International*, and *Capitalism's World Disorder*.

The last word goes to a reader in Montreal, Canada. Carlos Cornejo reported that a leader of a group of Algerian immigrants involved in an antideportation fight bought a copy of the French-language edition of "The Opening Guns of World War III" on April 18. "Here is what I was looking for to better understand the situation in Iraq," he said, as he bought the issue of *Nouvelle Internationale*.

Big push needed to meet fund goal

BY PAUL PEDERSON

Two-thirds of the way through the nine-week international campaign to raise \$85,000 toward the costs of producing the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, substantial ground remains to be covered. With three weeks to go, almost three-quarters of the pledged funds are still to be collected.

Supporters of the fund around the country have been holding fund-raising meetings. Events are planned in a number of cities in the coming weeks.

The fund in Seattle received a big boost when more than 50 people, including 12 from Vancouver, Canada, attended an April 19 meeting on the Iranian revolution and its impact on politics today. Ma'mud Shirvani, the Farsi-language editor of Pathfinder Press, was the featured speaker. Supporters collected \$3,700 and raised \$1,600 in new pledges after Young Socialists member Camilo Catalan spoke on the importance of the fund.

Discussing the U.S.-led assault on Iraq, Shirvani said that the truth about the war's imperialist and anti-working-class character "is being revealed through the contest over the spoils of war." He noted that Stevedoring Services of America, a Seattle-based firm that led the attacks on the West Coast dock workers during their contract fight earlier this year, has been awarded the contract to run the Umm Qasr port in southern Iraq.

Steve, a participant who is from a coal mining family in northeastern Pennsylvania, told the *Militant* that Shirvani's talk "helped me to figure out what is going on in the world today."

Two people attending their first such meeting signed up for subscriptions to the paper. A number of titles from Pathfinder were also sold.

"It is good to know what is really going on," said Ann Buzaid. Before the meeting she bought a *Militant* subscription along with a copy of *New International* no. 7, entitled "Opening Guns of World War III." Afterwards she returned to the literature table to pick up *Cosmetics, Fashions and the Exploitation of Women* by Joseph Hansen, Evelyn Reed, and Mary-Alice Waters. Shirvani had displayed the new Farsi-language edition during his presentation.

Those wishing to contribute to the fund should send checks or money orders made out to the *Militant* and earmarked Fund Drive to 152 W. 36th St. #401, New York, NY 10018.

David Ferguson from Seattle contributed to this article.

Militant/Perspectiva Mundial Subscription Drive April 5–June 1: Week 2 of 8							
Country	Militant			PM		Book	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
AUSTRALIA	30	14	47%	5	0	12	4
CANADA							
Vancouver	35	13	37%	5	0	15	5
Toronto	30	5	17%	5	1	25	1
Montreal	12	1	8%	4	1	15	2
CANADA total	77	19	22%	14	2	55	8
ICELAND	15	3	20%	1	0	8	1
NEW ZEALAND							
Christchurch	16	3	19%	1	0	4	0
Auckland	20	5	25%	1	0	5	0
N.Z. total	36	8	22%	2	0	9	0
SWEDEN							
Stockholm	10	0	0%	2	0	4	0
Gothenburg	12	0	0%	2	0	8	0
SWEDEN Total	22	0	0%	4	0	12	0
UNITED KINGDOM							
London	40	9	23%	15	1	25	2
Cent. Scotland	12	1	8%	1	0	8	0
UK total	52	10	19%	16	1	33	2
UNITED STATES							
Des Moines	25	15	60%	12	3	12	1
Omaha	17	10	59%	31	6	17	7
San Francisco	35	14	40%	15	1	25	2
Tucson	10	4	40%	2	1	6	0
Atlanta	35	13	37%	15	7	25	3
Newark	55	17	31%	20	8	30	6
NE Pennsylvania	20	6	30%	6	0	10	6
Cleveland	20	6	30%	8	1	18	2
Detroit	25	7	28%	8	0	12	1
Twin Cities	45	12	27%	35	17	25	1
Seattle	30	8	27%	8	1	20	0
Houston	25	6	24%	10	0	25	0
Washington	25	6	24%	12	0	15	3
Tampa	25	5	20%	10	5	15	2
Utah	10	2	20%	5	0	10	2
Chicago	40	8	20%	25	7	25	0
New York	100	17	17%	40	13	60	0
Boston	35	5	14%	15	0	25	0
Philadelphia	30	4	13%	7	2	10	0
Miami	32	4	13%	10	0	25	3
Charlotte	20	2	10%	8	1	16	0
Birmingham	20	2	10%	5	1	10	0
Pittsburgh	30	3	10%	3	0	0	1
Los Angeles	45	0	0%	20	0	20	0
Western Colorado	18	0	0%	12	7	10	3
U.S. total	772	176	23%	342	81	466	43
Int'l totals	1004	216	22%	384	84	595	58
Goal/Should be	1000	250	25%	375	94	600	150
IN THE UNIONS							
	Militant			PM		Book	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold
AUSTRALIA							
AMIEU	4	2	50%			2	0
MUA	4	1	25%			2	0
Total	8	3	38%			4	0
CANADA							
UFCW	9	2	22%	2	0	9	0
UNITE	4	0	0%	5	0	6	0
Total	13	2	15%	7	0	15	0
ICELAND							
Efling	1	0	0%			1	0
NEW ZEALAND							
MWU	2	0	0%			1	0
NDU	2	0	0%			1	0
Total	4	0	0%			2	0
UNITED STATES							
UFCW	50	10	20%	75	16	40	5
UMWA	15	0	0%	4	0	10	0
UNITE	25	5	20%	20	2	20	2
Total	90	15	17%	99	18	70	7

AMIEU—Australasian Meat Industry Employees' Union; MUA—Maritime Union of Australia; MWU—Meat Workers Union; NDU—National Distribution Union; UFCW—United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA—United Mine Workers of America; UNITE—Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees.

\$85,000 Militant Fund March 10–May 12: Week 6 of 9			
	Goal	Paid	%
Utah	800	480	60%
Charlotte NC	3,000	1,740	58%
Boston MA	2,800	1,615	58%
New York NY	7,500	4,173	56%
Tucson AZ	250	100	40%
Washington DC	2,200	875	40%
Atlanta GA	4,100	1,630	40%
Des Moines IA	900	355	39%
Northeast PA	1,600	605	38%
Los Angeles CA	7,500	2,710	36%
Philadelphia PA	3,000	1,075	36%
Omaha NE	900	269	30%
Birmingham AL	2,500	580	23%
San Francisco CA	7,000	1,585	23%
Twin Cities MN	4,300	950	22%
Newark NJ	3,800	800	21%
Detroit MI	3,000	600	20%
Miami FL	1,600	280	18%
Chicago IL	4,200	709	17%
Cleveland OH	1,100	140	13%
Houston TX	3,200	375	12%
Seattle WA	6,000	30	1%
Pittsburgh PA	3,000	0	0%
Tampa FL	1,800	0	0%
Western CO	2,500	0	0%
Other	0	306	
U.S. Total	78,550	21,982	28%
France	300	150	50%
New Zealand	1,500	748	50%
Iceland	150	50	33%
United Kingdom	500	10	2%
Australia	1,000	0	0%
Canada	3,460	0	0%
Sweden	400	0	0%
International total	85,860	22,940	27%
Int'l goal/Should be	85,000	56,100	66%

Washington imposes occupation regime

Continued from Front page

1991 and established ties with the leaderships of the major Kurdish organizations. In a visit to Kurdish areas on April 22, he was welcomed by Jalal Talabani, the leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan.

Garner received a more muted reception in Baghdad, however. Disappointed U.S. officials had hoped that "the new civilian administrator, whom many see as a modern-day viceroy, would be greeted with obvious warmth," reported the *New York Times*.

No crowds gathered to welcome the general. Instead, 2,000 members of the Shiite community rallied in the central square, holding banners that read, "no to colonialism." Over the past couple of weeks protests have been organized in several cities demanding U.S. and British withdrawal. They have occurred amid wider social unrest fueled by anger at shortages of food and power, and at the human toll of the imperialist assault.

U.S. commanders have moved to reconfigure their forces for a long-term stay. Aircraft carriers and Stealth bombers have been deployed elsewhere and Patriot Missile batteries in Israel have been packed up, but the occupation force on the ground has been fortified rather than weakened.

The 20,000 Marines in Baghdad are moving south, replaced in the capital by Army units, which have heavier armor. Some 120,000 U.S. ground troops are now stationed on Iraqi soil, backed up by British forces in the south.

In preparation for a longer-term occupation, the U.S. State Department has begun recruiting some 1,000 U.S. cops to "advise and train an Iraqi police force," said department spokeswoman Julie Shinnick. Information Radio, a new radio station established by the occupation forces, has announced an 11:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. curfew in Baghdad.

Casualty figures

"I, for one, think that Operation Iraqi Freedom demonstrates a new American way of war," exulted Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Myers was referring to the relatively low casualty count that marked the offensive. The U.S. Central Command lists a total to date of 125 U.S. soldiers dead and three missing, along with 31 British deaths—about half the total "allied" casualties during the Gulf War.

The Iraqi dead are uncounted but far more numerous, especially among troops hit by the relentless bombing attacks. Many "were buried in unmarked graves while others are still covered by piles of rubble," reported the Associated Press.

After revelations that dozens of civilians had been mowed down and hundreds wounded in U.S. bombing attacks on Al-Hillah, a city some 60 miles southwest of Baghdad, the U.S. command acknowledged for the first time that its bombers were spraying cluster bombs onto their targets.

Cluster bombs' power to wound and kill gives them "a very bad reputation" said Colin King, a researcher for Jane's Defense Weekly. Since a high proportion of the

bomblets do not explode immediately, "Iraqi civilians will be paying the price with their lives and limbs for many years," said Steve Goose of Human Rights Watch.

Anger over civilian casualties has helped draw thousands to demonstrations in several cities.

Opposition has also found expression through other channels. Reporters have noted the widespread opposition to military occupation among the hundreds of thousands of Shiites who have joined a pilgrimage to the city of Karbala. The observance, which has traditionally become a forum for political debate and protest, had been banned by the Saddam Hussein government, which had persecuted the Shiite Muslim majority.

"The Americans are not our enemy, but they are not our friend," a 29-year-old man told journalists. "We want an Islamic state and we need to see that the Americans intend to leave our country."

In Kut, a city 100 miles southeast of Baghdad, Shiite Muslim cleric Sayed Abbas has pronounced himself mayor and called for resistance to the U.S. "dividers." Abbas is a local leader of the Iran-linked Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq. U.S. Special Forces in Kut "say they considered killing Mr. Abbas but have since thought better of it," reported the *New York Times* April 19. "He remains a concern to us," said one officer.

In the largest demonstration in Baghdad to date, thousands of Iraqi working people from both the Shiite and Sunni factions of the Muslim religion gathered at Baghdad's Abu Hanafi Mosque on April 18. The Sunni center was hung with a banner reading, "No to America...no to sectarianism, one Islamic state."

'We know why they are here'

"The United States is the enemy of mankind, we all know why they are here," cleric Ahmed al-Kubeisy told the crowd. The cleric was referring to the country's oil wealth. After hearing speeches, the crowd formed a demonstration in the city streets.

Muhammad Zobeidi, who has proclaimed himself governor of Baghdad with the backing of U.S. forces, said on the same day that "I invite all U.S. companies to come here to work in Baghdad and make business in this country." Iraq is "the first country in oil," he claimed.

Despite Zobeidi's claims to have established "an executive committee to run Baghdad," reporters say that basic services, including hospitals, public transport, and garbage collection, are being organized out of the mosques. This is especially true in poorer neighborhoods, observers say.

Zobeidi spoke at an April 18 news conference for the Iraq National Congress (INC), an exile opposition group that has received millions of dollars in U.S. government funding, and its leader Ahmed Chalabi. The INC boasts a militia numbering hundreds of fighters, trained by U.S. officers in Hungary and Iraq. Chalabi's headquarters in Baghdad's richest neighborhood is guarded by U.S. Special Forces equipped with Bradley fighting vehicles.



Rally in Baghdad April 18 opposes U.S. occupation, one of a number of such protests.

Chalabi left Iraq in 1958, after the revolution that brought down the imperialist-backed monarchy. His reputation has been further sullied by accusations of involvement in the theft of hundreds of millions of dollars from a Jordanian bank. The money's disappearance more than a decade ago bankrupted many small investors.

