

THE MILITANT

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build strike solidarity rally
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 67/NO. 22 JUNE 30, 2003

Tel Aviv unleashes military onslaught on Hamas

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

In the wake of the June 4–5 “peace” summit in Aqaba, Jordan, the Israeli government has launched a military onslaught against the Palestinian organization Hamas. In virtually daily air raids the second week of June, Tel Aviv carried out five assassination attempts against the group’s leaders, killing more than 20 Palestinians and wounding 100. The Israeli government-owned Israel Radio said the army has been ordered to “completely wipe out” Hamas, and that each of its supporters should be considered a target, “from the lowliest member to Sheik Ahmed Yassin,” the organization’s central leader.

After initially stating he was “troubled” by the Israeli helicopter gunship attacks, U.S. president George Bush labeled

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UFCW seeks support for union drive at Carolina plant

BY BILL ARTH

ATLANTA—An overflow crowd of more than 250 union members and civil rights supporters packed the auditorium at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site June 12 for the premier showing of a documentary video on the decade-long effort by workers to organize a union at the Smithfield Foods hog-processing plant in Tar Heel, North Carolina. The video is part of a campaign by the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) to pressure Smithfield to end its fight to keep

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Three Houston cops convicted in killing of Serafin Olvera

BY JACQUIE HENDERSON

HOUSTON—Three immigration agents were found guilty June 9 of violating the civil rights of Serafin Olvera. The cops denied Olvera medical care for more than seven hours after beating him and breaking his neck during their March 25, 2001, raid on a Bryan, Texas, home, where he and other immigrant construction workers were living.

Olvera, a longtime Houston resident and Mexican citizen, was paralyzed in the attack, which broke his spinal cord. He died 11 months later.

Louis Rey Gomez, Richard Henry Gonzales, and Carlos Reyna were convicted by a Houston jury of willfully denying Olvera medical care after his paralyzing injury. The jury also found Gonzales, who doused the Mexican worker with pepper spray, guilty

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UN nuclear agency aids U.S. anti-Iran campaign

Washington tries to use student protests in drive to oust regime

BY PATRICK O’NEILL

United Nations officials, faithfully serving the interests of Washington and the other imperialist powers, have begun a weeklong meeting on Iran’s nuclear program by demanding the right to organize more inspections of the Natanz nuclear power plant, still under construction 200 miles south of Tehran. “I call on Iran to permit us to take environmental samples at the particular location where allegations about enrichment activities exist,” said Mohamed ElBaradei.

As the director-general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), a UN agency, ElBaradei made this statement at the opening of the group’s board of governors meeting in Vienna June 16. ElBaradei said that Iran should sign an Additional Protocol to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty that would grant IAEA “inspectors” wider access and the right to carry out more intrusive, short-notice inspections. U.S. officials have wielded a fuller report by the agency, released June 16, as a propaganda club against the Iranian government. Washington’s IAEA representative Kenneth Brill described the document as “a very serious and sobering report and we have to deal with it.”

U.S. president George Bush has also tried to rhetorically co-opt protests against Tehran, declaring support for student-led demonstrations that have come under attack by police and vigilante forces.

These developments are marked by the aggressive probes and threats of the U.S. rulers, whose military forces now flank Iran on both its Afghani and Iraqi borders,



Iranian students rally at Amir Kabir University in Tehran June 16. Demonstrations began a week ago in opposition to proposals by government officials to privatize some schools. Washington has tried to use protests to push for “regime change” in Iran.

and the fearful response of the Iranian regime, which is bending over backwards to emphasize its willingness to cooperate. Washington is seeking to reverse the gains of the 1979 Iranian revolution.

U.S. officials have named Iran and north Korea as targets of a new campaign to intercept ships and planes alleged to be carrying proscribed armaments and technology.

Under an agreement now being put together, the governments of Australia, France, Germany, Japan, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States,

along with the workers state of Poland, will work together to interdict ships and planes claimed to be carrying such cargo. Washington is pressing Beijing, Moscow, and Seoul to join the pact.

According to the June 15 *New York Times*, the aim is “a coalition of nations that would allow ships to be boarded and aircraft to be forced down the moment they slipped into any cooperative country’s waters or airspace.”

In a move that immediately undermined

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European Union governments adopt punitive measures against Cuba

Hundreds of thousands in Havana take to the streets to protest

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

Hundreds of thousands of Cubans marched on the Spanish and Italian embassies in Havana June 12 to protest the sanctions recently decreed against Cuba by Madrid, Rome, and other imperialist governments in Europe to try to politically isolate the revolutionary government.

A week earlier, the European Union (EU) announced its member states had unanimously decided to end high-level visits to Cuba, cut back cultural exchanges with the island, and—in a move seen by Cubans as particularly provocative—invite opponents of the Cuban Revolution to receptions at their embassies in Havana.

An EU statement declared that the measures were in response to the recent trials and executions of three hijackers and the prosecution of several dozen opponents of the Cuban Revolution in April.

The sanctions are part of the campaign that imperialist governments from Washington to Paris have been waging to brand Cuba as a repressive dictatorship. This campaign has focused on the trials of 75 opponents of the revolution, portraying them as “dissidents” victimized for expressing their ideas.

The 75 were convicted for acts of collaboration with the U.S. government as part of its 44-year-long campaign to overthrow the Cuban government. Over the past year the head of the U.S. Interests Section in Ha-

vana, James Cason, has openly organized provocations such as funneling millions of dollars to finance the activities of these individuals, who posed as “independent journalists,” “independent librarians,” “independent doctors,” or even “independent trade unionists.”

The propaganda campaign has also sought to lump the trials of the U.S.-financed “dissidents” together with the case of three armed hijackers, presenting them as harmless individuals who sought to leave the island for political reasons. The three were tried and convicted for commandeering a ferry off the coast of Havana and threatening the lives of its passengers, and were executed. The case was part of a string of violent hijackings that escalated over the past year, fostered by Washington’s policy of limiting visas for Cuban applicants, automatically granting legal residence to any Cuban who reaches U.S. territory by whatever means, and refusing to prosecute hijackers. No further hijackings from Cuba have been reported since these trials.

As part of this propaganda drive, on June 5 the 15-member European Union issued a statement that accused the revolutionary government of actions “aiming not only at violating fundamental freedoms in Cuba, but also at depriving civilians of the ultimate human right, that of life.” Cuban government officials said they first learned about the declaration in the international

press.

The statement, released by the Greek government, which currently holds the EU presidency, claimed Havana had trampled on the rights of “members of the Cuban opposition and of independent journalists, being deprived of their freedom for having expressed freely their opinion.” It demanded their immediate release.

The statement also warned that the body would “proceed to the reevaluation of the

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Moroccan fights deportation in Montreal

BY GRANT HARGRAVE

MONTREAL—More than 100 people gathered here May 31 to call for the immediate release of Adil Charkaoui, a 30-year-old Moroccan landed immigrant held without charges on a “security certificate” since his arrest on May 21.

The “security certificate” allows the government to arrest individuals, jail them without charges, and hold a secret trial or hearing at which neither the accused nor their lawyer have any right to see the evidence or confront any government witnesses. Such certificates can be used against refugees and landed immigrants (permanent residents). If a judge agrees with the government, the accused can be summarily deported. The Canadian Security and Intelligence Service (CSIS), Canada’s secret police, claims that Charkaoui is a “danger to national security” because he allegedly has links with international terrorism.

At the gathering, Adil Charkaoui’s sister, Hind Charkaoui, said that their family arrived in Canada in 1995 “dreaming of

liberty and justice,” which was shattered after he was arrested. Adil Charkaoui has worked as a teacher in Montreal and is currently a Ph.D. student. He now has an 18-month-old daughter and his wife is expecting their second child. Hind Charkaoui said that her brother was harassed by the CSIS, who asked him to act as an informer. After refusing to work for the secret police, he was not granted Canadian citizenship, unlike the rest of his family.

The meeting was organized by the Justice Coalition for Adil Charkaoui. Mohamed Cherfi of the Non-Status Refugees Action Committee (CASS), which has mobilized hundreds of refugee applicants from Algeria whom the Canadian government had tried to deport to that country, also spoke. “We all dreamed,” he said, “but when we see it from the inside the dreams are worthless. What we face is government repression.” He explained how a May 29 sit-in organized by CASS in the Ottawa offices of the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, Denis Coderre, was attacked

by the riot squad. They used “very violent methods, methods that we did not think existed in Canada,” he said.

Twelve people were arrested and the police beat three of them after they had been handcuffed, including Cherfi. The three showed the wounds from the Taser guns used by the cops, and in one case from the butt of a cop’s revolver used to strike them.

“We have to learn how to fight them,” added Cherfi. “We have to get involved. Our strength is in our numbers.” He finished by calling for mobilizations, including at the next judicial hearing for Adil Charkaoui, which will be in early July in Montreal. He also invited participants to sign cards addressed to Coderre demanding the release of Mohamed Harkat, an Algerian who is also being held without charges on a security certificate (see article in the May 26, 2003, *Militant*).

Representatives from the Muslim Council of Montreal (MCM), and the No One is Illegal Campaign of Montreal also spoke at the meeting.

A press release denouncing the use of the security certificate to arrest and detain Charkaoui was issued May 27 by the League of Rights and Liberties, Amnesty International – Canada, the American Association of Jurists, and the Coalition for the International Surveillance of Civil Liberties. On May 30 the Canadian Arab Federation also issued a press release denouncing the use of security certificates in relation to the case of Charkaoui.

The Justice Coalition For Adil Charkaoui is demanding his immediate release—along with all those who are being held under security certificates, an end to deportation proceedings, and a fair trial.

For more information or to get involved in the defense campaign contact the Justice Coalition for Adil Charkaoui at (514) 583-2208 or by email at justiceforadil@riseup.net. The coalition has a website www.montrealmuslimnews.net/adilfile.htm

Donations for the Adil Charkaoui campaign can be made payable to: JFM Jamiyatu Falahi AIMuslimin and mailed to: MCM: Muslim Council of Montreal, P.O.Box 5286, St-Laurent Stn., St-Laurent QC, H4L 4Z8

Strike shuts down ports of Faeroe Islands

BY ÓLÖF ANDRA PROPPÉ

REYKJAVIK, Iceland—A five-week strike involving more than one-third of the workforce in the Faeroe Islands ended at midnight June 5. The islands, situated in the Atlantic Ocean north of Scotland, are a Danish colony that is home to 46,000 people. A movement against Danish rule has been popular there for over a century.