Meanwhile, the Pentagon has so far failed to turn up any stores of chemical or biological weapons in Iraq, undercutting a central pretext for the war.

"Ferretting it out is going to take some time," said one U.S. defense official, announcing that 1,000 "experts" will embark on a renewed hunt.

White House officials have also accused Syria of stockpiling chemical weapons, and of providing refuge for Iraqi Baathist Party officials fleeing the invasion. With statements by the Syrian government that it has sealed its border and that Iraqis without visas would be turned away, U.S. president George Bush declared April 20 that "they're getting the message."

"I'm confident the Syrian government has heard us and I believe it when they say they want to cooperate with us," he said.

Four days earlier, Iranian president Mohammad Khatami had said that "we will defend Syria but it doesn't mean we will engage in military confrontation." Khatami also stated that his government would not "recognize any administration other than an all-Iraqi government."

"We are not seeking tensions or confrontation with anybody," said the Iranian leader. Washington, which has carried out a campaign of aggression against Iran since the 1979 revolution that toppled the U.S.-backed shah, has accused Tehran of seeking to develop nuclear weapons.

On April 17 the *New York Times* reported that U.S. planes had bombed the bases of the Mujahedeen Khalq, an Iranian opposition group in northern Iraq. Benefiting from its ties to Baghdad, the Mujahedeen has built a force of thousands of fighters equipped with tanks and artillery, and has carried out many cross-border attacks on Iran.

As the imperialist military was scaled down, the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance that Garner heads took a number of steps to restore production in the Iraqi oil industry well before his arrival and triumphal tour. U.S. officers have been meeting regularly with Iraqi oil administrators "to discuss the logistics of restarting refineries and power plants," reported the *Wall Street Journal* on April 22. The big-business daily added, "U.S. military commanders likely will be making—or postponing—all high-level oil-related decisions for the time being."

Washington's moves to restart the open-market trade in Iraqi oil, and its domination of the postwar occupation, have ratcheted up tensions with Paris and other imperialist rivals.

A proposal by U.S. president George Bush for the UN Security Council to be-

gin lifting economic sanctions on Iraq has proved controversial. The end result of the proposal would be for the country's oil to be traded on the open market.

Paris initially opposed the move outright. On April 22 UN ambassador Jean-Marc de la Sabliere changed tack, saying: "We could suspend the sanctions and adjust the oil for food program with an idea of its phasing out." Sanctions should be lifted only if Iraq is given the all-clear by UN weapons inspectors, he said.

French capitalists were among the largest beneficiaries of contracts with Baghdad under the oil for food program—the name for the sanctions as modified in 1996.

Opponents of the war and occupation have also included the German government. On April 19 Chancellor Gerhard Schröder said, "I deeply regret there were exaggerated comments" against Washington's course, including "from cabinet members of my previous government."

Despite such conciliatory talk, however, Washington has shown no sign of breaking the U.S. firms' monopoly on major "reconstruction" contracts. "The idea that we would throw contracts to the French or the Russians to get them to go along—I mean, come on," said one official.

The U.S. Agency for International Development has awarded the first major deal for construction work to Bechtel, the giant San Francisco-based company. The prime contracts for work on the country's infrastructure, transportation, telecommunications, electricity, and food industries will go "to American companies," reported the *Wall Street Journal*, a fact that has "provoked bitterness overseas."

Racing to sell U.S. wheat

Potential losers include imperialist powers that lined up alongside Washington in the recent war. The *Journal* noted that the Bush administration is "racing to get Iraqis eating U.S. wheat again" after losing domination of the country's market to Australian producers in the 1990s.

There is no hint that other powers will get any representation in the government now being rapidly assembled in Iraq. Serving alongside Garner will be John Abizaid, an Arabic-speaking lieutenant general in the U.S. armed forces. Central Command head Gen. Thomas Franks will remain in overall military charge.

The Pentagon has announced plans to divide Iraq into three sectors—north, center and south—which are in their majority Kurdish, Sunni, and Shiite, respectively.

These developments have sparked discussion among cadets at New York's West Point officers' academy. "I might have to go over there and basically be mayor of a town," said 22-year-old Mary Tobin. "That is a mission I never imagined."

"How long until the 'Yankee go home!' signs come out? How long until the liberated attack the liberators?" asked Andrew Salmo, 21.

from Pathfinder

Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism

V.I. Lenin

"I trust that this pamphlet will help the reader to understand the fundamental economic question, that of the economic essence of imperialism," Lenin wrote in 1917. "For unless this is studied, it will be impossible to understand and appraise modern war and modern politics." Also available in Spanish \$10.00

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Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin on imperialist war

Printed below are excerpts from “Lenin and imperialist war,” an article by Leon Trotsky written in Mexico in December 1938. The article appears in *Writings of Leon Trotsky [1938–39]*, published by Pathfinder Press. It originally appeared in the February 1939 issue of the *Bulletin of the Opposition*.

The *Militant* is printing these excerpts in response to questions by readers on revolutionists’ stance toward imperialist wars, including the U.S.-led assault on Iraq. Trotsky draws on the writings of V.I. Lenin—the central leader of the Bolshevik Party, which led workers and peasants to take power in the 1917 Russian Revolution. The quotes in the article are from Lenin’s writings.

Trotsky was a leader of the Russian Revolution and the Bolshevik Party. From the mid-1920s, following Lenin’s death, he led the opposition to the bureaucratic counterrevolution in the Soviet Union personified by Joseph Stalin. Trotsky played a leading part in the international fight to restore continuity with Lenin’s political course and the program for world revolution developed by the Communist International under Lenin’s guidance—the program that to this day continues to underlie the work of communists in every country—until his murder by one of Stalin’s thugs in Mexico in 1940. In September 1938 he joined other revolutionaries in founding the Fourth International. Copyright © 1969, 1974 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.



BY LEON TROTSKY

With the outbreak of the war in August 1914 the first question which arose was this: Should the socialists of imperialist countries assume the “defense of the fatherland”? The issue was not whether or not individual socialists should fulfill the obligations of soldiers—there was no other alternative; desertion is not a revolutionary policy. The issue was: Should socialist parties support the war politically? vote for the war budget? renounce the struggle against the government and agitate for the “defense of the fatherland”? Lenin’s answer was: No! the party must not do so, it has no right to do so, not because war is involved but because this is a reactionary war, because this is a dog fight between the slave owners for the redivision of the world.

The formation of national states on the European continent occupied an entire epoch which began approximately with the Great French Revolution and concluded with the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–71.

During these dramatic decades the wars were predominantly of a national character. War waged for the creation or defense of national states necessary for the development of productive forces and of culture possessed during this period a profoundly progressive historical character. Revolutionists not only could but were obliged to support national wars politically.

Imperialist wars to divide world

From 1871 to 1914 European capitalism, on the foundation of national states, not only flowered but outlived itself by becoming transformed into monopoly or imperialist capitalism. “Imperialism is that stage of capitalism when the latter, after fulfilling everything in its power, begins to decline.” The cause for decline lies in this, that the productive forces are fettered by the framework of private property as well as by the boundaries of the national state. Imperialism seeks to divide and redivide the world. In place of national wars there come imperialist wars. They are utterly reactionary in character and are an expression of the impasse, stagnation, and decay of monopoly capital.

The world, however, still remains very heterogeneous. The coercive imperialism of advanced nations is able to exist only because backward nations, oppressed nationalities, colonial and semicolonial countries, remain on our planet. The struggle of the oppressed peoples for... national independence is doubly progressive because, on the one side, this prepares more favorable conditions for their own development, while, on the other side, this deals blows to imperialism. That, in particular, is the reason why, in the struggle between a civilized, imperialist, democratic republic and a backward, barbaric monarchy in a colonial country, the socialists are completely on the side of the oppressed country notwithstanding its monarchy and against the oppressor country notwithstanding its “democracy.”

Imperialism camouflages its own peculiar aims—seizure of colonies, markets, sources of raw material, spheres of influence—with such ideas as “safeguarding peace against the aggressors,” “defense of the fatherland,” “defense of democracy,” etc. These ideas are false through and through. It is the duty of every socialist not to support them but, on the contrary, to unmask them before the people...

The objective historical meaning of the war is of decisive importance for the proletariat: What class is conducting it? and for the sake of what? This is decisive, and not the subterfuges of diplomacy by means of which the enemy can always be successfully portrayed to the people as an aggressor. A political superstructure of one kind or another cannot change the reactionary economic foundation of imperialism. On the contrary, it is the foundation that subordinates the superstructure to itself. “In our day...it is silly even to think of a progressive bourgeoisie, a progressive bourgeois movement. All bourgeois ‘democracy’...has become reactionary.” This appraisal of imperialist “democracy” constitutes the cornerstone of the entire Leninist conception...

In the very first days of September 1914, Lenin was already characterizing the content of the war for each of the imperialist countries and for all the groupings as follows: “The struggle



Above: workers and peasants march for peace in Russia, December 1917. The Bolshevik-led Soviet government brought to power by the October Russian Revolution withdrew from the war, signing an armistice with the German government in March 1918. Right: V.I. Lenin (center), talks to fellow Bolshevik leaders Leon Trotsky (left) and Lev Kamenev (right). Lenin explained that working people should oppose all imperialist wars, including those waged on semicolonial countries ruled by dictatorial regimes.



for markets and for plundering foreign lands, the eagerness to head off the revolutionary movement of the proletariat and to crush democracy within each country, the urge to deceive, divide, and crush the proletarians of all countries, to incite the wage slaves of one nation against the wage slaves of another nation for the profits of the bourgeoisie—that is the only real content and meaning of the war...”

‘National unity’ supports reaction

The policy of “national unity” during wartime means, even more than in peacetime, support for reaction and the perpetuation of imperialist barbarism. Denying such support—the elementary duty of a socialist—is, however, only the negative or passive side of internationalism. This alone is not enough. The task of the party of the proletariat is “comprehensive propaganda, applying to both the army and the theater of war, for a socialist revolution and the need to direct the weapons not against our brothers, the wage slaves of other countries, but against the reactionary and bourgeois governments and parties of all countries.

“There is an absolute need for the organization of illegal cells and groups in the armies of all countries for such propaganda in all languages. The struggle against the chauvinism and ‘patriotism’ of the philistines and the bourgeoisie of all countries without exception is relentless.”

But a revolutionary struggle in time of war can lead to the defeat of one’s own government. This conclusion did not frighten Lenin. “In every country the struggle against one’s own government, which is conducting an imperialist war, must not stop short of revolutionary agitation for the defeat of that country.” This is precisely what the line of the so-called theory of “defeatism” involves. Unscrupulous enemies have tried to interpret this to mean that Lenin supposedly approved of collaboration with foreign imperialism in order to defeat national reaction. In fact, what he was talking about was a parallel struggle by the workers of each country against their own imperialism, as their primary and most immediate enemy...

It is impossible to fight against imperialist war by sighing for peace after the fashion of the pacifists. “One of the ways of fooling the working class is pacifism and the abstract propaganda of peace. Under capitalism, especially in its imperialist stage, wars are inevitable.” A peace concluded by imperialists would only be a breathing spell before a new war. Only a revolutionary mass struggle against war and against imperialism, which breeds war, can secure a real peace. “Without a number of revolutions the so-called democratic peace is a middle class utopia.”

The struggle against the narcotic and debilitating illusions of pacifism enters as the most important element into Lenin’s doctrine. He rejected with especial hostility the demand for “disarmament as obvi-

ously utopian under capitalism.”

“The oppressed class that does not try to learn how to use arms and try to have them in its possession—such an oppressed class would deserve to be treated as no more than slaves.” And further: “...Only after the proletariat has disarmed the bourgeoisie can it consign all weapons to the scrap heap without betraying its world-historical mission.” This leads to the conclusion that Lenin draws in dozens of articles: “The slogan ‘peace’ is wrong. The slogan must be to turn the national war into a civil war.”

Social chauvinism and its roots

Most of the labor parties in the advanced capitalist countries turned out on the side of their respective bourgeoisies during the war. Lenin named this tendency as social chauvinism: socialism in words, chauvinism in deeds. The betrayal of internationalism did not fall from the skies but came as an inevitable continuation and development of the policies of reformist adaptation. “The ideological-political content of opportunism and of social chauvinism is one and the same: class collaboration instead of class struggle, support of one’s ‘own’ government when it is in difficulties instead of utilizing these difficulties for the revolution.”

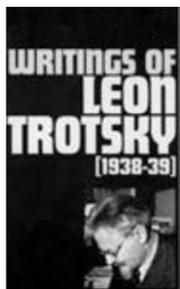
The period of capitalist prosperity immediately prior to the last war—from 1909 to 1913—tied the upper layers of the proletariat very closely with imperialism. From the superprofits obtained by the imperialist bourgeoisie from colonies and from backward countries in general, juicy crumbs fell to the lot of the labor aristocracy and the labor bureaucracy. In consequence, their patriotism was dictated by direct self-interest in the policies of imperialism. During the war, which laid bare all social relations, “the opportunists and chauvinists were invested with a gigantic power because of their alliance with the bourgeoisie, with the government and with the general staffs...”

After giving a sociological and political appraisal of the labor bureaucracy of the Second International, Lenin did not halt midway. “Unity with opportunists is the alliance of workers with their ‘own’ national bourgeoisie and signifies a split in the ranks of the international revolutionary working class.” Hence flows the conclusion that internationalists must break with the social chauvinists. “It is impossible to fulfill the tasks of socialism at the present time, it is impossible to achieve a genuine international fusion of workers without decisively breaking with opportunism...” as well as with centrism, “this bourgeois tendency in socialism.” The very name of the party must be changed. “Isn’t it better to cast aside the name of ‘Social Democrats,’ which has been smeared and degraded, and to return to the old Marxist name of Communists?” It is time to break with the Second International and to build the Third.

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How Iranian workers and peasants overthrew the U.S.-backed shah in 1979 revolution

(Last of three articles)

BY MA'MUD SHIRVANI

The first article in this series described the decades of revolutionary struggle in Iran to rid the country of the despotic monarchy and domination by its imperialist backers, primarily Washington and London. Last week's article explained that it took a quarter of a century after the CIA-organized military coup in 1953, which put Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi back in power, for the Iranian working class and its allies to recover from that counterrevolutionary blow and mount a new struggle to topple the monarchy. Next to Israel, the shah stood as the most important pillar of U.S. imperialism in the region. That article described how the declaration of

In Mashhad, a city of one million in the east near the Afghanistan border, the outraged population was able to drive the shah's army out of the city in bloody clashes. In the Kurdish city of Sanandaj in the west, defense guards were created as the army was pushed out.

'Only thing shah controls is military'

Before the year was over, people in a number of provinces, particularly in Azerbaijan and two provinces on the Caspian Sea, Gilan, and Mazandaran, had taken over some of the towns. Popular organs called *shoras* (councils) started blossoming. In Sari and Amol on the Caspian, a solidarity council was formed that was composed of representatives of 27 industrial groups and crafts, as well as teachers, traders, and civil servants.

Washington secretly placed inside Iran U.S. general Robert E. Huyser, supreme NATO commander in Europe, to organize a military coup to keep the monarchy in power, as the imperialists had done in 1953. "As best I could make out, the only thing the government had control of was the military and its installations," Huyser wrote in his memoirs, *Mission to Tehran*, assessing the situation two days after he arrived.

By the end of 1978, the shah had exhausted all possibilities for breaking the strikes and crushing the mass movement. He had shuffled his cabinets going back and forth between hard and soft lackeys, freeing some political prisoners, and imprisoning some of his most trusted henchmen, ex-prime ministers, and heads of SAVAK to appease the masses. At other times he acted tough and unleashed his generals to intensify the violence against the masses. None of this worked.

Finally, under the pressure of events and the strong urging of Washington, he was forced to reach out to the liberal bourgeois opposition. He appointed Shahpur Bakhtiar, a former member of the National Front, a political grouping founded by Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh in 1949, as prime minister and prepared to flee from the country.

Bakhtiar was immediately denounced by Khomeini, who was then living in exile in Paris.

The Islamic clerical hierarchy, and especially those forces around Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, were looked to by the masses as a new leadership. As a result of the Stalinist betrayals and defeats suffered by the working class during the second Iranian revolution (see first article in this series), and due to the intensity of political repression under the shah, especially against toilers, there were no working-class organizations that could take the lead in this third revolution.



Hatami
Iranian soldier who joined anti-shah forces, Jan. 15, 1979, is carried triumphantly by youth down Shahreza Avenue, now Revolution Avenue, in Tehran.



Protesters ride motorbikes in demonstration against the shah

martial law by the shah on Sept. 7, 1978, and his "Bloody Friday" massacre the day after, sparked successive waves of strikes and street protests. This week, we examine the final chapter of the popular revolution that overthrew the shah.

Rise of popular councils, shoras

As strikes became general, various forms of neighborhood councils arose in the cities. Those in working-class districts were the best organized. Mainly centered in the mosques, they handled distribution of food and fuel, defended the neighborhood against attacks by the regime's thugs, attended to the families of those killed or maimed in the antigovernment demonstrations, and helped build new protest actions.

might enlist their support on this issue?"

On January 3, the rubber stamp *majles* (parliament) formally approved Bakhtiar's appointment as prime minister. General Huyser arrived in Tehran a day later. Huyser immediately got to work with a number of the shah's top generals to convince them to work with Bakhtiar, a former opposition figure, in order to save the army, and to even contemplate what up to then was the "unthinkable": to start negotiations with representatives of Khomeini and the "mullahs," whom the shah and his generals in the military had always looked down upon.

'Everything but the fuel'

Washington's immediate goal was to break the strikes militarily. "We had the ammunition, the transport, the tanks—everything we needed, except fuel," Huyser wrote. The oil workers were not allowing fuel deliveries to the army. Huyser tried to use the class divisions within the revolutionary movement as a lever to push for his goals. He kept impressing upon the generals "that if we could contact the religious leaders we

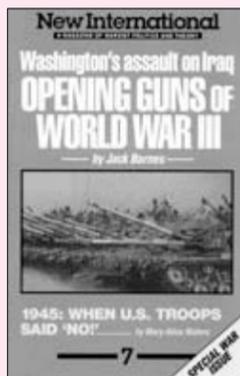
As the shah's generals procrastinated, on January 11 Huyser asked Washington to direct a fuel tanker, which was in nearby waters at the time, to be unloaded for the army's use. The response was slow. "We had already started on the propaganda, with leaflets on the streets," Huyser said in frustration. "But if we were going to take actions on any of the [coup] plans which required tanks and vehicles, then we would need a new source of diesel fuel and motor gasoline."

The propaganda and the leaflets that Huyser mentions refer to their efforts to organize a political base for the counter-revolution, and gain support among layers of the middle class who directly benefited from the shah's rule. They wanted to start a "pro-Constitution" movement, which could operate in the streets—as the CIA-organized thugs had done during the 1953 coup—with a facade of democracy. For decades the monarchy and its imperialist paymasters had trampled upon the constitution that the first Iranian revolution had brought into being. Now they were invoc-



Hatami
Members of neighborhood defense committees in action during February 1979 insurrection. Arms were obtained from overrun military barracks in Tehran.

In *New International* no. 7



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ts overthrew nary insurrection

ing it to masquerade a counterrevolution.

During those days, one would come across armed thugs riding in open trucks around cities beating up isolated protesters and attacking universities. The “Pro-Constitution” movement succeeded in holding a pro-Bakhtiar demonstration of 50,000 in Tehran January 25. It was their first and last action.

Finally, when the oil tanker chartered by the U.S. Department of Defense arrived in Iranian waters at the end of January, the oil workers refused to turn it over to the army. Huyser reported to U.S. secretary of defense Harold Brown that the oil workers had demanded that it be a “gift from the Iranian military to the people of Iran, and of course we couldn’t [do that].” General Huyser left the country shortly after—mission failed.

The shah fled the country January 16, supposedly on an “extended vacation.” Millions throughout Iran celebrated the victory in jubilation. Then millions from across the country converged on Tehran to welcome Khomeini on February 1. Upon his arrival, Khomeini declared

they were opposed to independent political action by the workers and organized to “call off those strikes which jeopardized the work of the main industries involved in the production of peoples’ urgent needs, those threatening the country’s survival.” In fact by January 30 they had succeeded in persuading workers in some 118 factories to go back to work. However, in early January when Bazargan went to the oil fields to try to get domestic production resumed, he was booed by the striking workers. “They do not respect religion,” he complained. But it had been workers’ intransigence in preventing the military from gaining access to the oil they needed for a coup that had saved the revolution. Huyser, in his account quoted earlier, inadvertently confirms this assessment.

While negotiations for a peaceful transfer of power to the provisional government dragged on at the top, the working class and peasant youth in the army were being won over to the revolution. In the urban areas demonstrators were fraternizing with the soldiers and raising the slogan, “Brother soldier, why kill brothers?”



Scenes from 1953 CIA-organized coup that toppled nationalist regime of Mohammad Mossadegh and reimposed the Shah of Iran. Above: club-wielding mob organized by coup-plotters. Right: Tehran street following riots that broke out after the coup. U.S. president James Carter considered military action against 1979 revolution: “We tried this once in Vietnam. It didn’t work well,” he concluded.



Striking TV and radio workers stage sitdown protest. Their walkout was part of strike wave, which included oil workers, in five months leading up to regime’s fall.

Bakhtiar’s government illegal and said he would appoint a legitimate cabinet.

Shortly afterwards, Khomeini appointed Mehdi Bazargan, who had been one of his representatives in the country, to head up a provisional revolutionary government. Bazargan was a popular bourgeois nationalist figure who had collaborated with Mossadegh and had been the first director of the nationalized oil industry in 1951.

Bazargan along with some other leaders of the bourgeoisie, including clerics, had been at odds with workers because

Women participated in mass demonstrations, often leading the fraternization efforts. They threw flowers over to soldiers in army trucks or placed them in their gun barrels and called on them to join the people in revolt.

Airmen mutiny

No one in the Khomeini leadership called for an insurrection. Mounting class tensions, however, burst into the open the evening of Friday, February 9. That’s when the elite Royal Guard of the shah tried to crush a mutiny by pro-Khomeini *homafars*, air force technicians and cadets, at the Doshan Tappeh Air Force Base in Tehran.

The *Militant* carried an eyewitness report of what followed by its Iran correspondent, Cindy Jaquith, who was part of a team of revolutionary socialist journalists in the country at the time. “At midnight on February 9, the silence of the curfew in southeast Tehran was suddenly broken by cries of ‘Allah Akbar,’” Jaquith wrote, “coming from Doshan Tappeh air base. The airmen were appealing to everyone living in the surrounding area to help repel the Royal Guard invasion.

“The air base had been alerted that guardsmen were rolling down from north of Tehran. The airmen began to organize defense. The ranks elected new officers to lead the battle. Arms were distributed. As the cries of help reached residents of the area, there was a massive display of revolutionary solidarity. Thousands poured out of their homes in defiance of the curfew and rushed to the air base. There they helped the airmen construct barricades.”

By the next day, the entire city had begun to organize. Young people who had served as marshals in the recent demon-

strations began taking control of the streets, as well as members of some of the underground guerrilla organizations. In a desperate move to get people off the streets and isolate the airmen, the military announced at 2 p.m. on February 9 that a curfew would begin at 4:30 p.m. that day. While some clerical leaders made public statements urging people to heed the curfew, shortly before the 4:30 p.m. deadline Khomeini called on people to defy the curfew set by an “illegal government” and protect the airmen.

The masses immediately poured into the streets. In the working-class district of southern Tehran practically the entire population came out. “That night, people began occupying police stations, taking weapons and files,” Jaquith reported. The next day, at 2 p.m., “the radio announced that the army high command stated it would no longer resist people.”

Soldiers opened the barracks in the city and the population took up arms. The uprising in Tehran rapidly spread to the entire country. The monarchy was toppled.

While the insurrection was going on, General Huyser was called to a telephone conference and asked by the U.S. under secretary of defense if he would be willing to go back to Tehran and lead a mili-

tary takeover. Huyser stated in his memoirs that he agreed with some conditions, including Washington sending him 10,000 of its best troops, and providing him with “undivided national support.”

“There was a long pause,” Huyser wrote, “so I answered the question for them.”

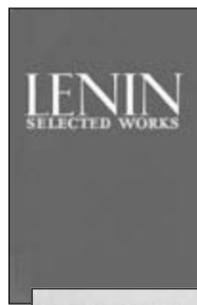
The U.S. rulers knew that the Iranian toilers would fight back tenaciously in the event of a U.S. military assault, and will push forth to establish a government of workers and farmers, as toilers in Vietnam had done earlier.