The strike involved all “unskilled” workers in private businesses. In the beginning the unions demanded a raise of 25 Danish kroner (DK) per hour (US\$3.98) over the next two years. In the course of the strike they lowered their demand to 8.6 DK (US\$1.37), plus a 2 percent raise in the pension. The employers highest offer before the settlement was a 4 DK (\$0.64) raise

In the end, union officials negotiated an extension of the previous contract for two years, until April 30, 2005, with a few changes. These include an 8.6 DK hourly wage increase, a clause that forces employers to supply special gear needed to perform certain jobs, and a raise in the piece-rate paid to workers on the docks. As we go to press, the union had not announced the results of



the vote by the rank-and-file.

A large number of the workers on strike work in fish processing, which is the main industry on the islands, and on the docks. The home government of the islands, which the Danish imperialists have occupied since 1814, threatened to intervene in the strike “to save the valuables”—the fish that were not being unloaded from trawlers and the breeding fish, they claim, that were being damaged. Grétar Thorsteinsson, president of ASÍ, the labor federation in Iceland, is-

sued a statement encouraging its affiliates and their members to show solidarity with their fellow workers in the Faeroe Islands by not unloading trawlers from there arriving at Icelandic ports. No Faeroeish trawler unloaded in Icelandic harbors during the strike.

The employers organized a number of strikebreaking attempts. On the last day of the walkout an attempt was made to unload the ferry *Norraena*, which sails with passengers and cargo across the North Atlantic. When strikers prevented the ferry from being unloaded the police came and cleared the way for scabs and arrested a group of unionists. A statement issued by the unions said that this attack shows the authorities are in cahoots with the bosses and use the police against striking workers. The employers did not succeed in sowing mistrust among the workers, but made them stick together even tighter, the statement declared.

The strike also had more wide-ranging effects. Schools closed during the walkout as school janitors also joined the strike. Food stores and gas stations shut down as well since their supplies were on boats sitting loaded in the harbor.

The unions issued a statement on June 6 thanking all “pickets and captains, cooks, bus drivers, and everyone who gave a helping hand during the strike, and those who donated skerpu meat [dried lamb] and other good things.”

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The Militant

Vol. 67/No. 22

Closing news date: June 17, 2003

Editor: ARGIRIS MALAPANIS
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Published weekly except for one week in January, July, August and December.
The *Militant* (ISSN 0026-3885), 152 West 36th St., #401, New York, NY 10018. Telephone: (212) 594-1014; Fax (212) 594-1018.
E-mail: TheMilitant@verizon.net
The *Militant* website is: www.themilitant.com
Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to The *Militant* Business Office, 152 W. 36th St., #401, New York, NY 10018.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the *Militant*, 152 W. 36th St. #401 NY, NY 10018.

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EU takes measures against Cuba

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EU common position”—a threat to take further sanctions. In Brussels, according to the Associated Press, an EU spokesman said the European Union member states wanted “closer economic and political relations” with the Caribbean nation but “only if Cuba becomes more democratic.”

Cuba’s largest trade and investment ties are with countries in the European Union, accounting for 34 percent of its foreign commerce.

Some economic ties already cut off

In a June 11 statement, the Cuban foreign ministry pointed out that the Italian government had already unilaterally cut off 40 million euros in “cooperation aid” to Cuba earmarked for agricultural projects, medical equipment, and other social needs projected by the Cuban government.

The foreign ministry cited other hostile actions taken by governments in the European Union over the past three months, including a series of EU statements condemning Cuba for the April trials and the Dutch government’s cancellation of a trade mission to Havana.

On April 30 the European Commission decided to postpone “indefinitely” a request by Cuba to join the Cotonou Agreement, a trade accord between EU governments and some of their former colonies. In response, Cuba withdrew its application.

This imperialist campaign against revolutionary Cuba has been echoed by social-democratic, Stalinist, and other forces in Europe that identify themselves as the left. In France, for example, the Communist Party, the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR), and other parties in the workers movement publicly condemned the Cuban government’s recent actions as “repressive.” The group Reporters without Borders and other outfits staged physical confrontations at Cuban tourism and diplomatic offices in Paris on April 4 and on April 24.

Cuban leaders responded to the EU powers’ latest sanctions by pointing to their hypocrisy. In a June 12 speech at an international conference in Havana, Cuban president Fidel Castro said that while those governments were quick to condemn Cuba for supposed human rights violations, “none of the EU members said a single word about the crimes committed against thousands of Angolans and Mozambicans in dirty wars organized by capitalism’s centers of power” in recent decades.

In its statement, Cuba’s foreign ministry said the EU maintained a double standard on the question of the death penalty, by condemning Cuba for its legitimate actions but never asking the UN Human Rights Commission to denounce Washington for the 71 executions it carried out last year or for seeking the death penalty against minors and individuals who are mentally ill. It pointed to the brutal conditions facing the 2 million people in U.S. prisons today, as well as Washington’s violations “of the most elementary norms of human rights at the naval base in Guantánamo” and the roundup of thousands of U.S. residents of Arab or Muslim background who are

denied the right to due process.

Cuban leaders said the European powers were attacking Cuba in order to ingratiate themselves with Washington and patch up earlier differences over the imperialist war against Iraq, which they described as a result of the Bush administration’s “fascist” foreign policy.

Havana directs fire at Madrid, Rome

Cuban officials directed their fire at the Spanish and Italian governments. They pointed to the cutoff of development assistance by Rome, and noted that the Spanish regime of Prime Minister José María Aznar has been the most insistent in pushing the EU to take hostile measures against Cuba.

Cuban foreign minister Felipe Pérez Roque said that Havana does not judge all the European Union governments equally, and “knows well who are the principal instigators of this unusual provocation.”

In his June 11 speech Castro condemned Aznar, calling him “a little Fuehrer with a mustache and Nazi-fascist ideology” who is allied with Washington. He also called Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusconi a “fascist” and a “clown.” At June 12 demonstrations outside the Spanish and Italian embassies in Havana, marchers carried signs calling Berlusconi a puppet and comparing him to fascist leader Benito Mussolini.

After the EU decreed the cutoff in cultural exchanges with the island, the Cuban government announced it would take over the Spanish embassy’s cultural center in Havana, suggesting that Madrid was using it to fund counterrevolutionary groups in Cuba. The

Third Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange Havana, Cuba July 24–31

Young people from across the United States will be traveling to Cuba in July to participate in the Third Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange. They will meet with youth in that country, exchange ideas with them, and see firsthand the truth about Cuba’s socialist revolution. They will take part in the 50th anniversary celebration of the assault on Moncada, which launched the revolutionary war that brought down a U.S.-backed dictatorship. The project is hosted by the Union of Young Communists, Federation of University Students, and other youth organizations in Cuba. A national clearinghouse for information on the exchange has been set up in Los Angeles. Contact them at the e-mail address below to find out how you can join—**time is running out for new applicants, so act now!**



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foreign ministry said the center—renamed the Federico García Lorca Cultural Center after the Spanish poet who was assassinated in 1936 by the fascist forces in Spain during the civil war there—was being placed under Cuban administration and would be “dedicated to promote the best values of Spanish culture in our country.”

Meanwhile, U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell took Washington’s anti-Cuba campaign to a meeting in Santiago, Chile, of the Organization of American States (OAS) to demand that Latin American governments help “hasten the inevitable democratic transition to Cuba,” a euphemism for overthrowing the Cuban revolutionary government.

He denounced Cuba as “our hemisphere’s only dictatorship.”

A number of Latin American government officials, however, told the media they resented Powell’s heavy-handed insistence that they focus on Cuba at the expense of other issues. In a registration of their displeasure, OAS member states declined to elect the U.S. government’s nominee to the OAS’s Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, the first time a U.S. representative has not been voted onto the commission. Washington’s nominee was Rafael Martínez, an Orlando, Florida, medical malpractice lawyer and brother of U.S. secretary of housing Melquiades Martínez.

Tel Aviv’s military onslaught on Hamas

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Hamas as the principle obstacle in front of the “road map for peace.” White House spokesperson Ari Fleischer said June 12 that “the issue is Hamas. The terrorists are Hamas.”

The summit in Aqaba, Jordan, attended by Bush, Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon, and Palestinian prime minister Mahmoud Abbas had endorsed the so-called road map initiated by Washington, with the backing of the European Union (EU), Moscow, and United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan. The plan projects the creation of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip on the condition that the Palestinian Authority (PA) suppresses organizations fighting for Palestinian self-determination that Washington and Tel Aviv label “terrorist.”

Tel Aviv made minor initial concessions to the Palestinians—beginning to close a dozen largely uninhabited settlement outposts in the occupied territories, and releasing 100 of the more than 5,000 Palestinians it holds in jail—in order to align itself with Washington to pursue common objectives in the region. These shared goals by the Israeli and U.S. rulers include preventing Tehran from developing nuclear weapons and pursuing “regime change” in Iran, as well as rolling up the Lebanese-based

group Hezbollah, which is backed by the Iranian government, and Hamas.

Soon after the Aqaba summit, the Hamas leadership denounced the agreement and ended cease-fire talks with Abbas. On June 8, Hamas took responsibility for an attack on an Israeli army checkpoint at the Erez crossing from Gaza into Israel. Hamas militants carried out that assault jointly with two other groups, Islamic Jihad and the Al Aksa Martyrs Brigade, killing four Israeli soldiers. Hamas also subsequently claimed responsibility for other armed actions in Israel, including a June 11 suicide bombing attack on a Jerusalem bus that killed 17.

Like Hezbollah, Hamas has taken responsibility repeatedly for such armed actions against Zionist targets in Israel and the occupied territories. The group continues to call for the destruction of the state of Israel and is for the establishment of what it describes as an Islamic republic.