In a January 17 news conference, U.S. president James Carter had stated, “Certainly we have no desire, nor ability, to intrude massive forces into Iran.... We tried this once in Vietnam. It didn’t work well.”

Correction

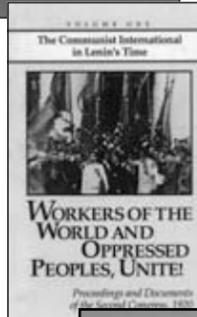
The article “Iran: 1978 revolt broke hold of the shah” in last week’s *Militant* gave the wrong dates for the “Bloody Friday” massacre, and the oil workers’ strike that followed it. Bloody Friday was September 8, 1978. The oil workers began their walkout next day, September 9.

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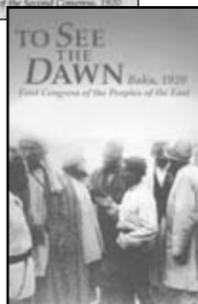
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Young women in Iran lead protest

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Twin Cities Somali leader fights deportation

BY BECKY ELLIS

MINNEAPOLIS—"This is going to be a very long journey," said Omar Jamal, executive director of the Somali Justice Advocacy Center, during a meeting-turned-rally here. "This will not end overnight. Even if I get deported, it will be with a big smile on my face because I have your support."

The April 11 gathering of more than 200 Somalis and their allies was organized to initiate the Omar Jamal Support Coalition. Jamal had been arrested the previous week and faces charges for mistakes he made on his application for asylum in 1998.

Peter Erlinder, a professor at the William Mitchell College of Law and former president of the National Lawyers Guild, gave the crowd an account of how the arrest took place. At 6:30 a.m. on April 7, Jamal received a phone call from the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (BICE)—the reorganized Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). A BICE agent asked him to come to his office to look at some photographs.

Thinking this was unusual, Jamal went to Erlinder's house to solicit his help. They decided to go together to the BICE office

and got into Erlinder's car. They had driven only a couple of blocks when they suddenly found themselves surrounded by federal officers who had a warrant for Omar's arrest.

Jamal was taken immediately to a federal court where he found out for the first time that a Tennessee grand jury had indicted him on six counts of making false statements when he applied for asylum five years ago. Jamal spent three days in jail and was released after hundreds of phone calls came in to BICE demanding his release.

The government claims it started an investigation after unnamed individuals in the Somali community called to complain that Jamal was in the country illegally. Government files attained through court proceedings, however, show that the Joint Terrorism Task Force began the investigation shortly after Sept. 11, 2001, following a public protest that Jamal had organized against the killing of a Somali immigrant, Abu Kassin Jeilani, by Minneapolis police. The INS took over the case soon thereafter.

Jamal's public activity against police brutality, against deportations of Somalis convicted of criminal or immigration vio-

lations, and in support of Somali money transfer agencies that were shut down by the U.S. Treasury Department are the real reasons he faces government persecution, Erlinder said.

The support coalition made available to the press a solidarity letter to Jamal from Róger Calero. "Even though I will not be able to be there with you and the Somali community today, I would like to add my support to your fight in defense of your right to live and work in this country," Calero said. "As someone who is also facing the threat of deportation, I join with others in the demand that all charges against you be dropped immediately, and to put a stop to the efforts to deport you."

Minneapolis city council member Dean Zimmerman, and Phil Steger of Friends for A Non-Violent World, were among the other speakers at the April 11 meeting.



Twin Cities Somali activist Omar Jamal is fighting efforts by the immigration authorities to deport him.

Calero defense committee presents hundreds of antideportation letters to immigration cops in Newark

Continued from front page

the transfer of Calero's case, his supporters wanted to make sure immigration officials have copies of all the letters and petitions demanding the deportation case be dropped. These include all the materials earlier submitted to the INS office in Houston.

As Calero and his supporters made their way through the building, immigration agents stopped and stared at the delega-

tion. First one supervisor, then another, told Calero and Studer that they would not accept hand delivery of the papers. Finally, the delegation went to the post office across the street and mailed the documents.

"They want to discourage and intimidate people from fighting back for their rights," Vossen, one of the national co-chairs of the defense committee, said after the delegation returned.

"They know we were here," Studer told

supporters. "They are on notice that this is a public, political fight, and that is what we were out to accomplish."

Calero then led supporters to a picket line in front of the Bloomfield Police Department to protest the killing of Santiago Villanueva by Bloomfield cops a year ago that day. Villanueva, a garment worker, was strangled to death by the cops while he was having an epileptic seizure. The day before the protest, four of the five cops involved in the killing had been indicted on manslaughter charges for his death. Villanueva's family is demanding the cops be suspended and indicted for first-degree murder.

Because of the indictments, the picket received substantial media coverage.

Later that evening, 22 people attended a public meeting at *La Casa de Don Pedro*, a community center in north Newark, to hear Studer and Calero give updates on the defense efforts and where the attacks on immigrant workers fits in the world today.

Studer explained that Washington's policies to restrict workers' rights at home are part of the rulers' response to a deepening economic crisis of their system and the opening of a round of wars abroad. "The rulers attack peoples' rights where they are weakest, in the hope to divide workers," Studer said. "Among any workers who are fighting, we find this case gets a good hearing."

"What do we see happening in Iraq?" Calero asked in his remarks. "Occupation troops shooting down protesters—a mirror image of what they will carry out against working people here. This war had nothing to do with democracy or freedom for the Iraqi people."

Calero also spoke about the resistance by workers in the United States in defense of their rights and living conditions. He pointed to the case of Omar Jamal (see ar-

ticle above). "Jamal's arrest came on the heels of a victory of the Somali community in winning a suspension of the deportations of immigrant workers from Somalia," he stated. "It's obvious that this is an attempt to undermine their victory."

Sharin Chiorazzo, a member of the Committee to Free Farouk Abdel-Muhti, attended the meeting and encouraged everyone to attend a picket line April 25. This marks the one-year anniversary of the detention of the Palestinian activist by the immigration police.

Calero, 34, is an associate editor of *Perspectiva Mundial*, a Spanish-language monthly magazine published in New York, and a *Militant* staff writer. On December 3, he was returning from reporting trips to Cuba and Mexico. INS agents seized Calero at Houston Intercontinental Airport, told him he was denied entry into the U.S., and carted him off to an immigration jail. He was released 10 days later, after scores of people poured messages of protest into the Houston INS office.

Immigration officials began deportation proceedings against Calero based on a 1988 plea-bargain conviction, when he was a high school student in Los Angeles. Calero had been accused by the police of selling an ounce of marijuana to an undercover cop. The INS waived this conviction twice, in granting Calero permanent residency in 1990 and then in renewing it 10 years later.

In recent weeks, supporters of the Róger Calero Defense Committee here spoke and staffed Calero defense literature tables at a meeting of delegates of the Hospital Workers Union Local 1199J, a conference on workers' rights organized by the Industrial Union Council of the state AFL-CIO, a gathering of the Bergen County Ethical Culture Society, and a meeting of the Black Telephone Workers for Justice.

Tyson Strike entering 3rd Month!

Solidarity Rally

Food Drive • Picnic • Music

UFCW Local 538
invites supporters
to join them

Sat. April 26

at Rotary Waterfront Park
in Jefferson, Wisconsin
starting at Noon

Directions:

Jefferson is located halfway between Madison and Milwaukee.

Take 190/94 to Johnson Creek exit and travel 6 miles south on Hwy. 26.

After crossing Hwy. 18 (in Jefferson) Rotary Waterfront Park and the Tyson plant are on the right, along the east bank of the Rock River.

Find parking and then follow W. Milwaukee, W. Dodge or Linden Dr. toward the river.



Grilled Union Hot Dogs served beginning at 11 a.m.

A rally with special guest speakers - 1:30 p.m. at Tyson Food's plant gate.

Post-rally concert performance by Labor Troubadour Anne Feeney.

Contributions of food and financial donations are encouraged. Make out checks to UFCW Local 538 Strike Fund.

For more information call (608) 244-5653 or visit www.SCFL.org where a list of needed food items can be found.

See also: www.TysonfamiliesStandUp.org



For more information or to send a contribution:

Róger Calero Defense Committee,
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phone/fax, (212)563-0585.

On the web: www.calerodefense.org

Send messages demanding exclusion moves against Róger Calero be dropped to: Demetrios Georgakopolous, Director, Bureau of Customs and Immigration Enforcement. Fax messages to: (973) 645-3074; or mail to: 970 Broad St., Newark, NJ 07102. Please send copies to the Róger Calero Defense Committee.

'No to givebacks!' say N.Y. maintenance and building workers

BY ANNE HOPKINS AND NAOMI CRAINE

NEW YORK—Tens of thousands of doormen, elevator operators, janitors, superintendents, and maintenance workers marched from Central Park to a rally on Park Avenue April 15 carrying signs reading, "No Givebacks" and "Support New York's Home Team." The members of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 32BJ were taking action in support of the union's rejection of building owners' contract proposals. The union has set a strike deadline for April 23.

"We are demonstrating to send them a message," said Cecil, a maintenance worker in Coney Island, Brooklyn. "They want to cut vacation time and sick time, and we say, 'no givebacks.'"

Local 32BJ represents 28,000 apartment building workers whose contract will expire April 20. The union has rejected a proposal by the Realty Advisory Board on Labor Relations, which negotiates on behalf of the building owners, for a wage freeze over the next three years. The employers proposed a one-time payment of

\$500 in each of the second and third years of the contract.

The present starting salary for janitors and doormen is \$27,400, rising to \$34,300 after two and a half years. The union is seeking to eliminate the lower starting salary, while management wants to extend this period a further year.

Victor, a 23-year-old worker from the Bronx, told the *Militant* that the bosses want to halve the two weeks vacation that workers with one year's seniority currently receive. The bosses also want to cut the number of sick days from 10 to six.

Realty Advisory Board president James Berg claims that a weak real estate market and an 18.5 percent increase in property taxes mean the employers cannot afford to increase wages.

For their part, union representatives argue that the November 2001 contract covering 30,000 workers in office buildings, which incorporated a 9.5 percent wage increase over three years, should be used as a model in the current negotiations.

Members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees



New York maintenance and building workers demonstrate April 15 on Park Avenue

District Council 37 and Local 100 of the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees union joined the rally. Speakers included two members of the city council.

Around 300 workers rallied the same day outside the main post office in Midtown Manhattan at a demonstration called by the Communication Workers of America Local 1180. The action opposed cutbacks planned by the city administration.

Mayor Michael Bloomberg has already announced the layoff of 5,400 city workers in a package of measures that particularly targets public education. Ten thousand more jobs will go, he says, unless city unions swallow \$600 million in concessions and the state government approves a tax for out-of-towners who work in New York.

The cuts include the elimination of more than 800 full-time classroom aides, an end to optional summer school programs, and a reduction in stipends for teachers to buy school supplies. School health and immunization programs are also on the chopping block.

Education is not the only target, however. Funds to maintain neighborhood parks are being slashed, while city officials say they will use so-called workfare programs, in which workers on public assistance are forced to work for sub-minimum wages, to replace 1,000 regular seasonal jobs in the parks. The city is further cutting funding to the Metropolitan Transit Authority, which has already announced a 33 percent hike in subway and bus fares.

Twelve of the 30 city-funded children's health clinics are slated to close. Some sanitation workers will be laid off, meaning less frequent trash pickups in some neighborhoods. This is what Bloomberg calls his "best case" scenario. The "doomsday" budget that he says would be imposed without the taxes and concessions he is demanding would slash another \$1 billion in jobs and services across the board.

District Council 37 has called a rally at City Hall for April 29 to protest the mayor's demands. Participants will gather at 5:30 p.m. Students from the City University of New York are also planning a demonstration May 1 to protest tuition hikes and cuts in the public university system.

U.S. gov't threatens Cuba with new sanctions

Continued from Page 4

Puerto Rico with USAID funds, sent to Cuba via the diplomatic pouch of the U.S. Interests Section, and passed around widely by U.S. diplomats.

Pérez Roque also said that a number of the defendants regularly provided information to Cubanet and other U.S.-funded media outlets that could be used by Washington to implement provisions of the Helms-Burton law. According to Cuban officials, Cubanet is an Internet publication that receives some \$2 million per year through USAID and backs Washington's policies toward Cuba.