In what has become a central feature of Israeli assaults, Tel Aviv used helicopter gunships June 12 to fire at least six missiles at a car in the Gaza Strip, killing Hamas official Yasir Taha. Also killed in the Israeli assassination operation were Taha’s wife, three-year-old daughter, and four others on the street. A June 9 helicopter assault targeting another Hamas leader, Abdel-Aziz Rantisi, only wounded the intended victim. Tel Aviv defended its longstanding policy of assassination attempts against leaders of “terrorist” groups. Foreign ministry official Gideon Meir’s only regret the next day was that “unfortunately, we missed” the target.

Washington is promoting newly appointed Palestinian prime minister Abbas as an asset in its campaign to push the Aqaba plan. In his remarks condemning attacks by Hamas on Israel, Bush made a point of singling out Abbas as one who agrees with the White House plan for a “peaceful [Palestinian] state, living side-by-side with Israel.” U.S. officials view “the appointment of Mr. Abbas and the de facto marginalization of Yasir Arafat,” the *Financial Times* reported June 11, as “the single most important reason to hope for progress.” Arafat remains the president of the Palestinian Authority (PA) in the West Bank and Gaza, but he has been confined to his headquarters in Ramallah for the last two years because of Israeli army restrictions imposed on his movements. Both Washington and Tel Aviv have stated explicitly they will not negotiate with the Palestinians if Arafat is at the table.

Abbas has stated that the PA is “not go-

ing to outlaw anyone” or use force against other Palestinian groups. Other Palestinian officials say they are trying to convince all the parties to accept the Aqaba agreement and that the PA aims to “include Hamas in the system.” Both Abbas and Arafat denounced the Hamas bombing of a Jerusalem bus as well as Tel Aviv’s attacks on Hamas leaders as “terrorist operations.”

Tel Aviv seems to share Washington’s assessment of the new Palestinian prime minister. The Israeli rulers are carrying out their war against Hamas while the PA does no more than issue statements protesting Israeli army actions. The Palestinian Authority has not organized any mobilizations of Palestinians in response to the latest Israeli air raids in Gaza. Nor has it ordered the police force under its command into battle against the Israeli incursions into territory nominally under its “control,” as it has done at times in the past.

At a June 12 Israeli cabinet meeting, Sharon described Abbas as “a chick who has still not grown his feathers,” the Israeli daily *Ha’aretz* reported. He said Tel Aviv will take the lead in the military campaign against Hamas until the Palestinian leader “grows feathers.”

The repeated army attacks on Palestinians in Gaza have encouraged some Israelis to take action against individual Palestinians. On June 11 about 100 Zionist protesters entered a Jerusalem market to attack Arab workers there; others gathered at Zion Square striking at Palestinians on their way home to the predominantly Arab eastern portion of the city.

Faced with a possible breakdown of the façade of Washington’s “peace” plan, the editors of London’s *Financial Times* asserted June 13 that the first step in kick-starting the road map is for Abbas to “establish a monopoly of violence” in the West Bank and Gaza.

In a letter to Bush, Virginia Republican John Warner, chairperson of the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee, urged the dispatch of a “peacekeeping” force under NATO command to the occupied territories to reinforce Washington’s objectives there. U.S. and Israeli government officials dismissed the idea. Washington is planning another summit in Aqaba in late June—including representatives of the European Union, the United Nations, and Moscow this time—to continue its efforts to push ahead with the U.S.-initiated plan.

U.S. anti-Iran campaign

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this show of unity among the imperialist powers, 1,300 French cops stormed the Paris offices of the People’s Mujahedeen, a political and military organization that is sworn to the overthrow of the Iranian government. The cops arrested 165 people and confiscated \$1.3 million in U.S. currency in the June 17 raid.

Although Washington has confiscated the heavy arms of the Mujahedeen’s Iraq-based units, it has long fostered the group as an ally in its drive against Iran.

Tehran has maintained that its atomic program is designed to help supply the country’s electricity needs. The Iranian government has also signaled that it will allow further inspections of its nuclear facilities, and is prepared to make other concessions to Washington’s demands. The latter include the call by both the U.S. and Israeli governments for Tehran to cut all aid

to fighters in Hezbollah in south Lebanon and Hamas or other Palestinian groups in occupied Palestine.

On June 15 Gholamreza Aghazadeh, head of Iran’s nuclear program, said that his government had failed to report importing from China a small quantity of uranium 12 years ago. He urged the IAEA to publish its report widely, saying that it did not back up U.S. charges that Iran had violated international protocols. The document contains “no mention of the word ‘violation,’” Aghazadeh said. “The report only mentions ‘failure,’ which is still a legal debate between us. And these are normal differences.”

Other Iranian government officials called on Washington to reenter state-to-state negotiations, recently suspended by the U.S. government.

Former president Hashemi Rafsanjani

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Three cops convicted in Houston killing

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of using excessive force. Reyna was found innocent of the additional charge of using excessive force in beating Olvera.

Sentencing was set for September 17. Gonzales could get up to 20 years in prison and \$500,000 in fines. Reyna and Gomez face up to 10 years in prison and up to \$250,000 in fines. Gomez's lawyer, Jay Norton, told the press following the trial, "I believe we will be filing the appropriate motions and appeal."

"I hope this decision will help others," said Martha Olvera, sister-in-law of Serafin. "I see this as a first step for everyone fighting for justice—no matter what color they are, no matter where they come from. It isn't just immigrants in this country who suffer injustice, who are denied their civil rights."

The case was brought to trial after a more than two-year campaign led by the Olvera family and the Serafin Olvera Justice Committee. The committee's efforts included actions publicizing the case in the United States and Mexico, pressing for trial first for

murder and then under Section 242 of the federal civil rights code, which states that law officers are prohibited from depriving people of basic rights.

Family members gathered information on Olvera's deported co-workers and roommates, went to Mexico and met with them, and convinced six of them to come to Houston to testify.

During the trial, which began here May 14, the workers detailed the events of the raid carried out by 12 Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) agents from both Houston and San Antonio. These workers described seeing the three agents beating Olvera as he lay on the floor with his hands and feet cuffed. The agents were members of a special team formed by the INS to hunt felons for deportation.

Under laws adopted under the Clinton administration, the immigration cops gained sweeping powers to round up and deport those charged with being "illegal" immigrants without the right to judicial review or appeal.

Rosendo Solís, Jesús Cruz Balderas, and Gumersindo Martínez, all from the Mexican province of Veracruz, testified that they were told by the assaulting agents that if they even looked at what was happening to Olvera, "The same thing will happen to you." Despite the threats they did look and came to testify.

"Olvera cried for help," recalled Cruz-Balderas. "He said, 'They broke me.'" Solís reported that Olvera asked for a doctor. Martínez and others showed the court how Olvera was kicked and kned by the cops.

Several cops who participated in the raid testified during the trial. Agent Gilbert Rodriguez testified he heard Gonzalez say, "Let's mace this f---r and see if he'll budge!" Another agent admitted that he failed to enter the names of those being deported, but denied he did it to make it impossible to trace possible witnesses.



Don Seributra

Martha and Socorro Olvera outside Houston federal building mark one-year anniversary of March 25, 2001, fatal cop attack on Serafin Olvera. This fight for justice scored a victory June 9 when three cops were convicted of violating his civil rights.

Union drive at Tar Heel meat plant

Continued from front page

the union out. A UFCW press release explains, "As a key Smithfield market area, Atlanta is the kickoff point for a new campaign: Witness: Justice@Smithfield—that will bring religious, civil rights, community and worker activists to food stores alerting both the retail operators and customers about the human rights abuses at Smithfield's plant in Tar Heel, North Carolina. Retail food operators and consumers will be asked to send a message to Smithfield."

The Tar Heel plant, the largest hog processing plant in the world, has nearly 6,000 workers, and slaughters 32,000 hogs per day over two shifts. By the company's own estimates, the union press release states, the plant has an annual turnover rate of 6,000 workers, or 100 percent. About 60 percent of the workforce is Latino. The majority of other workers are Black.

Union elections were held in 1994 and 1997, with the union losing both times. After the 1997 elections, supporters of the union won damages of \$755,000 in a civil lawsuit filed under the Ku Klux Klan Act. Union election monitors were badly beaten by company thugs after the election results were announced. A National Labor Relations Board judge also overturned the results from the 1997 union election at Smithfield and ordered the company to provide the UFCW with free access to the workers in the plant. Smithfield has tied up both decisions with legal appeals.

The union's video presentation includes interviews with Smithfield workers and former bosses on the gangster tactics used by Smithfield to defeat union organizing efforts. A favorite management technique was to foster divisions along racial lines. Black workers were threatened with replacement by Latino workers, and Latino workers were threatened with INS action and told that Black workers were attempting to eliminate them from the plant.

Speakers at the premiere included Doug Dority, UFCW international president; Joseph Lowery, Georgia Coalition for People's Agenda; Linda Chavez-Thompson, AFL-CIO executive vice president; William Lucy, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists; and other Georgia union officials, civil rights figures, and politicians. A showing of the video is planned for Raleigh, North Carolina, June 18.

The union has targeted Saturday, June 28, as a day for supporters of the Smithfield workers to visit local Atlanta stores to get out information on the union organizing campaign. They will meet at the Atlanta Central Labor Council, 501 Pulliam St. SW, from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m., to be dispatched to selected stores. More information on this fight is available online at www.smithfieldjustice.com.

Bill Arth is a meat packer and member of UFCW Local 1996.

Houston activists prepare Calero victory tour

BY JACQUIE HENDERSON

HOUSTON—Ten partisans of the Róger Calero Defense Committee met here June 14 to make plans for the first leg of Calero's international victory tour. "We want to give him a warm welcome," said Tony Dutrow opening the meeting. "Not like the greeting he got when he arrived here December 3."

On Dec. 3, 2002, Calero, an associate editor of *Perspectiva Mundial* and staff writer for the *Militant*, was arrested by immigration agents when he arrived at Houston Intercontinental Airport on his way back home from a reporting trip to Cuba and Mexico. He was thrown in an immigration jail where he was held for 10 days until an international campaign of protest won his release. While Calero was locked up in Houston, the government began deportation proceedings against him, using a conviction, which Calero received while in high school in 1988, for selling an ounce of marijuana to an undercover cop. The immigration service was fully aware of this conviction and waived it when it granted Calero permanent residency in 1990.