Cason's acts fit history of aggression

"The U.S. Interests Section's diplomatic pouch is increasingly being used to bring in funds and other materials to groups in Cuba created and funded by the U.S. government to carry out counterrevolutionary acts," Pérez Roque said.

He accused James Cason, head of the U.S. Interests section since last July, of engaging in increasingly provocative actions. "The U.S. Interests Section has been instructed to establish there what is practically the headquarters of internal subversion in Cuba," the foreign minister said. "The head of this section has the highest profile of anyone in its 25 years of functioning, in open violation of the laws governing diplomatic conduct, openly interfering in Cuba's internal affairs, with a tone and demeanor totally inappropriate for a diplomat." This course is consistent with "the obsession of the U.S. governments to fabricate an opposition in Cuba," he stated.

These recent actions, the foreign minister noted, build on the U.S. government's unrelenting economic war, support for paramilitary forces operating from U.S. territory, assassination attempts against Cuban government leaders, and efforts to isolate Cuba diplomatically and politically for more than four decades. The people of Cuba and the government of Cuba "are currently waging a hard struggle for their right to self-determination, for their right to independence," he said.

Washington's campaign

Washington used the arrests and convictions to escalate its anti-Cuba campaign. U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell said April 15 that these sentences show Havana is "stifling dissent," adding that these actions "should be an outrage to every leader in this hemisphere, every leader in this world."

Immediately after the sentences of the 75 were announced, U.S. State Department spokesman Phillip Recker stated, "The United States calls on the international community to join with us in condemning this crackdown and to demand the release

of these Cuban prisoners of conscience."

Responding to this statement, Roque told the press April 9, "Mr. Recker should know that the international community is... horrified by the more than 600 prisoners still locked up at the Guantánamo Naval Base, in a legal limbo, who are not treated like human beings, and will be tried in secret U.S. military courts. He could include that the accused have had no access to a lawyer or to the evidence against them that has been declared secret information."

"Some governments and international figures have expressed public concern about these trials," said Carlos Fernández de Cossio, Cuba's ambassador to Canada, in a letter published in the Toronto *Globe and Mail*, responding to an editorial in the April 8 issue of the daily, titled, "Locked up in Cuba with Castro's key."

"In contrast, they express public silence in regard to the most powerful nation on Earth," Fernández de Cossio stated. "No action similar to the abuses of Afghans, Arabs and citizens from different countries detained in Guantánamo base has taken place in Cuba. No secret military trial like the ones established in the United States has been or can be carried out in Cuba."

The Cuban ambassador to Canada said that "the 75 Cuban individuals and their attorneys have had full access to the information used against them by the prosecution, in contrast with the five Cubans condemned to abusive sentences in the U.S. who are still waiting to read over 50 percent of the documentation used to incriminate them because it was declared secret."

He was referring to five Cuban revolutionaries convicted in a federal court in Miami in 2001 of various charges, including failing to register as agents of a foreign power, conspiracy to commit espionage for Havana and, in one case, conspiracy to commit murder. These five Cuban patriots were given sentences ranging from 15 years to a double-life term in prison. From February 28 through the end of March they were thrown into solitary confinement by the Federal Bureau of Prisons, following an order by the U.S. attorney general alleging that their contact with many people through visits and mail presented a potential threat to Washington's "national security." Their visitation rights were revoked and their reading and writing material were taken away. Gerardo Hernández, one of the five, was confined into "The Box"—a hole within the "hole"—a cell where he could only take three steps and the lights were on 24 hours a day. Prison guards took his clothes away and gave him only underpants and a shirt to wear.

The five were let out of the hole April 2, as Washington prepared to ratchet up its

campaign against Cuba over the arrests of the 75. To this day, however, their visitation rights are restricted to family members, Cuban consular officials, and defense attorneys.

In the phone interview, Rogelio Polanco, editor of *Juventud Rebelde*, said that the arrests and trials of the 75 have been deliberately lumped together by the big-business media with the recent executions of three men who hijacked a ferry in Havana "to create confusion and give the false impression that 'dissidents' are given the death penalty in Cuba."

A spate of hijackings

"This is a different case," Polanco said. "These people committed an act of piracy."

Polanco was referring to the April 2 attempt by 10 Cubans who hijacked a ferry at knife- and gunpoint in the Havana harbor in an unsuccessful attempt to reach Florida. The hijackers took the ferry 30 miles off the Cuban coast, where the vessel ran out of fuel. They demanded a new boat, threatening to begin throwing some of the 34 passengers and crew overboard

Continued on Page 12

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U.S. threatens Cuba with new sanctions

Continued from Page 11

if their demand was not met. The Cuban Border Guard notified the U.S. Coast Guard, which stated that it was not prepared to take action. Cuban coast guard vessels stayed near the ferry and finally convinced the hijackers to return to Havana for refueling. In the port, Cuban security agents stormed the ferry and arrested the hijackers after passengers starting jumping into the water.

The 10 individuals were charged under the Law Against Terrorism, passed in December 2001, with having "committed grave acts of terrorism." They were tried and convicted April 8. Three of them were given the death penalty and, after Cuba's Supreme Court and Council of State upheld the sentences, they were executed three days later. Another four men among this group were given life in prison, while three women were handed one- to five-year terms.

This was the latest in a string of such incidents. "In the last seven months," Pérez Roque stated April 9, "there have been seven hijackings of Cuban air and sea crafts, encouraged by... the indiscriminate application of the Cuban Adjustment Act, by the practice of receiving people who use terrorism and violence to get there."

Approved by the U.S. Congress in 1966, the Cuban Adjustment Act encourages people to leave Cuba for the United States by providing virtually automatic asylum to any Cuban who lands on Florida's shores regardless of any crimes they may have committed to get there.

Washington has refused to take action to discourage these incidents. According to Cuban government officials, those who carried out four of these hijackings last year "still walk the streets of Miami." Two hijackings of planes took place on March 19 and March 31, with the perpetrators

landing in Florida, and then the ferry was hijacked two days later

The evening of April 2, James Cason took the unusual step of issuing a statement broadcast on Cuban television warning Cubans that Washington would not provide immunity to future hijackers. "Such acts are extremely serious violations of international law and of U.S. law," Cason said in his message, according to the April 3 *Miami Herald*. His statement was read by an announcer in Spanish in the regular nightly TV broadcast. "Any individual of any nationality, including Cuban, who hijacks an aircraft or vessel to the United States will be prosecuted with the full force of the U.S. legal system. The individual convicted of such offenses can expect to serve lengthy sentences in federal penitentiaries. Once convicted of such an offense the individual, including a Cuban, would be rendered permanently ineligible for lawful permanent residence in the U.S."

On April 10, a U.S. federal judge released on bail the perpetrators of the two plane hijackings in March, according to the Mexican news agency Notimex. The same day, Cuban authorities foiled an attempt at another plane hijacking at the Isle of Youth airport. Pointing to these events, an April 11 editorial in the Cuban daily *Granma* said they constitute "further evidence of the absolute truthfulness of the Cuban accusations" that Washington is encouraging hijackings by refusing to prosecute the perpetrators.

Cuban government officials have pointed to previous such incidents over the last decade, including a string of hijackings in 1994, when a police officer and a navy lieutenant were killed in armed attacks by would-be hijackers.

Speaking to reporters April 17, Pérez Roque said that using the death penalty against three of the ferry hijackers was an "exceptional measure" to deal with a crisis in the making provoked by Washington's conduct, which includes disregarding the immigration agreements between the two governments.

In an accord signed by both governments in 1994, Washington agreed to grant 20,000 visas annually to Cubans applying to emigrate to the United States. Even though requests have exceeded this number every year, the U.S. government has fallen short of its quota by substantial margins. In 2002, the U.S. Interests Section

issued 18,000 such visas, Pérez Roque said. In the first five months of this year, which for immigration purposes begins October 1, Washington issued 505 visas, he stated. This compares to 11,000 visas in the year 2000, 8,300 in 2001, and just over 7,000 last year during the same five-month period. "We are dealing with a deliberate plan to make those who want to emigrate lose hope, so that they have no alternative but illegal immigration," he stated.

Debate on the Cuban measures

In the wake of Washington's stepped-up propaganda campaign against Cuba, liberal critics of U.S. foreign policy have joined the big-business chorus of denunciations of Havana. Democratic congressman Charles Rangel, one of the leaders of the congressional Cuba Working Group that advocates a "dialogue" between the U.S. and Cuban governments and an end to the travel restrictions on U.S. citizens, told the *New York Times*, "This about ends that discussion."

"They know how to support their enemies and get rid of their friends," he fumed.

Other forces that have spoken out against Washington's Cuba policies have echoed the big-business propaganda. Supporters of the Democratic Socialists of America, for example, have organized an Internet sign-on letter that in the name of "the democratic left" states, "In solidarity with the people of Cuba, we condemn the Cuban state's current repression of independent thinkers and writers, human rights activists, and democrats." The statement declares that the Cuban government is "just one more dictatorship." Among the signers are prominent social democrats Stanley Aronowitz, Bogdan Denitch, and Leo Casey.

José Saramago, a Nobel literature laureate and member of the Portuguese Communist Party, publicly broke with the Cuban government in a statement published in the Madrid daily *El País* April 14. "This is as far as I go," he wrote. "Cuba has won no heroic victory by executing these three men, but it has lost my confidence, damaged my hopes, robbed me of illusions."

Polemicalizing with Saramago, prominent Uruguayan writer Mario Benedetti said now is not the time to "remove oneself completely from support to Cuba."

In an interview published in the Uruguayan newspaper *La República*, Benedetti

stated his opposition to the death penalty and criticized the executions in Cuba, but directed most of his fire at Washington for its war on Iraq and the high number of executions in the United States. Referring to the Uruguayan government's servile role at the UN Human Rights Commission, he said, "For rulers who have supported the U.S. in its murderous invasion of Iraq to now beat their democratic chests, outraged about Cuba executing three hijackers, is nauseating hypocrisy."

In Havana, 27 well-known writers and artists signed an open letter titled "Message from Havana to friends who are far away." They take issue with "friends who may have been led astray" by joining the condemnations of the recent trials and sentences. To defend itself against attacks by the U.S. government, they stated, "Cuba has been forced to adopt forceful measures that it naturally did not want to adopt." The letter is signed, among others, by Miguel Barnet, Roberto Fernández Retamar, Senel Paz, Silvio Rodríguez, Humberto Solás, and Carlos Martí.

Another prominent Cuban writer, César López, joined the debate in an interview with *El País*. "You can be against the death penalty. I am. You can question the appropriateness of the sentences that were legally issued," he said. "I question them."

But, he emphasized, "to forget the reality, the danger, the constant attack against Cuba and its people manifested during all these years and exacerbated in the last few weeks, does not seem completely honest." Events in the world demand not a condemnation of Cuba, he concluded, but "clear actions against the war and the danger enveloping all of us, including Cuba."

"This is not an issue of human rights, liberty or freedom of expression," said Cuba's ambassador to Canada in his letter to the *Globe and Mail*. "The government that has supported some of the most brutal regimes in the 20th century," he continued, "that carries out a criminal war for economic and geopolitical ambitions, that possesses the greatest arsenals of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons cannot and should not be allowed to assume that Cuba's integrity and sovereignty are for sale."

Chris Hoepfner in Miami and *Militant* staff writer Martin Koppel contributed to this article.

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North Carolina farm workers demand contract

BY SETH GALINSKY

MT. OLIVE, North Carolina—Under a hot sun, 275 people rallied here April 13 to demand that the Mt. Olive Pickle Company improve wages and working conditions for farm workers. The Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC), which organized the demonstration, is calling for the negotiation of a three-way contract between the company, the farmers who grow its cucumbers, and the workers who harvest them.

Rally participants marched to the nearby Mt. Olive Pickle plant. Members and officials from a wide range of unions in North Carolina, Georgia, and Virginia participated. Students from North Carolina State and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) also took part, along with some 50 farm workers from the Mt. Olive area.

FLOC president Baldemar Velasquez told the rally that the company cannot claim that it does not have responsibility for the workers who pick its cucumbers. Mt. Olive belongs to the North Carolina Growers Association, which "recruits" these workers and brings them to the fields, he said. Most of these farm workers are immigrants from Mexico and other countries in Latin America.