Since last December, Calero remained under the threat of deportation until the government moved to drop its case against him in early May, saying that circumstances had changed since his arrest and it was no longer in Washington's interest to pursue deportation. Calero has pointed out at recent public meetings that what changed in the ensuing five months was the swelling of public support for his fight against the government's efforts to deport him. On May 22, an immigration judge in Newark, New Jersey, where Calero lives, ruled that he cannot be deported, formally closing the case.

Houston is the first stop on an international victory tour to celebrate the May 22 decision that Calero is "non deportable."

Martha Olvera, one of the first in Houston to publicize Calero's case while he was still in the immigration jail, explained why she thought the victory tour was important: "There are many people like Calero, caught up by the immigration laws. But they don't act like Calero. They hire a lawyer and wait for results. And they are deported. Calero was different. From the beginning, even when he was in the detention center, he was organizing. He moved! He went everywhere,

The defense maintained the agents were performing their duties as best they could and that they believed the immigrant worker was faking his injuries. They tried to discredit the Mexican workers' testimony implying that they were bribed to come to testify by the prospect of working in Texas during the court proceedings. When asked if it was true that he made big money working as a construction worker in Texas during the trial, Cruz Balderas replied with dignity, "Not so much money." Then he explained, "The only difference in coming to Texas this time is that I didn't have to hire a coyote." On the day the trial began 18 immigrants abandoned by a coyote (smuggler) were found dead in a truck south of Houston.

Many working people in this area welcomed the verdict. "It is a partial victory," said Christobal Hinojosa of Mexicans In Action, a group which has helped to organize several protests since the 2001 raid,

referring to the jury decision. "A first step to what I believe will be a real victory as we continue to fight."

"They thought they could get away with it because they are the government and can do what they want to us," said Ruby Solorzón, a sewing machine operator in Houston. "They want immigrants to come here to work—they get the hot, dirty jobs like he had in construction—but they don't want to give them their rights."

Those fighting for justice for Serafin Olvera offered their solidarity to other struggles. Martha Olvera, for example, became one of the national co-chairs of the Róger Calero Defense Committee (see information on this page).

Amelia Pérez, an activist in the Serafin Olvera Justice Committee said that "Martha Olvera kept fighting even when it looked difficult. She always said, 'Si se puede. We can do it.'"

speaking out. We need to let people know what he did so that they can win too."

The group made plans for the two-day visit. They wrote and printed leaflets in Spanish and English for the victory meeting Thursday, June 19, at the Resurrection Church in the Denver Harbor area of Houston. They decided to hold a press conference the day before to publicize the victory and the meeting. One committee activist offered his home for a barbecue.

Following the meeting, several of the participants took the Calero flyer to a meeting of over 100 trade unionists and immigrant rights organizers who were launching the Texas leg of the "Immigrant Rights Freedom Ride," scheduled to leave Houston for Washington, D.C., in September. The Calero victory was warmly received at the gathering. Two reporters asked to be first in line to interview Calero.

New Jersey man wins fight against effort to deport him

BY NANCY ROSENSTOCK

NEWARK, New Jersey—"If we are strong and united, we can beat the system," said Omar Arango, after the government dropped its deportation case against him June 13.

Immigration officials sought to deport Arango to Colombia. Arango, a truck driver from Elizabeth, New Jersey, has lived in the United States for 22 years. Like thousands of other immigrants, the government's case against him was based on a prior felony conviction five years ago.

Leading up to his deportation hearing, 150 people added their names to a letter, which Arango presented to the judge, urging a halt to the deportation proceedings.

Some 30 relatives and friends packed the hearing room June 13. The judge ordered all but Arango's wife and children to a waiting room down the hall. When Arango walked out of the hearing victorious, friends and family erupted in applause and cheers.

After reading about the case of Róger Calero (see information in article above on this page) in the newspaper *Hoy* in January and looking for effective ways to fight his deportation, Arango and his family attended a meeting the next day in New York City in defense of Calero. A few weeks later, Arango spoke about his case at a similar meeting, organized by supporters of Calero's antideportation fight, held in Newark.

On the invitation of Calero, who just won a similar victory against the government's attempt to deport him, Arango will share the platform with Calero at a July 7 victory meeting in Newark, scheduled to take place at the Service Employees International Union Local 1199J union hall.

Róger Calero Victory Tour

Below is the schedule for the first leg of the tour. Requests for additional tour dates can be made to the committee.

Houston June 18–19
Twin Cities June 20–21
Jefferson, WI June 22
Chicago June 23–24
Des Moines June 25
Omaha June 26
Los Angeles June 27–28
San Francisco June 29–30
Seattle July 1–2
New York July 4–5
Newark July 6–7

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

Australia: strike at Morris McMahon enters fourth month

BY DOUG COOPER

SYDNEY, Australia—Striking members of the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union (AMWU) at Morris McMahon continue to gain ground in their fight to win their first union contract at the industrial can and drum manufacturer. Their fight, which began March 12, has become a focal point of union solidarity in Sydney.

The company has won an injunction against the strikers and other AMWU members from picketing directly in front of the factory gates. Strikers say the court order also prohibits unionists from visiting other workplaces to win support for their strike, calling such solidarity visits “incitement.” Prior to being slapped with this draconian order, the unionists were actively traveling to workplaces around the region to win moral and financial support for their fight.

Despite this, the workers continue to win broad support. In recent weeks hundreds of union members, in particular building and maritime workers, have beefed up picket lines with delegations ranging in size from a few workers to nearly 100. The Construction, Forestry, Mining, and Energy Union (CFMEU) and the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) have both been threatened with court injunctions to stop their members from staffing picket lines.

More than 50 wharfies, seamen, ferry deckhands, and other MUA members joined the picket on May 22. Nearly 100 participated on May 29, delaying a bus loaded with strikebreakers from leaving the factory for three hours. Members of the Australian Services Union, Fire Brigades Employees Union, and others have also come along.

Phil, a striker, when asked by an MUA member if it has all been hard times on the picket line for the first 12 weeks, said, “I can’t believe how much support we’ve gotten. We never knew what it was like [to

be in a union]. This was our first time but [this experience will go] with you to your grave.” Laughing lightly he added, “We’ve had some great times, too. There’s been plenty of joking and singing, too.”

He explained that the backbone of the strike are the mostly female assemblers. “The scabs can produce parts but the company can’t get them assembled without these women,” he said.

News of the fight broke into the major media in mid May. Australian Labor Party MPs have spoken in both the state and federal parliaments about the workers’ fight to win a union agreement.

Under growing pressure, the company began negotiations with AMWU National Secretary Doug Cameron on June 3. Negotiations were broadened the next day as the strikers’ rank-and-file negotiating committee joined them. Financial support for the strikers has been crucial to their ability to sustain the lengthy battle. The AMWU contributes \$180 per week to each striker and other unionists are taking collections at their workplaces. Members of the MUA at sites around the port of Sydney have raised over \$17,000 in contributions.

After hearing reports from striker James Bridge and union organizer Vanessa Seagrove at a May 19 MUA yard meeting at Patrick’s Port Botany, workers at the terminal voted to levy themselves \$50. The vote was unanimous and more than \$10,000 has been contributed and turned over to the strikers.

Texas sugar workers demand severance pay

BY STEVE WARSHALL

SUGARLAND, Texas—Carrying glow-in-the-dark signs reading “Dedicated service means zero,” “Imperial Sugar not sweet to workers,” and “No severance, no peace,”

Ontario Steelworkers strike to defend benefits



Some 3,300 steelworkers in Ontario, Canada, members of the United Steelworkers of America Local 6500 in Sudbury and Local 170 in Port Colborne, went on strike June 1 against Inco to fight a company concession drive against their health-care benefits, and for higher pensions and wages. The Sudbury complex generates about half of the nickel produced by the giant company, which, in total, produces 9 percent of the world’s supply of the metal. Pensions are a key issue in the strike. About 45 percent of the current workforce is eligible for retirement in the next three years.

Other MUA members at the CTAL container facility, P&O White Bay terminal, Patrick’s Darling Harbour wharves, Sydney Ferries and elsewhere have also raised funds.

“There’s been very good support for the levy, especially from some of the casuals,” said John Sotiri, an MUA member with 13 years on the waterfront. He estimated that 75 percent of the permanent workers and half the casuals at Patrick’s Port Botany had paid the \$50 as of early June. MUA members have a decades-long tradition of voting to organize such levies.

Commenting on the strike, Sotiri said, “This is just like it was with us,” referring to the 1998 national lockout of wharfies by Patrick Stevedores, which lasted 5 weeks. “Seeing you blokes brought back memories,” he said, not all of them good. The way the cops used force to clear picketers away from the factory gates prior to the anti-AMWU injunction, reminded Sotiri of the MUA dispute with Patrick. “It’s something you never forget,” he said.

Doug Cooper is a member of the Maritime Union of Australia.

Machinists at Fleet end long strike in Ontario

BY PATRICIA O’BEIRNE

TORONTO—About 200 of the 335 workers in Fort Erie, Ontario, who went on strike against Fleet Industries on October 1 are now back to work without a union contract, alongside scabs that were hired by the company during the strike. On March 22, the aerospace workers and office staff, members of International Association of Machinists (IAM) locals 939 and 171, voted by a two-thirds majority to ratify the company’s “final offer,” which they had rejected in February and January by near unanimous votes.

Fleet, owned by Magellan Aerospace, one of the largest unionized employers in Fort Erie, produces components for fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters.

The 300 production workers and 50 office workers had walked out in response to Fleet’s demands to gut seniority rights and replace the plant-wide seniority system with seniority by job classification.

On January 19, the workers rejected by a vote of 255 to 1 essentially the same demands they had turned down last fall. Accepting these offers would have meant an immediate layoff of all employees and recall based on favoritism, not seniority. The company proposal stated, “For the first six weeks following the resumption of operations, which will be a date specified by the Company following ratification, the Company has the right to recall employees out of seniority based on the company’s need, as determined by the Company.”

Strikers organized to win solidarity throughout the region. The unionists reached out to workers on strike against Anagram in St. Catharines and Niagara-on-the-Lake; to Steelworkers picketing at Washington Mills in Niagara Falls; and to members of the Canadian Auto Workers union who were locked out by Ronal Canada in Stevensville. There have been nine strikes and lockouts in the Niagara region over the last year.