A Spanish-language flyer distributed to promote the event was headlined, "No to the exploitation of immigrants." It stated, "We are demanding a contract for better working conditions and pay."

The farm workers who turned up pick strawberries, blueberries, watermelon, cucumbers, tobacco, and sweet potatoes, depending on which farms are hiring. Some stay in North Carolina year-round and try to find construction or other work in the off-season. Others spend six months in Florida for the tomato, chili, and orange harvests, and then another six months in North Carolina as another round of crops ripens. As the harvest rolls in, some find work at the pickling factories.

One 30-year-old worker from Chiapas, Mexico, said he is currently earning about \$6 an hour picking strawberries. When that work runs out he will move on to the cucumber and tobacco harvests. "We want the working day to be limited to eight hours," he said. "Often we're forced to work 10 hours or more in grueling heat."

"There's no drinking water in the fields, so you have to bring your own in a thermos," said Maribel Sánchez, 28. "The contractors treat us like animals," she said. "The buses they use to take us to work of-



Militant/Greg Preston

Some 275 farm workers and supporters in April 13 march to Mt. Olive Pickle plant in North Carolina, demanding a three-way contract with company and farmers.

ten don't have seat belts or even any seats."

The wretched quality and high cost of living is also a long-standing grievance. Many workers rent their own trailers from contractors and others. "They'll charge \$350 a month for a foul-smelling trailer, with holes where cockroaches, rats, and snakes get in," Sánchez said.

"If you take a bathroom break," she said, "they take it out of your wages. Some places don't even allow a lunch break." She explained that in the blueberry fields workers are paid only \$5 a bushel, an amount that can take an hour and a half to pick.

Sánchez and her sister, Bertila, 25, ar-

gued strongly for a higher wage. "We earn so little. We're not asking for \$8 or \$9 an hour. We want to earn \$7 an hour," she said. "If immigrants all went on strike the bosses would have to listen."

Mt. Olive Pickle Company is the largest privately owned pickle company in the United States. Its factories pack more than 70 million jars of processed and fresh pickles, peppers, and relishes each year, using 100 million pounds of cucumbers and peppers. According to the company, about one-third of its cucumbers are grown in North Carolina. Mt. Olive does not own most of the farms that supply its processing plants with produce.

FLOC wants a three-way contract modeled after the deals it has won in Ohio and Michigan with Heinz, Vlasic, Dean Foods, and Campbell's Soup Company. Those companies have agreed to pay more to farmers, who in turn have agreed to increase the wages and benefits they pay to farm workers.

"FLOC is demanding that Mt. Olive bring farmers to the bargaining table to negotiate and participate in bargaining discussions with farmers," Mt. Olive Pickle spokeswoman Lynn Williams complained to the *Raleigh News & Observer*. "We think that is an inappropriate role to play."

FLOC launched a boycott of Mt. Olive pickles in 1999 to pressure the company to agree to these demands.

Agriculture is the largest sector of the North Carolina economy with more than \$59 billion in sales every year. At peak harvest tens of thousands of migrant farm workers, most of them Spanish-speaking immigrants, labor in the fields.

Among the speakers at the April 13 rally were James Andrews, president of the North Carolina AFL-CIO; Naema Muhammad, of Black Workers for Justice; and Ken Riley, a leader of the International Longshoremen's Association in Charleston, South Carolina, and currently a national official of the union.

Also attending were organizers from the United Food and Commercial Workers union (UFCW). The UFCW has reinitiated the drive to organize workers at the Smithfield pork processing plant in Tar Heel, North Carolina, and recently opened an office for that purpose in Red Springs. The Tar Heel plant is one of the largest pork-kill facilities in the country.

Seth Galinsky is member of UNITE Local 1506 at Pillowtex in Concord, N.C.

Pathfinder Around the World

This is the first installment of *Pathfinder Around the World*, a column that will appear periodically in the *Militant*. The column will cover the activities of supporters of the revolutionary publishing house, which keeps in print the speeches and writings of revolutionary leaders covering more than one-and-a-half centuries of the modern working-class movement. It will report the publication of new Pathfinder titles, along with reprints and new editions of books and pamphlets in the publisher's 350-title catalog, and sales and promotional work carried out by volunteers. Excerpts from reviews of Pathfinder titles, as below, will also be featured. Readers are urged to e-mail to the *Militant* items for use in future *Pathfinder Around the World* columns on recent experiences in selling and promoting Pathfinder books in your area.

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

A review of the Pathfinder book *Cointelpro: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom* by Nelson Blackstock appears in the Internet Bookwatch section of the March 2003 *Midwest Book Review*. The book "is a close and penetrating look at the illegal FBI counterintelligence program code-named COINTELPRO," the review states. "Its methods for political disruption, techniques used by the FBI, CIA, and military intelligence, are all covered in-depth in this shocking and fascinating account. Enhanced with an introduction by Noam Chomsky, *Cointelpro* is especially timely reading in view of the radical measures being passed into law and implemented under the aegis of Homeland Security."

In February a program presented on Radio Havana Cuba by Bernie Dwyer featured Pathfinder's newly published book *Marianas in Combat: Teté Puebla and the Mariana Grajales Women's Platoon in Cuba's Revolutionary War 1956-58*. "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 Batista in 1956, when she was 15 years old. *Marianas in Combat*, presented by Pathfinder Press at the 12th International Book Fair, is her story—from clandestine action in the cities, to

serving as an officer in the victorious Rebel Army's first all-woman platoon. For nearly 50 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," Dwyer stated. "With this book," he added, "one more strand of the rich history of the Cuban Revolution is now accessible to all. The editor, Mary-Alice Waters, dedicates the story of Teté Puebla to the young people in every corner of the earth who today, just like her 15-year-old subject before them, refuse to accept inequality and injustice and decide to join with others in a disciplined fight for a better world."

Writing in the January/April 2002 library journal *Counterpoise*, Travis Fristoe reviews *Black Music, White Business: Illuminating the History and Political Economy of Jazz* by Frank Kofsky. Fristoe writes, "Kofsky's work demands answers to questions that pitifully few other jazz critics ever dare to ask, like how the controlling economic power (record labels, club memberships, union cards, venue bookings) lies overwhelmingly with the white businessmen, but the music has been creatively fueled and maintained by African-American artists since its inception." He continues, "The Marxist critiques of means of production, division of labor, and economic bottom lines suit the topic well. Combine this book with its pithier companion piece, *John Coltrane and the Jazz Revolution of the 1960s*, for criticisms still valid in our new millennium."

The full text of the above three reviews, as well as those for a number of other Pathfinder books, including *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*, *From the Escambray to the Congo*, *Playa Giron/Bay of Pigs: Washington's First Military Defeat in the Americas*, and *Their Morals and Ours*, can be found on book pages for these titles on www.pathfinderpress.com

When visiting the Pathfinder web site be sure to check out the "News from Pathfinder" section. In addition to providing information on Pathfinder's upcoming publishing schedule and newly digitized books that have been recently printed in a more readable format, "News from Pathfinder" also makes available promotional flyers of some recently published Pathfinder books. Currently available are flyers for *Malcolm*

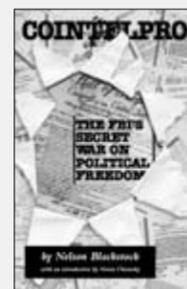
X Talks to Young People, *Malcolm X habla a la juventud*, *Marianas in Combat*, and *Marianas en combate*. These attractively formatted flyers can be posted in Pathfinder bookstores, made into posters for displays at literature tables, and taken to other commercial bookstores that might be interested in ordering and promoting these titles.

Supporters of Pathfinder have launched a special six-week campaign from April 15 through May 26 to get the new 2003 Pathfinder catalog into the hands of as many bookstore buyers, librarians, and professors as possible. Goals are being adopted by Pathfinder supporters around the country to maximize the impact of this effort. The 60-page catalog, which sells for \$1, provides brief summaries and cover reproductions of the hundreds of titles published and distributed by Pathfinder in English, French, and Spanish, as well as the Swedish, Farsi, Greek, and Russian languages. This campaign provides Pathfinder representatives with an opportunity to visit and deepen relations with current customers, as well as to visit and follow up with those who have not yet placed an order for Pathfinder titles. Those wanting to be part of this effort can place their orders for Pathfinder catalogs today at www.pathfinderpress.com.

You can now join the Pathfinder Readers Club online. For an annual fee of just \$10, Readers Club members receive a 15 percent discount on all Pathfinder titles purchased online or at any of the more than 30 Pathfinder bookstores around the world. Higher discounts of 25 percent off are also available on specially featured books each month. Once their membership is in the system, Readers Club members will automatically receive discounts on all books purchased at www.pathfinderpress.com. Join today!!

Several Pathfinder pamphlets are now back in print with newly designed covers and a more attractive and readable format. They include *Abortion: A Woman's Right to Choose* by Evelyn Reed and Pat Grogan; *Revolutionary Dynamics of Women's Liberation* by George Novack; and *A Political Biography of Walter Reuther: The Record of an Opportunist* by Beatrice Hansen.

Cointelpro: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom



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

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Defend the Cuban Revolution!

Continued from front page

“leaked to the *New York Times* by well-placed officials—that the U.S. government may bar remittances by Cuban-Americans to relatives on the island and ban direct charter flights to Cuba is part of a menacing new escalation of Washington’s threats and provocations against the Cuban Revolution. The termination of all “people-to-people” licenses for U.S. residents to visit Cuba is also part of these attacks.

Another piece of this imperialist campaign has been the spate of hijackings of Cuban planes and boats to the United States since last August, prompted by the U.S. government’s practice of limiting visas to Cubans who want to emigrate, while automatically granting residence to any Cuban who manages to reach Florida’s shores by whatever means. This policy, codified in the 1966 Cuban Adjustment Act, coupled with U.S. officials’ failure to prosecute these hijackers, has given the green light to such armed acts of piracy, which endanger the lives of countless Cubans.

Washington is now using the arrest and conviction of 75 opponents of the Cuban Revolution on charges of aiding and abetting a hostile state power in its campaign to subvert Cuban sovereignty, as well as the execution of three armed hijackers (the facts on these developments are reported elsewhere in this issue), to portray the revolutionary government as a ruthless dictatorship in order to justify further attacks on the Cuban people.

This cynical campaign has nothing to do with concern for human rights, democracy, or freedom. It is being orchestrated by the main executioner and number one jailer in the world—Washington, an imperialist regime that just invaded and occupied Iraq to safeguard its plunder and secure its strategic bases in the Mideast.

The arrest, frame-up, and conviction on conspiracy charges of five Cuban revolutionaries working to protect their fellow countrymen from armed groups operat-

ing from U.S. soil is one more dramatic proof of the hypocrisy of U.S. concerns for “justice” and “humanity.” The five are now serving draconian sentences of up to double life in U.S. prisons.

Washington’s use of its naval base in Guantánamo—Cuban territory occupied against the will of the Cuban people—to jail indefinitely, without charges or rights, hundreds of men accused of “terrorism,” and to subject them to what can only be termed systematic torture, is the greatest provocation of all. The use of Cuban soil for this imperialist brutality would bring tears to the eyes and strength to the arms of Cuba’s national hero, José Martí, who gave his life in the struggle against the perpetration of such atrocities.

These hostile actions are of a piece with more than 40 years of the unrelenting attempts by U.S. imperialism to overthrow the Cuban Revolution—from bombings, sabotage, and assassinations, to the 1961 Bay of Pigs mercenary invasion, to a threatened nuclear holocaust in 1962, to a brutal economic war that continues to this day. Confronting the determination, consciousness, and preparedness of Cuba’s working people, all have failed.

Washington’s policies are not irrational. Nor has their fundamental character changed from one administration to the next, whether Democratic or Republican. By its example, Cuba represents a mortal danger to the property interests and prerogatives of U.S. ruling families. Cuba shows that working people—including in this country—are capable of forging a revolutionary leadership, taking political power out of the hands of the capitalist exploiters, and joining the worldwide struggle for a society based on human solidarity and the needs of the majority of the earth’s toilers, not the dog-eat-dog reality and morality of capitalism.

That is what Washington fears. That is what the people of Cuba and their government support. That is what we join them in defending.

U.S. troops out of Korea!

Since the last months of 2002, the U.S. rulers have bolstered the forces at their command for an attack on the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (DPRK). Among other moves, Washington has stationed a new fleet of nuclear-capable B-1 and B-52 bombers on Guam, and the Pentagon has just led the armed forces of south Korea in a month of aggressive military exercises.