On January 22, 100 strikers prevented replacement workers, escorted by police, from entering the factory in school buses with

black-out windows. Strikers succeeded in stopping the scabs again the following day, with help from members of other unions in the region. This union solidarity pushed back company attempts to use scabs for several weeks.

Production workers rejected another company offer on February 8—a proposal that was practically identical to the earlier ones—by a vote of 221 to 6. The following day office workers rejected these offers by a vote of 24 to 20. During the week that followed, Fleet strikers and their supporters successfully blocked buses carrying scabs from entering the plant, in spite of a court injunction that limited picketing.

On February 13, faced with the fact that not one worker on strike had crossed the picket line, Magellan bosses announced that they were going to close the plant. William Matthews, the vice-president of marketing at Magellan, said “when the group went on strike, we ran the plant with management and non-union. But we knew we couldn’t do that forever. We exercised our legal right to bring in replacement workers and we were unable to do that.”

The company said that there was enough work in the plant for a few months and offered strikers their jobs if they would cross the picket line and go back to work.

Local and national IAM officials on March 22 told the workers at Fleet that the best option to get severance pay from the company, given the announcement that the plant would be closing, would be to get back in the plant. The union leadership recommended that workers ratify the company’s “final offer,” which they had rejected in February, and apply for severance benefits under section 80 of the Labor Relations Act.

In a phone interview with the *Militant* in late May, IAM local 171 president Julius Antal reported that the company refused to recognize the vote and immediately began recalling workers out of seniority. Workers report that the company sent out a letter to each employee stating that they did not rec-

unemployed members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) Local 517 picketed the now-closed Imperial Sugar refinery and distribution plant in this southeast Texas community June 6.

ognize the March 22 vote. Upon returning to work, each worker was made to sign an individual contract with the company that specifies that no union activity is allowed in the plant.

In addition, Antal reported that two people were fired by the company, allegedly for “just cause” in relation to incidents that occurred during the strike. Over a dozen people never made applications under Section 80, because they did not want to return to work without a union contract and continue to picket outside the plant. While about 25 of the office workers who participated in the strike are back at work, about 20 office workers continue to picket.

Workers who have not been called back to work or who did not sign an individual contract with Fleet receive no severance pay and no unemployment benefits. One worker who is still picketing reported that workers in the plant had signed their first paychecks over to those still on the picket line.

The union has lodged an unfair labor practice complaint before the labor board, and is pursuing getting a severance package from Fleet.

As of the end of May, production in the plant is now running seven days a week, with the workers putting in a 48-hour workweek. On May 28, Fleet CEO Richard Neill sent a letter to the IAM stating that Fleet has “no intention” of reconsidering the decision to close the plant.

Despite Fleet’s success in restarting production without a union contract, some workers told this reporter that they are proud of the fight they waged. “I told everyone at a union meeting we had recently that we should all be proud of what we did and hold our heads up high, because we stood together,” said one worker, who is still on the picket line. “But we didn’t feel we could go any further in these conditions.”

Patricia O’Beirne is a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees in Toronto.

“They sent in a squad of union-busting specialists,” Robert Williams, who worked at the plant for 25 years, told *Militant* reporters. “They raised a hundred excuses of why they were going to close the plant. But in the end, they just had decided to get rid of it—and they decided it well over a year ago before any negotiations started. Now their operations are in Grammercy, Louisiana.”

“This is basically a case of corporate greed,” said IAM District 37 representative Gene Cobbins. “This company had intended to close the plant nearly a year ago. They never offered any alternative.”

Imperial Sugar shut down its sugar refinery here last year, throwing 325 workers on the street, according to an article in the May 30 *Houston Chronicle*. The article explains that management promised to keep its distribution and packaging facility open, where it employed roughly 130 workers, but decided to shut that down too, after it failed to get workers to accept major concessions.

Workers said the contract with the Machinists union at the plant did not expire until October 2003. But the company wanted the union to break the contract and vote on a new one with concessions on severance, seniority, and pay rates. The cuts would supposedly make the facility more “productive,” preventing a shutdown. The union refused to bring these proposals to a vote.

“It would have been like voting on your own destruction,” said Cobbins.

In the event of a plant shutdown, the existing agreement states that union members get severance benefits equivalent to between 20 and 60 hours pay for every year of service. In addition, most of the workers are due to receive Supplemental Unemployment Benefits, which the union had won, of roughly \$100 per week to bring the amount received during layoffs up to 60 percent of regular pay. The company is refusing to honor either of these agreements.

“I’ve worked here for 22 years. I came in a week and a half after high school,” said Thomas Washington. “Now I get nothing. No severance, no supplemental, and no insurance. Not only that, but there’s nothing out there now. Nobody is hiring.”

Workers said the union has taken the case to arbitration. While the plant is closed, they want people to know the truth about what happened. “We don’t know if we’ll get what’s owed to us or not,” said Washington. “But we plan to be back again on Monday morning.”

Europe and America: to the v

N.Y. event discusses appearance and reality of world politics and prosp

BY PATRICK O'NEILL
AND SAM MANUEL

NEW YORK—"Broad historical trends are working in favor of the international working class and its fight to overturn the imperialist order," said Jack Barnes at the conclusion of a public meeting attended by 250 people at Hunter College here June 7. The event was titled "Europe and America: To the Victor Go the Spoils; Appearance and Reality of World Politics, Prospects for the Revolutionary Movement Today."

Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, was the main speaker at the meeting, which took stock of developments in world politics and the class struggle as illuminated and accelerated by Washington's assault on Iraq and the war's aftermath.

The event was hosted by the New York SWP and Young Socialists. It was part of a series of activities of the communist movement that weekend. These included meetings of socialist workers in the coal mining, meatpacking, and garment/textile industries who are active in the corresponding unions; a gathering of Young Socialists and YS-age youth; and a meeting of the SWP National Committee.

Barnes was joined on the speakers panel by Róger Calero, an editor of *Perspectiva Mundial* and staff writer for the *Militant*; Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press; Ma'mud Shirvani, Pathfinder's Farsi-language editor; Joel Britton, a member of the SWP National Committee from Los Angeles; and YS leader Diana Newberry.

"If the U.S. government had gotten its way, our first speaker wouldn't be here tonight," said John Studer, coordinator of the Róger Calero Defense Committee, who co-chaired the meeting with YS leader Arrin Hawkins. On May 22, nearly six months after U.S. immigration agents had arrested Calero and initiated deportation proceedings against him, an immigration judge ruled he was "not deportable."

"I've been called many things in my life, but I've never been called 'nondeportable,'" said Calero when the applause had died down. "I offer my victory as a weapon to all workers in the same position." (For details of Calero's remarks see "Calero kicks off national tour" in last week's *Militant*; see also further coverage on page 4.)

Cuba remains target of imperialism

Mary-Alice Waters focused her remarks on the latest imperialist-orchestrated campaign against the Cuban Revolution. This campaign led by Washington is aimed at dividing and isolating the communist vanguard in Cuba and around the world, she said, "to see who will jump out of the trenches under fire."

The most recent attempts by the U.S. and other imperialist governments to brand Cuba a "repressive dictatorship" have put a spotlight both on the strengths of the Cuban Revolution and on the lines of fissure the enemy is trying to explore, she stated. Waters pointed to statements by prominent individuals and groups that have campaigned against Washington's economic war on Cuba who have criticized or taken their distance from recent actions by the Cuban government. These actions include the jailing of some 75 people convicted of collaborating with Washington in its campaign to subvert Cuban sovereignty and overthrow the revolution, and the execution of three men who were the ringleaders in the hijacking of a passenger ferry from the Havana harbor in April (see also front-page article on new European Union sanctions against Cuba.)

Among those who condemned the U.S.-led anti-Cuba campaign but opposed the executions of the three hijackers was the Communist Party USA, on the grounds that it "opposes the death penalty, and joins the call for its universal opposition," as a statement by the group's national board put it.

At this year's May Day rally in Havana, Pastors for Peace leader Lucius Walker



Militant/Eric Simpson

Top: audience at June 7 public meeting at New York's Hunter College. Bottom left: SWP national secretary Jack Barnes speaks. To his left are Arrin Hawkins and John Studer, who cochaired the meeting. Bottom right: Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press and editor of *New International*. Joel Britton, Diana Newberry, and Ma'mud Shirvani also spoke.

stated, "The death penalty demeans Cuba. I call on Cuba to, by example, lead a world campaign to end the death penalty."

But the action taken by Cuba in executing the hijackers advances the fight to accomplish just that goal, said Waters. It pushes forward the struggle against the very system that uses the brutal weapon of capital punishment against working people, she said. The acts of these hijackers, holding passengers with knives and handguns and threatening to toss them overboard, could have caused the "slaughter of the innocents."

Waters pointed out that Washington had encouraged a spate of hijackings of Cuban boats and planes since last summer by not granting visas to thousands of Cubans who applied to emigrate, granting any Cuban who reaches Florida's shores virtually automatic residency regardless of the means they used to get there, and refusing to prosecute hijackers who reach the United States. Since the executions, no more hijackings have been reported in Cuba.

Like many others in the United States who speak in defense of Cuba, Walker also exaggerated the immediate danger facing the revolution today, Waters said. He described the actions of the Bush administration as the "worst provocation by any U.S. administration in history."

"If you think about the actions of the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations in the revolution's first years it is easy to see the inaccuracy of that statement," said Waters.

Those administrations oversaw the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion by 1,200 U.S.-organized mercenaries, which Cuban militias and the Revolutionary Armed Forces defeated in 72 hours, and the threat of a nuclear holocaust against Cuba during the October 1962 "missile" crisis.

U.S. rulers weaker in relation to Cuba

President John F. Kennedy backed off his invasion plans in October 1962 for the same reasons that his successors have continued to reject the option of a military assault on Cuba, said Waters—"because of the politically untenable casualties that U.S. forces would suffer in a very short time."

Despite the omnipotence the U.S. rulers try to project in relation to Cuba, Waters

noted, they are in a weaker position today than at any time since the opening years of the Cuban Revolution to attack Cuba militarily. The Cuban toilers are less alone, partly because of the "smoldering volcano of the class struggle in Latin America and even in the United States," she said.