While U.S. diplomats pushed through a resolution at the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva condemning Pyongyang for “human rights violations,” Washington has scrapped contracted shipments of food and fuel to north Korea.

The U.S. rulers’ stance is consistent with 50 years of hostility to north Korea, which dealt Washington its first military defeat in the 1950-53 Korean War. It is also part of its accelerated drive today toward war. In face of spreading depression conditions and intensifying conflict among the world’s leading capitalist powers, the U.S. rulers are using their military might to extend their economic and strategic advantage over their rivals in Europe and Japan. This crises-driven effort to redivide the world for the benefit of U.S. finance capital is behind the war and occupation of Iraq.

As they step up their campaign against north Korea, the U.S. war planners are well aware of the demonstrated defensive capacities of the DPRK’s armed forces and of

the workers and peasants of this embattled nation. Imperialist aggression would have an explosive impact among working people and youth in the south, millions of whom oppose the presence of U.S. forces and support the demand: “Korea is one!”

The bosses’ response to the crisis of capitalism is to increase layoffs and speedup, cut wages and benefits, and press harder to carve out markets for its capital and commodities throughout the world. The war against working people at home goes hand in hand with their aggression abroad.

Capitalist attacks on working people in the United States, however, continue to generate resistance. Today workers are engaged in strike action—from the machinists at Lockheed Martin in Texas, to meat packers at Tyson Foods in Wisconsin. They are refusing to subordinate their demands to wartime ruling-class appeals for “national unity” and patriotism.

It is to these fighters, along with young people and others protesting the brutality of capitalism, that class-conscious workers reach out with the truth about imperialism’s drive to war against Korea.

We urge you to join with others in demanding of the U.S. government: No to all military threats and provocations! End the economic embargo! Normalize diplomatic relations with the DPRK! All U.S. troops out of Korea!

Ten years since Waco massacre

Ten years ago, millions of working people watched in horror the inferno that was the culmination of the FBI’s April 19, 1993, assault on the wooden complex housing the Branch Davidian religious sect in Waco, Texas. Below are excerpts from a statement the Socialist Workers Party National Committee issued April 21 of that year in response to the massacre.

President Bill Clinton and Attorney General Janet Reno are responsible for the cold-blooded murder of 86 people, including 17 children, outside Waco, Texas....

This heinous crime exposes the true face of the bipartisan imperialist government in the United States—its imperial presidency, Congress, armed forces, cop agencies, and courts. The entire operation had been carried out over weeks with coarse disregard for democratic rights and with callous indifference to the human life of anyone outside of—or viewed as an obstacle to—ruling-class circles and their multitude of professional and middle-class retainers.

To cite just one example, federal officials had cut off electricity in the first weeks after their initial February 28 assault on the buildings and knew full well that kerosene lamps had to be used for lighting inside. Yet, despite plans for armored vehicles to ram the wooden structures for hours on end, and to inject massive quantities of tear gas into the premises, the FBI had no fire trucks on hand....

Using the Waco events to bolster Washington’s murderous policies elsewhere, the president ominously added. “There is, unfortunately, a rise in this sort of fa-

naticism all across the world. And we may have to confront it again.... In Waco there were close to 90 victims. In the Gulf War two years ago, the roster of Iraqis incinerated trying to surrender, or murdered in one of the U.S.-organized “turkey shoots,” totaled in the tens and possibly hundreds of thousands. In Vietnam, the toll rose into the millions....

What happened to due process? Protection from illegal search and seizure? Freedom of religion?

Did the right to association and equal protection under the law not apply to the Branch Davidians? If so, who else might someday find themselves labeled fanatics or fundamentalists or radicals? A Black rights organization? An immigrants’ rights group? Defenders of an abortion clinic? A striking union local...?

For workers around the world, watching the carnage in Waco was an almost unbearable reminder of the kind of violence the capitalist government, capitalist political parties, and their armed gangs—whether cops or rightist goons—will not hesitate to use....

Fewer than 100 days into the new Democratic administration, workers in the United States and the world over have been given the chance to take a cold, hard look at the truth about the Clinton White House and bipartisan Congress. That reality should redouble our determination to unite and organize as a class—across national borders and beyond skin color, language, or sex—to defend the economic, social, and political rights of working people, which are under attack both at home and abroad by the employers and their government.

Youth Exchange

Continued from front page

strains put on it. In particular, I want to see the education system and health-care system.”

Travanty, a political science and art student at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, is part of a group of several dozen college and high school students in the Twin Cities who are building a delegation from their area to Cuba this summer. They will take part in the Third Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange, July 24-31. They will travel to Havana, as well as Santiago de Cuba, where they will take part in the national celebration of the 50th anniversary of the July 26, 1953, assault on the Bayamo and Moncada barracks. That was the beginning of Cuba’s revolutionary war, through which Cuban workers and farmers overthrew the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista, took power into their own hands, and began building a socialist society. The revolution was led by the July 26 Movement and Rebel Army, headed by Fidel Castro, now Cuba’s president.

The project is hosted by Cuba’s Union of Young Communists, Federation of University Students, Federation of High School Students, and Brother Saiz Cultural Association. Hundreds of young people throughout the United States are expected to take part. The week-long tour will be an opportunity for youth from this country to meet their Cuban peers, and exchange experiences and ideas about world politics.

“We have been holding meetings every two weeks on the U of M campus, with about 15-20 people at each meeting,” said Travanty. “I think about one-sixth or one-fifth of the group is high school students.” The meetings were initiated by the Minnesota Cuba Coalition and professors at the University of Minnesota.

Similar delegations are being built around the country.

More than 50 people attended a Youth Exchange planning meeting in Los Angeles April 12. The Los Angeles Coalition in Solidarity with Cuba has organized these gatherings here every other week since January.

The April 12 meeting included students from a number of area colleges and high schools.

Several organizations are endorsers of the Youth Exchange in LA. They include the Comité Zapatista de Los Angeles, the Puerto Rican Alliance, the Central American Resource Center Youth Leadership Program, the Young Socialists, and several campus chapters of the Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (MEChA), and Raza Student Associations.

Sol Porras, the chairperson of the MEChA chapter at California State University, Northridge, reported on preparations on her campus for the trip. “We have about 20 people planning on going to Cuba this summer from my school,” she said. “We have already started plans for fund-raising, including parties and teach-ins.”

Lawrence Reyes of the Puerto Rican Alliance in Los Angeles described plans to raise funds for the broader group from Los Angeles, which include a fund-raising barbecue April 27. One upcoming event will be an April 24 public forum titled “Defend Cuban Sovereignty,” which will feature a panel of speakers including leaders of the local delegation for the Youth Exchange.

Several of the youth planning on going on the Youth Exchange have begun working to obtain licenses to travel legally. While the U.S. government recently revoked the “people-to-people” licenses, tightening its travel restrictions to Cuba, other types of licenses exist. They include academic permits belonging to universities or academic departments, religious licenses, and permits for humanitarian aid. Journalist licenses exist for those who are employed full-time by a media outlet and have an assignment from that employer to cover the event.

Meeting participants also decided to study Cuban history and current events in preparation for the trip. Jeff Kikawa, a student at California State University, Long Beach, proposed that the group study *The Second Declaration of Havana*. Two people at the meeting bought copies of the pamphlet, and another 16 placed orders for it.

Groups of young people are building the Youth Exchange in many other areas, including New York, Washington, D.C., and Cleveland. About 16 students and other youth took part in a film showing of the Cuban movie *Death of a Bureaucrat* at Barnard College in New York April 19 to raise funds for the exchange.

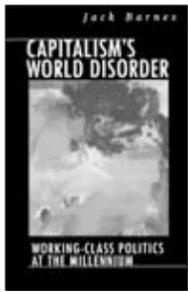
Many of these local groups are publicizing the Youth Exchange with the call by the hosting organizations in Cuba that initiated this project. “The current U.S. administration and the most reactionary sectors,” the document says, “have launched a fierce struggle against the Cuban people. Our youth and students want to live in peace with their next-door neighbor, however we will never give up our dreams.... Our Revolution has not only allowed us to inherit and enjoy its conquests, but enables us to play a leading role in an ongoing ‘Battle of Ideas,’ building a more just and cultured society....”

“Let’s find a common road to mutual understanding, tolerance, peace, and respect. Let’s discuss the important issues of great concern in today’s world, such as ecology, unemployment, democracy, racism, culture as people’s identity, the situation in education, women’s issues, and many others. **Let’s meet and live in a spirit of solidarity at the III Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange. We await you in Cuba.**”

Olympia Newton is a member of the Young Socialists in Los Angeles. Paul Pederson, a member of the Young Socialists in New York, contributed to this article.

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Texas Machinists strike Lockheed Martin

Continued from front page

rehired several times since he started working for the company in 1984. "You are only considered a Lockheed employee for nine months. After that you have to be rehired 'off the street,'" he explained. Benefits and wages paid start over again with each time hired—often lower than when laid off.

Pauline Ramos, with 22 years in the plant, explained that this was her third strike. "They want us to give up what we already have," she told the reporters. You don't ever want to do that because once you give something up you will never see it again." Ramos heads up the union's video team. She said that in the 1984 strike the company used doctored video tapes to frame union pickets on charges of "violence." Since that time the union has main-

tained its own 24-hour video surveillance during strikes.

Workers were incensed by the news that despite the poor-mouthing of the bosses in recent weeks leading up to the contract deadline, multi-million dollar bonuses were given to company chairman Vance Coffman and Dain Hancock, president of the Fort Worth-based aeronautics division.

The last contract was signed in 2000 after a 17-day strike. Since then about 1,700 Machinists have been hired as the result of the company increasing production for new contracts.

A younger layer of workers has been hired in the last 18 months, many as part of the multi-billion dollar bonanza that Lockheed garnered from the Pentagon, besting its main competitor in 2001, the

Boeing Corporation. The bosses had hoped this younger layer would be less inclined to strike and would subordinate their interests to the calls for "sacrifice" during wartime. Instead the company came up against unexpected resistance.

The Fort Worth *Star-Telegram* reported April 18, in an article titled "Solidarity for the ages," that these new workers voted overwhelmingly against the contract, and are turning out in large numbers at the picket line. The company withdrew a demand to exclude new hires from the retirement program. The company has tried to maintain production using technicians, engineers, and research personnel along with supervisors. By the third day of the strike, management admitted that production is slowing down and the company is trying to fill

a 300-plane backlog of orders with F-16s that are already assembled.

The union local's web page features the solidarity the strikers have received from nonunion workers in the plant, other unions, and local businesses, including a contingent of United Auto Workers members who have walked the picket line.

This outpouring of solidarity from workers in the area and from those working in the plant shows the failure of the company's baiting of the workers as "overpaid." Strikers said that wages range from \$11.00 up to \$22.43 per hour for the highest-paid skilled workers.

To send solidarity and find out more information about this important battle, visit the local's web page in Fort Worth at www.776iam.org

LETTERS

Democracy and thieves

Jonathan Borchart's letter [in the April 21 *Militant*] says, "U.S. occupation will provide freedom to achieve freedom. Workers will be able to make more progress under U.S. domination than Saddam. The Iraqis will use our standards of democracy against the U.S. rulers."

This is completely untrue, by a simple look at the history of American imperialist wars in the last century.

They can never "provide freedom" as they always supported the reactionary dictatorships everywhere in the world, for example the killing of Mossadegh in Iran and Lumumba in Congo.

If American workers couldn't use their standards of democracy against their rulers, so can we be sure that the Iraqi workers will do so?

Also, Ahmed Chalabi is a previous bank robber, so if what is going to be there is a democracy, it will simply be a "democracy of thieves" in the ministry of oil.

Nasser El Hossary
By e-mail

Destruction of history

The U.S. government allocated its massive resources in accordance with its priorities. It had Special Ops inside Iraq for months making sure that the intended war booty would not be damaged. But U.S. military officers did not lift a finger when millennia of cultural history was destroyed when first Iraq's national museum was sacked and then its national library burned to the ground.

If anything, the destruction of Iraq's cultural and bibliographic history fits in perfectly with Washington's plans. I believe it was Malcolm X who pointed out



that an integral part of conquering and enslaving a people is convincing them they have no past—and hence no future.

Robert Dees
San Francisco, California

Indispensable coverage

I will be moving in a couple of months to be closer to a branch [of the Socialist Workers Party] and the center of working-class politics, and to participate in activities.