Washington's hands are more tied than ever, Waters stated, including by the growing size of the Cuban population in this country who have arrived in Miami, Union City, New Jersey, or other U.S. cities. The majority in recent years have come for economic reasons, not out of determination to subvert the Cuban Revolution. Many Cuban-Americans would not support a U.S. military attack that would cause many of their relatives on the Caribbean nation to perish.

Washington's provocations today are simply one more chapter in the continuity of the U.S. rulers' 44-year-old campaign against Cuba, the socialist leader said. Cuban workers and farmers and their government have unflinchingly stood down all attempts by U.S. imperialism to overthrow the revolution, she added. "Cuba-U.S. relations remain one of the more unchanging elements in politics. The situation calls not for shrillness, fear, or panic, but for the most modulated tone and for confidence and calmness."

Waters said she disagreed with Cuba solidarity activists and groups in the U.S. who say that Washington's recent provocations against Cuba are carried out by an "ultra-rightist" or "fascist" president. This is not accurate, she stated. The current U.S.-led anti-Cuba campaign is carried out by the "plain old garden variety of democratic imperialism." The difference is not about semantics, Waters stated, but is decisive. Those who are campaigning to "stop Bush" are trying to draw others behind the bandwagon of "lesser evilism," of supporting the Democratic Party in the 2004 elections, one of the two main parties of the U.S. rulers that's as responsible as the Republicans for Washington's economic war on Cuba.

Victories registered in the last two months in the U.S. Navy abandoning its base and bombing practice in Vieques, Puerto Rico, the U.S. government dropping its effort to deport Róger Calero, and the Federal Bureau of Prisons releasing from the "hole"

five Cuban revolutionaries framed up by Washington on charges of conspiracy to commit espionage would not be possible if fascism was on the rise, she said.

The SWP leader also cited a May Day statement by Alain Krivine, a longtime leader of the Revolutionary Communist League (LCR) in France. Slandorously describing the arrests and executions in Cuba as a "wave of repression" and a "parody of justice," Krivine also attacked the Bush administration for its "domination of world markets."

"He makes no mention in the statement about French imperialism," said Waters. "In fact, what is astonishing about the statement is not Krivine's attacks on Cuba, which are not new, but the degree of adaptation it displays toward French imperialism." Pressuring individuals and organizations who function in the workers movement to adapt further to the bourgeoisie in their own countries is part of what this imperialist offensive against Cuba is about, Waters stated.

Men and women like the Cuban Five, and Victor Dreke and Ana Morales, who toured the United States last fall speaking about the Cuban Revolution, set the limits on what Washington can get away with in its attacks, said Waters.

Dreke was second in command to Ernesto Che Guevara during Cuba's internationalist mission in the Congo in the mid-1960s. He later led the Cuban volunteers who joined African fighters in the successful struggle to rid Guinea Bissau of colonial domination by Portuguese imperialism. Morales, who teaches at the Latin American School of Medicine in Havana, has led Cuba's medical missions in a number of African countries, including Guinea Bissau.

This is what the proletarian vanguard in Cuba is like, Waters noted. Washington will have a very hard time in its efforts to divide the communist vanguard or the Revolutionary Armed Forces in Cuba.

A couple of weeks earlier at a public meeting in Philadelphia to discuss the Cuban Revolution, Waters said, she had shared the platform with Gerry O'Hare, an Irish republican fighter, among other speakers. O'Hare put it well, she said, when he pointed out, "If the imperialists try to go looking in Cuba for weapons of mass destruction, they'll find weapons in the hands of the masses who will cause their destruction."

Women's rights books popular in Iran

John Studer displayed a copy of *In Defense of Marxism* by Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky in introducing the next speaker, Ma'mud Shirvani. This was the first book produced from beginning to end by supporters of the communist movement—from putting together the entire book on a CD-ROM, to selecting a commercial printer, sending the book to the printer through the Internet, and organizing its shipment to Pathfinder's new distribution center in Atlanta, which is also run by volunteers.

"A group of women in Tehran launched Farsi-language editions of Pathfinder's *Problems of Women's Liberation and Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women*, on March 8, International Women's Day," said Shirvani, "the first time since the 1979 revolution that overthrew the U.S.-backed shah that this anniversary has been celebrated publicly." He had recently returned from helping staff the Pathfinder stall at the May 4-14 Tehran International Book Fair.

The March 8 celebration was put together by the organization of women publishers in Iran. Books on women's emancipation were among Pathfinder's best sellers at the fair. The two titles were translated and published by the Iranian publisher Golázin. A representative of the new enterprise told Shirvani that "something clicked" when she read *Problems of Women's Liberation* by Evelyn Reed. She said Golázin plans to publish a Farsi-language edition of Pathfinder's *Marianas in Combat: Teté Puebla and the Mariana Grajales Women's Platoon in Cuba's Revo-*

Victor go the spoils

pects for building revolutionary movement today

lutionary War, 1956–58.

Shirvani reported “renewed interests by young people in the history of anti-imperialist struggles in the region”—especially the 1945–46 revolution in Azerbaijan, which forged a workers and peasants government only to be betrayed by the Stalinist movement. He displayed a special issue of a magazine published by Turkish students at Tehran University commemorating that revolution. The issue included a biography of Jafar Pishevari, a founder of Iran’s Communist Party at the time of the October 1917 Russian Revolution.

“This was the first time I have heard of a magazine in Iran celebrating that event and not facing prosecution,” said Shirvani. “It is an example of how new generations are reaching out to the past to learn.” These realities are part of the reason why U.S. imperialism would have a hard time launching a military assault on Iran, he said.

Joel Britton and Diana Newberry reported on their recent visit to Sweden and the United Kingdom for political collaboration with communist workers and Young Socialists there.

“Workers and youth are building communist leagues in Europe that follow the lines of resistance in the working class,” Britton said. Progress is being made, he reported, in building fractions of worker-bolsheviks that carry out collective political work in their workplaces and unions, where attacks by the bosses and resistance by workers are intense. “As they do this they get a response and help from fellow workers, including in conquering the skills needed to hold down jobs in the garment industry.”

In Scotland, members of the Communist League organizing committee introduced the socialists from the United States to dairy farmers fighting a price cut. In Gothenburg, Sweden, Britton and Newberry attended the opening of the new Pathfinder bookstore, met public workers on strike, and exchanged ideas and experiences with several Iranian immigrants, “one of whom had bought a copy of *Problems of Women’s Liberation* at

a book fair in Vienna,” said Britton.

Newberry gave further examples of this joint political work, particularly with the Young Socialists in Sweden. In introducing her, chairperson Arrin Hawkins reported on the efforts by dozens of youth in California, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and elsewhere to organize delegations to the Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange this summer. (See ad on page 3)

U.S. gov’t initiator of political conflicts

In his feature presentation, Jack Barnes addressed the overall themes of the meeting. “We have little to alter from what the communist movement described 10 weeks ago when we got together in the midst of the buildup to Washington and London’s assault on Iraq,” he said. “Our anticipation that wars don’t change political conditions but accelerate existing trends and contradictions has panned out.

“The U.S. government is the great initiator of political conflicts today,” Barnes stated.

The invasion was inevitable, given the course of the U.S. government under the Democratic administration of William Clinton, his Republican predecessor, and the current Bush administration—and given the hostile stance and actions toward Iraq of all the imperialist powers over the previous decade.

The war showed “the power and organization of the U.S. armed forces,” Barnes said. This is not just a question of destructive weaponry, he emphasized. This is not a draftee army. The U.S. armed forces today are made up of volunteers, overwhelmingly young, who are not only highly trained, but motivated. They are driven partly by prospects for promotion.

The morale of these troops will not take big blows until they strike the kind of unbending resistance and take the kind of terrible casualties that were inflicted on the U.S. armed forces by the workers and peasants of Indochina in the Vietnam War, Barnes said.

During the discussion period, Barnes

also explained why the U.S. rulers and their officer corps are no longer plagued by the Vietnam Syndrome—a phenomenon in mass psychology stemming from U.S. imperialism’s defeat in Vietnam that has mostly died out with the older generations that were directly affected by it.

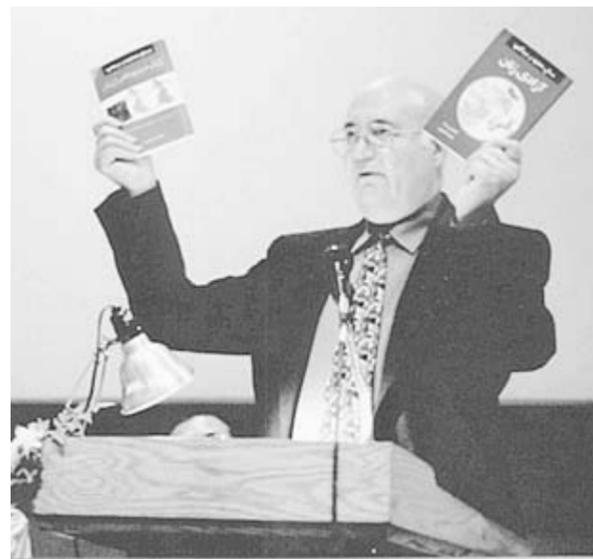
The U.S. armed forces swept quickly from Kuwait to northern Iraq with few casualties, taking advantage of what had been prepared beforehand, the SWP leader said. The treachery of Stalinism allowed a Baathist dictatorship to come to power in the 1960s and ‘70s—a form of party-police state—which affected the morale of the average Iraqi.

In Iraq, the modern U.S. army came up against the armed forces of an exhausted and widely hated capitalist regime. In contrast to the practices of its imperialist adversary, promotion in the Iraqi army had little to do with any ability to rise from the ranks, and far more to do with tribal connections and obsequiousness toward the officers.

“You also see what happens when weaponry is mostly imported and its maintenance is left up to others,” Barnes stated. The Iraqi army used largely outmoded and creaky armor from the former Soviet Union. Baghdad’s officer corps, said Barnes, “showed a dual tendency throughout recent history: run in the face of a powerful enemy, and murder innocents at home.”

These facts need to be pointed out not to exaggerate the power of the U.S. armed forces, Barnes stated, but in order to understand the enemy and the implications of what’s necessary to defend any conquests of the toilers under assault by imperialism.

The Iraqi military defeat was further confirmation of the exhaustion in history of the ability of semicolonial bourgeoisies to defend conquests that came out of national



Militant/Eric Simpson

Ma'mud Shirvani shows Farsi-language editions of Pathfinder titles printed by Iranian publishing houses. They are: *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women*, and *Problems of Women’s Liberation*.

liberation struggles, he said. It also showed the failure of secular bourgeois nationalist regimes in semicolonial countries to stand as an alternative to capitalist governments cloaked in clerical forms, as long as these secular governments are modeled on the police-state methods of Stalinism and what it has in common with fascism.

Drive to more wars

Difficulties in organizing a U.S.-run occupation regime were going to occur no matter what, said Barnes. But Washington is not facing a “quagmire” in Iraq as liberal critics of the Bush administration and many in the U.S. petty-bourgeois left argue. Far from being paralyzed by the fact that U.S. forces have discovered no “weapons of mass destruction” in Iraq—one of Bush’s main justifications of launching a war against Baghdad—the White House has simply asserted that this was just one of the main reasons for assaulting Iraq. “Regime change,” one of Washington’s main aims in Iraq, was a goal shared across the bipartisan capitalist political spectrum.

Having accomplished their main aims in the Iraq invasion and occupation, they are continuing along the same course, stealing a march over their imperialist allies and carving out a bigger piece of the resources

Continued on Page 8

‘Militant’, SWP national office, N.Y. SWP hold open houses

BY PATRICK O’NEILL

NEW YORK—The *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* and the national office of the Socialist Workers Party launched their new offices in midtown Manhattan with an open house June 7. Nearly 200 people took advantage of the opportunity to see—and celebrate—the new premises.

The same Saturday afternoon socialist workers hosted a simultaneous open house at the renovated Pathfinder bookstore and headquarters of the New York SWP—just two city blocks and about five minutes walk away. Given the proximity, most visitors were able to stop by both open houses.

Both locations are in the heart of New York’s Garment District, where tens of thousands of clothing workers toil in shops, large and small, located in multi-story buildings.

Visitors to the *Militant* offices were given a step-by-step guided tour of the editorial operation. Staff members walked them through each stage of producing an issue—from downloading articles and other material electronically, writing, editing and copy editing articles, to scanning and preparing photographs, to laying out pages and sending them to the printer via the Internet.

Several guests remarked that aside

from being attractive and well-organized, the new offices are a better fit for the socialist periodicals and party offices than the former premises at the old Pathfinder Building on the West Side Highway. The new wireless computer network also drew many positive comments.

In preparation for the move, a team of volunteers had worked intensively for almost two months. The crews erected walls, built windows and a kitchen, installed air conditioning ducts and wiring, stripped and varnished the floors, and painted the walls and ceilings, among many other tasks.

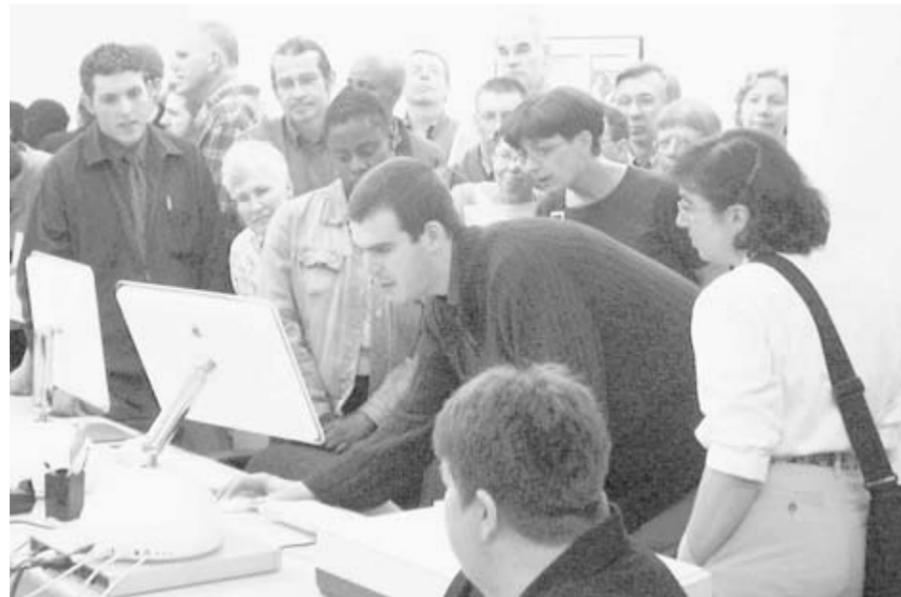
A steering committee of Ernie Mailhot from Seattle, Dennis Richter from Charlotte, North Carolina, and Maggie Trowe from Boston led the effort. Many of the volunteers came back for the open house to see the finished product of their labor.

Volunteer crews also gave the nearby New York SWP headquarters and Pathfinder bookstore a dramatic face-lift. They installed storage cupboards and demolished a disused wall cabinet to add much-needed space. They also painted the walls and laid new carpet.

A couple of hours after the open houses,

participants attended a public meeting at Hunter College, in New York (see coverage beginning on facing page).

At the Hunter College meeting, participants donated \$7,500 toward the costs of installing sound baffling, improved lighting, and ceiling fans in the *Militant/Perspectiva Mundial* office and SWP national office—the finishing touches of the new premises.



Militant/Róger Calero

Militant staff member Paul Pederson shows visitors to June 7 open house how photos are prepared for publication. A simultaneous open house was held at the newly renovated New York SWP headquarters and local Pathfinder bookstore.

From Pathfinder

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by Evelyn Reed
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Order online from www.pathfinderpress.com. Also available at bookstores, including those listed on page 8.

New York meeting on Europe & America

Continued from page 7

of the semicolonial world.

"The clock is ticking on 'regime change' in Iran," Barnes said. Right now U.S. officials are pressuring the government there to deepen any concessions it can be forced to make—above all, to pull the plug on the Hezbollah fighters in Lebanon. Acting in broad concert with the Israeli government, the U.S. rulers also have Hamas, the Palestinian organization, in their sights.

Ever since the 1979 revolution that overthrew the shah, one of the main bastions for imperialism's interests in the region, the U.S. rulers have tried to find ways to overthrow the Iranian government. Even though the government that came to power in 1979 is a capitalist regime wrapped in clerical forms that has pushed back most of the gains the toilers made through that popular uprising, the expectations and self-confidence of working people have not evaporated, and Washington can't rely on the current regime to act as its reliable cop in the region.

The imperialists' approach towards Tehran is following a different path than the war on Iraq, Barnes noted. The U.S. command knows that invading forces would meet resistance in Iran, where the masses of working people are not demoralized by a previous crushing defeat as they were in Iraq. Rather than an invasion, Washington is threatening "forceful intervention." This approach includes economic sanctions, naval and air interceptions of "suspect cargo" exported from Iran, intrusive inspections of nuclear plants and related facilities, possible cross-border raids by the Mujahedeen anti-Tehran group based in Iraq, and, if all else fails, military strikes against nuclear plants.

The imperialists do not intend, either, to install the shah's son back on his father's peacock throne, said Barnes. That's excluded by history. But they are determined to impose a more pliant regime that consistently defends their interests in the region, rather than obstructing them, even if it's a regime with a bourgeois nationalist character.

While targeting the alleged nuclear arms programs of north Korea and Iran, Washington is developing "bunker-busting" nuclear bombs designed to destroy deeply buried nuclear installations and military defenses. North Korea has placed many of its defensive resources underground or set into mountains, out of the reach of "conventional" weapons.

At the same time, the Pentagon has announced that it will pull 18,000 U.S. troops south from the so-called Demilitarized Zone dividing the Korean peninsula and out of range of northern artillery. Watching these various moves, said Barnes, "The north Korean government can only assume that Washington is preparing the option of nuclear attacks."

Increased danger of nuclear war

Barnes pointed to a recent speech at a university graduation by William Clinton, where the former U.S. president claimed that one of the main accomplishments of his administration is that youth today don't have to worry about the danger of nuclear war.

In fact, said Barnes, "we do have to worry more about this danger today than in the past," given the capitalist crisis and the increasing conflicts among the imperialist powers. Imagine the possibility of an ultra-rightist regime coming to power in France, which is a strategic nuclear power with the capacity to devastate humanity, he pointed out. That could pose a real danger of nuclear war. "This is a battle, not a given," Barnes said. "Working people need to wage the battle for socialism or face the possibility of the destruction of humanity down the road."

The course of U.S. imperialism has nothing to do with the idiosyncrasies of the current administration, Barnes said. It is rooted in the long-term decline of average rate of industrial profit in the world capitalist system, the downward curve of capitalist development that began in the early 1970s, and the resulting sharper competition among the major imperialist powers over division and redivision of the world.

The aggressive course of U.S. imperialism adds up to a "dreary prospect for the French and German rulers," Barnes said. Their relative weakness is exposed each time Washington exerts its military might. "Germany in particular has no strategic

armed forces," he said. All the powers of continental Europe—even France, with its many imperialist military interventions and its nuclear arsenal—"face the consequences of having depended on the U.S. military umbrella during the decades of the Cold War." Now Washington is pulling away that umbrella, or is making the price tag for continuing to offer protection much higher, Barnes stated, at the same time as these capitalist powers are faced with greater need to take on the social gains of working people at home.

One example of this is the recent announcement by the Pentagon that it intends to dismantle many of its forces in Germany and transfer them to Poland. Many of the armies of the powers in the European Union are made up of draftees who serve only brief stints in uniform, a fact which makes them very badly suited for combat in their present state.

Berlin and Paris's approach to the Iraq war is one example of the contrast between "appearance and reality in world politics," as highlighted by the title of the meeting. While the German and French rulers opposed the U.S.-British assault on Iraq, recognizing it as a threat to their own investments and contracts with Baghdad, their course over the past decade made the invasion inevitable—including their promotion of UN sanctions and "weapons inspections."

"We should remember that the war on Iraq was not simply set up by George Bush," Barnes said. "It was prepared by NATO, the G-8, the UN Security Council, and the European Union, including all of Washington's imperialist competitors." Since the conclusion of the war on Iraq, the representatives of French and German imperialism voted to ratify the U.S.-British occupation of Iraq at the United Nations and approved a U.S.-sponsored resolution targeting north Korea and Iran at the G-8 summit in France. At the same time the inter-imperialist conflicts continue to fester.