The *Militant* has been indispensable in the recent period by bringing such crystal clarity. This war and the events and openings that will unfold for our side have caused me to rethink what I need to do with my time and energy.

Although we remain mostly in a situation which is characterized by what the ruling class is doing to the working class, nevertheless, the signs of growing resistance and the initial boiling out of a vanguard

layer of working-class fighters is there, and the leaves are also shaking at the top of the tree.

Important, though small, layers of people are unsatisfied with their framework for interpreting world events and I think Pathfinder titles will become attractive to growing numbers with questions.

Jim Kendrick
Seattle, Washington

Dignity

I'd like to solidarize with our five Cuban comrades. The voice of the people succeeded in taking them out of the "hole," and we have to continue this battle that has no frontiers until they obtain their freedom.

The "war on terror" is putting in prison a large number of families from the Middle East and South Asia. This class of despotism is based on lies—jailing, deporting in groups, "disappearing" people, as they do in this prison in

York, Pennsylvania.

My situation is critical and I ask you to listen: for 48 days I have been in an iron box, in solitary confinement, 24 hours per day. There are only 45 minutes for the cleaning of the "box," to speak on the telephone, and for visits to the clinic.

The food is passed through a crack that is placed near the floor (as for dogs).

A guard came to have me sign something because they were returning the *Militant*, because it did not come from the publisher. I asked him to show me the envelope; instead he began swearing and calling me a "terrorist."

I will never let them destroy my dignity and principles.

No one can take us away or separate us from our communities, and no one has the right to stop our mouths from expressing our opinions.

I ask every person who reads this letter to please give a "moment of silence" for the thousands of dead—children, women, elderly, the people of Iraq—as well as for the invaders who fell offering their lives as cannon fodder.

Farouk Abdel-Muhti
York, Pennsylvania

Farouk Abdel-Muhti, an outspoken advocate of the Palestinian

struggle for self-determination, was jailed without charges one year ago.

While facing the threat of deportation from the United States, where he has lived since the 1970s, Abdel-Muhti has been imprisoned indefinitely, first in a series of jails throughout New Jersey and more recently in a prison in York, Pennsylvania, notorious for its harsh conditions. See page 4 for details of New York protest on the anniversary of his jailing.—Editor

Time to give to the Militant Prisoners Fund

The recent announcement that the U.S. prison population is at an all-time high of 2 million makes this a good time to give to the *Militant Prisoners Fund*. The fund makes it possible for workers and farmers behind bars to receive a subscription to the *Militant* at reduced rates: \$6 for a six month subscription and \$12 for one year.

Checks or money orders earmarked "Prisoners Fund" should be made out to the *Militant* and sent to 152 W. 36th St. Suite 401, New York, NY 10018.

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.

Wall Street praises Brazil's president

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

The International Monetary Fund and Wall Street are praising most of the policies of Brazil's new president, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who completed 100 days in office April 8. Da Silva won with a landslide in last October's presidential ballot as the candidate of the Workers Party. His election had raised fears among financiers from Washington and other imperialist powers that his administration would default on Brazil's foreign debt of \$260 billion.

Held up as a model for "emerging" capitalist countries in Latin America in the mid-1990s, Brazil's economy entered a tailspin in 1998 marked by a contraction of the gross domestic product and the skyrocketing of consumer interest rates up to 150 percent. The government received a \$41.5 billion "rescue" package from the IMF in exchange for cutbacks on the social security system and other social programs.

The downward spiral continued in 2002. The real, Brazil's currency, declined by 35 percent, and unemployment soared, reaching 20 percent in Sao Paulo, the country's largest city—making for nearly 2 million people without jobs in that industrial center alone. Inflation remains in double digits.

Lula, as da Silva is known, has used the initial months of his presidency to both assure the banks that the government will repay all loans, and to promise social programs to address the hunger and sharply declining living conditions facing the majority of workers and farmers. His election registered rising expectations among work-

ing people in Brazil, who have been devastated by the effects of the worldwide capitalist economic depression and the outgoing regime's austerity measures.

"Far from breaking with the market-friendly program of his predecessor, Fernando Henrique Cardoso," noted the April 8 *Financial Times*, "the government has kept to the same cautious course." Da Silva's "unexpected conservatism," has won praise from imperialist lenders anxious about a continued flow of payments into their coffers from Brazil's foreign debt. "Only about six months ago, it was generally feared that Brazil, South America's largest economy, was drifting inexorably on to the rocks of debt default and financial collapse," the *Times* stated. "Almost the opposite has occurred: Brazil has come into fashion on Wall Street. Traders and investors who shunned it last year are now scrambling to buy Brazilian bonds and equities."

PT shifts further to the right

Why has this happened? The governing Workers Party (PT) has further shifted to the right in its policies and practice. "Having voted in December 2001 for a 'rupture' with the 'neo-liberal' economic model introduced by former President Fernando Henrique Cardoso," said the *Financial Times*, "the party has rowed back towards the center of the political spectrum with astonishing speed." Lula, the paper said, "has been true to his word" in keeping post-election promises to stick with agreements Cardoso had made with the

IMF.

Da Silva's budget proposal to Congress in March included \$14 billion in spending cuts, which he described as "bitter medicine" for the economy that caused him to lose "a few nights' sleep." The budget and da Silva's promise to energetically pursue the previous administration's plans for slashing the pensions of government workers have steadied imperialist bankers' nerves about receiving monthly interest payments. Jorge Marquez-Ruarte, head of the IMF's western hemisphere department, told a New York business gathering in April that the new Brazilian government "will not default—ever."

Da Silva has reinforced the favorable impression on big business by appointing prominent capitalist figures to his governing team. They take their seats alongside the seven trade union leaders in the cabinet of 29. Luiz Fernando Furlan, president of Sadia SA, Brazil's largest chicken and food-processing company, was named minister of trade and industry. Roberto Rodrigues, the new minister of agriculture, is a soy and sugarcane businessman and head of the Brazilian Association of Agribusiness, which includes dozens of domestic and foreign commodity giants.

Da Silva also appointed Henrique Meirelles as new president of the Central Bank. Meirelles had been elected to Congress with the Social Democratic Party and is a former executive at FleetBoston. The choice was applauded by Cardoso as well as the departing bank chief.

"The government is not trying to overturn capitalism," said Brazilian legislator Fernando Gabeira, a member of the Workers Party and a former guerrilla fighter against the military dictatorship of the 1960s. Lula's administration, he said, aims to "attract more poor people... to the capitalist center." The president is using pro-worker demagoguery and his origins as a leftist trade unionist towards this end.

A layer of Brazilian capitalists has taken advantage of the devaluation of the real, which lowers the cost of Brazilian goods on the international market, to expand exports. Production of soybeans, for example, from Brazil and neighboring Argentina—whose currency has lost three-quarters of its value since the Argentine economic meltdown at the end of 2001—will surpass U.S. production this year. Agribusiness giant Archer Daniel Midland aims to profit from this consequence of the economic crisis by expanding its investments in Brazil. Rising exports are on target to bring a record \$16 billion trade surplus.

Since Lula's election the currency has stabilized at its low point of about three reals to the dollar.

While the IMF and World Bank have voiced optimism about the new government's ability to "lower the expectations" of working people and keep payments on the debt as previously, other foreign investors are pulling out of Brazil. In January three U.S. banks—J.P. Morgan Chase, Bank of America, and Citicorp—cut their "exposure" in Brazil by 50 percent. They were joined by Crédit Lyonnais of France, the Italian Banco Fiat, and Germany's second largest bank. John Dizard of the *Financial Times* advised profit-seekers at the end of March to "Take the money and run—out of Brazil."

The capitalist media is pointing to "pension reform"—cuts in the retirement system for government employees with 35 years of service—as the biggest test for da Silva's government. Lula has promised "pension reform" but has not presented any final proposals yet.

Carlos Borges, a government-employed road crew worker, told the *Washington Post* that he and other workers voted for the Workers Party candidate because "the previous government paid too much attention to the bankers and the business community." Borges added that "if he cuts our pension, many of us will be very, very disappointed."

The new government's budget proposal includes da Silva's much-publicized "Zero Hunger" program. The budget will allocate \$1.6 billion to provide food stamp-like vouchers for the 50 million people—nearly one-third the population—who live in poverty in Brazil. Da Silva has increased the minimum wage for government workers, though this standard is largely ignored by private companies, reports BBC News.

Farm workers resume land takeovers

In March the Movement of Landless Rural Workers (MST), which supported Lula in the October election, ended a moratorium on land takeovers it had announced January 1 to coincide with the inauguration of the new president. Farm workers resumed occupations of private- and state-owned properties in five states. On March 5, some 500 women and 100 children set up tents at the headquarters of the Agrarian Reform Institute in the state of Goias, 125 miles from Brasilia, the capital.

"We have waited long enough for the new government to take concrete action in favor of agrarian reform," said MST leader Joao Paulo Rodriguez. "The wait-and-see period is coming to an end." The PT government has called on the farm workers to end the land occupations, promising to institute a "peaceful process" of land redistribution.

Land ownership in Brazil is among the most unequal in the world, with 20 percent of the population in possession of 90 percent of the land. The poorest 40 percent own just 1 percent of the land.

New Zealand strikers defend seniority

BY FELICITY COGGAN

TOKOROA, New Zealand—Workers at the giant Kinleith pulp and paper plant here marked the beginning of their sixth week on strike April 13 with a family "fun day" at a park by the picket line. Around 250 workers and their families joined an afternoon of games, food, and entertainment provided by local businesses and community organizations, and participants took the opportunity to learn more about the issues in the strike.

The 270 workers at the Carter Holt Harvey mill, members of the Engineering, Printing, and Manufacturing Union, walked off the job March 7 and set up a 24-hour picket line to protest a concession contract proposed by the company. The previous contract expired two years ago.

Key to the dispute is the company's demand to scrap the current seniority provisions governing job assignments and promotion, and to replace the specialized firefighting unit by assigning other workers to carry out these duties on top of doing their own jobs—a move that would seriously compromise safety standards.

Carter Holt Harvey, which is reportedly losing NZ\$500,000 (NZ\$1 = US\$0.54) per day through the strike, has been using the time to perform its annual plant maintenance, usually carried out through a shutdown with the workers on paid leave.

As the strike entered its second month, pressure mounted on the company from fruit exporters it normally supplies with packaging. The company ordered paper on site to be moved out by rail. When train drivers were threatened with court action if they refused to cross the picket line, the strikers decided not to enforce it at this stage. Some paper has also been moved out by truck. As supplies run out, the company is seeking to import packaging to supply the fruit industry, which is heading into peak season.

With negotiations stalled, workers are noting the tough stance management is taking. "The main agenda is to break the union," said John Wallace, a union delegate, in an interview with the *Militant*.

The stakes in the dispute for the bosses were spelled out in an opinion column by



Militant/Felicity Coggan

Striking paperworkers at picket camp outside Kinleith mill, Tokoroa, April 13.

business writer Jim Eagles in the April 14 *New Zealand Herald*. Describing the dispute as "one the company has to win," he said, "It is probably—hopefully—the last sign of the Jurassic age of industrial relations that was swept away elsewhere years ago." The Kinleith site will not achieve its potential, he claimed, if "industrial dinosaurs continue to dominate the site and hamstring its development."

The strikers hold weekly meetings, and union officials have been visiting work sites around the country and in Australia to win support. As a result of donations from fellow unionists here and overseas, each striker receives weekly grocery vouchers, and extra food as well. Some strikers are replying to the personal letters they have been receiving from the company, threatening to close the mill, with their own letters asking why the company is refusing to talk.

While the strike has received little coverage in the big-business press, the TV docu-

mentary program *Sunday* ran an item April 7, with a preamble describing the Kinleith strikers as some of the highest-paid workers in New Zealand. Senior production delegate James "Whiskey" Hastie took exception to this on the program, stating, "Our forefathers are what have got us our conditions now, and my job is to try and retain that and to bring other people at a lower standard up to those sort of conditions—for my children and their children. Otherwise corporate greed will just take, take, take, and they'll end up with nothing."

Meanwhile Carter Holt Harvey chief executive Peter Springford reported April 16 a net first quarter profit of \$51 million, up from \$17 million for the same period last year. He said the company will hold "as long as it takes" to win the dispute.

Felicity Coggan is a sewing machine operator and member of the National Distribution Union.