The worldwide economic depression, now in its initial stages, is more advanced among the imperialist powers in Europe than in the United States, Barnes said. The desperation of these capitalist rulers provoked by their declining position is driving new assaults on the social wage won by working people, he said. Impelled by their deep crisis, the rulers in Germany

"will assault the working class as a whole, in both the west and the east."

The fall of the U.S. dollar against the euro is a short-term phenomenon, said Barnes. Neither the euro nor the Japanese yen can replace the U.S. dollar as the main currency for international trade and investment. Behind the dollar stands U.S. imperialism and its armed forces. Behind the euro, by contrast, stands a disparate collection of 12 states, soon to be almost doubled in number. The most powerful among them, Berlin and Paris, have failed to meet EU commission targets purportedly designed to underpin a stable and strong currency; meanwhile German imperialism, the largest power and leading force in the early stages of the push toward a European Union, is mired in economic stagnation. "It is not the euro that threatens the dollar long-term," said Barnes. "The threat comes from the economic depression."

Left reacts in fear at U.S. power

The imperialist victory in Iraq helped expose the political bankruptcy of the radical-liberal left in the United States and Europe, the SWP leader said. Among others, the forces in or around Stalinist organizations, social democratic currents, the Greens, and most centrist groups act out of fear towards the power of U.S. imperialism, he said. These political currents are now more energized to campaign for lesser evils among capitalist parties and politicians.

By contrast, said Barnes, the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists will launch a slate of candidates for the 2004 presidential campaign that points in the opposite direction, to the need for independent working-class political action. "The communist movement acts without fear and with integrity," he said. This slate will be announced at an international consultative conference sponsored by the SWP, which will take place at Oberlin College in Oberlin, Ohio, July 10-12.

The Socialist Workers campaign will address, among other issues, the questions raised by a "great debate" that has already opened among forces in the workers movement worldwide, Barnes said. This debate has begun to focus on the main strategic questions of the working-class line of march towards power and how to defend conquests by the toilers under attack by

imperialism. The debate has broken out to a large degree because of the latest imperialist-orchestrated campaign against the Cuban Revolution and because of the character of the Cuban communist leadership and the Cuban people and their refusal to bend their knee to U.S. imperialism.

Along with trying to hypnotize working people with their foreign policy course, the U.S. rulers are carrying out an offensive against the toilers at home not only on the economic but other fronts, Barnes said. We can expect more brutality from the police and other repressive government agencies, he said. Barnes also pointed to ongoing resistance to these assaults by working people demonstrated in strikes, union organizing drives, and other actions across the United States. "To accomplish their goals, the U.S. rulers will have to launch a real fight against the working class, not a one-sided assault," he stated.

The successes of the U.S. military abroad should not obscure the historic weakness of the imperialists, emphasized the SWP leader. The broader historical trends are in favor of the working-class and the line of march of the toilers towards overturning capitalist rule and joining the worldwide fight for socialism, Barnes stated.

"One is the broad trend toward secularism and a scientific understanding of the world," he said. This is dealing blows to the mystification and brutality of all forms of clerical domination of social life.

The growing participation of women in social and political life across the globe, and their collisions with the discrimination and constraints imposed by capitalism, form a vital part of this transformation. "If the key line of the 20th century was the color line, the line of the 21st century is the sex line, the struggle of women for emancipation," he said.

"Ma'mud Shirvani earlier told me something about his observations in Iran that he didn't mention tonight," said Barnes. "In Tabriz, the capital of Iranian Azerbaijan, he saw young men and women holding hands in public—an act that would have been difficult to imagine just a short while ago.

"That kind of progress, and the possibility of deepening and generalizing everything it promises, makes the whole effort of building the communist movement worthwhile," said Barnes. "Join us."

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How Popular Front made fascist victory possible in Spain

Printed below are excerpts from “The Lessons of Spain: the Last Warning,” an article by Leon Trotsky dated December 17, 1937. Trotsky was a leader of the October 1917 Russian Revolution and the Bolshevik party that led the working-class and its allies to power in Russia. The entire article can be found in *The Spanish Revolution (1931–39)*, a collection of Trotsky’s writings on the Spanish civil war published by Pathfinder Press.

Spanish dictator Miguel Primo de Rivera resigned in January 1930. King Alfonso XII appointed a short-lived interim government. In April 1931, a coalition of republican and socialist parties swept the country’s municipal elections and Alfonso went into exile. The next month clashes began between monarchists and workers in Madrid. The Spanish revolution had begun.

In the midst of the fascist victory in Germany, and with war clouds gathering over Europe, workers and peasants in Spain opened a series of battles that challenged the rule of the wealthy landlords and capitalist class. Their struggles showed a road out of the wars and economic crises of capitalism.

As worker uprisings spread from Catalonia to the rest of the country, the Spanish rulers turned to fascist general Francisco Franco. Based in the Spanish-occupied Morocco, Franco launched a war against the republican government in 1936 with support from other imperialist powers.

In June 1931, elections to a constituent assembly (Cortes) had given an overwhelming majority to pro-republican parties. The social-democratic Socialist Party was the largest in the Cortes.

Over the next five years, the dominant forces in the workers movement—social democrats, Stalinists, anarcho-syndicalists, and centrists—increasingly allied themselves with representatives of the liberal bourgeoisie. The Popular Front won the national government in the 1936 Spanish elections. It was a coalition of liberal bourgeois parties with the Socialist and Communist parties, which was backed by the anarchists and centrists.

The class-collaborationist policy of the Popular Front was promoted by the regime of Joseph Stalin in the Soviet Union.

After the death of Lenin, the central leader of the Bolsheviks, in 1924, Stalin had become the foremost representative of a bureaucratic caste that led a political counterrevolution, resulting in the degeneration of the Soviet Communist Party, the Communist International (Comintern), and of the Russian Revolution. Along with collaboration with the liberal bourgeoisie, the Stalinists in Spain used thuggery—including arrests and murders of anarchists, centrists, and others in the workers movement. Their counterrevolutionary efforts were aided by the refusal of anarchist and centrist forces to lead the rising working-class and peasant masses to establish a government of the exploited majority.

By subordinating the interests of the workers and peasants to the liberal capitalist parties, the Popular Front led the Spanish revolution to defeat, making possible the victory of Franco’s fascist forces.

Trotsky was the central leader of the international fight to continue Lenin’s course in the face of the Stalinist counterrevolution in Russia. He was expelled from the Stalinized Soviet CP and forced into exile. Trotsky argues clearly in this article and the other documents in *The Spanish Revolution* for a course that could have averted the Stalinist betrayal in Spain and the fascist victory, which—along with the earlier victories of fascism in Italy and Germany—was crucial in making possible the outbreak of the second world inter-imperialist slaughter.

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BY LEON TROTSKY

All general staffs are studying closely the military operations in Ethiopia, in

Spain, in the Far East, in preparation for the great future war. The battles of the Spanish proletariat, heat lightning flashes of the coming world revolution, should be no less attentively studied by the revolutionary staffs. Under this condition and this condition alone will the coming events not take us unawares.

Three ideologies fought—with unequal forces—in the so-called republican camp, namely, Menshevism¹, Bolshevism, and anarchism. As regards the bourgeois republican parties, they were without either independent ideas or independent political significance and were able to maintain themselves only by climbing on the backs of the reformists and Anarchists. Moreover, it is no exaggeration to say that the leaders of Spanish anarcho-syndicalism did everything to repudiate their doctrine and virtually reduce its significance to zero. Actually two doctrines in the so-called republican camp fought—Menshevism and Bolshevism.

According to the Socialists and Stalinists, i.e., the Mensheviks of the first and second instances, the Spanish revolution was called upon to solve only its “democratic” tasks, for which a united front with the “democratic” bourgeoisie was indispensable. From this point of view, any and all attempts of the proletariat to go beyond the limits of bourgeois democracy are not only premature but also fatal. Furthermore, on the agenda stands not the revolution but the struggle against the insurgent Franco.

Fascism, however, is not feudal but bourgeois reaction. A successful fight against bourgeois reaction can be waged only with the forces and methods of the proletarian revolution. Menshevism, itself a branch of bourgeois thought, does not have and cannot have any inkling of these facts.

The Bolshevik point of view

...Even purely democratic problems, like the liquidation of semi-feudal land ownership, cannot be solved without the conquest of power by the proletariat; but this in turn places the socialist revolution on the agenda. Moreover, during the very first stages of the revolution, the Spanish workers themselves posed in practice not merely democratic problems but also purely socialist ones.

The demand not to transgress the bounds of bourgeois democracy signifies in practice not a defense of the democratic revolution but a repudiation of it. Only through an overturn in agrarian relations could the peasantry, the great mass of the population, have been transformed into a powerful bulwark against fascism. But the landowners are intimately bound up with the commercial, industrial, and banking bourgeoisie, and the bourgeois intelligentsia that depends on them. The party of the proletariat was thus faced with a choice between going with the peasant masses or with the liberal bourgeoisie.

There could only be one reason to include the peasantry and the liberal bourgeoisie in the same coalition at the same time: to help the bourgeoisie deceive the peasantry and thus isolate the workers. The agrarian revolution could have been accomplished only *against* the bourgeoisie, and therefore only through measures of the dictatorship of the proletariat. There is no third, intermediate regime.

From the standpoint of theory, the most astonishing thing about Stalin’s Spanish policy is the utter disregard for the ABC of Leninism. After a delay of several decades—and what decades!—the Comintern has fully rehabilitated the doctrine of Menshevism....

‘Theory’ of Popular Front

It would be naive, however, to think that the politics of the Comintern in Spain stem from a theoretical “mistake.” Stalinism is not guided by Marxist theory, or for that matter by any theory at all, but by the empirical interests of the Soviet bureaucracy. In their intimate circles, the Soviet cynics mock Dimitrov’s “philosophy” of the Popu-



Republican militias during 1930s Spanish Civil War. By subordinating interests of workers and peasants to liberal capitalist parties, the Spanish Popular Front, pushed by the Soviet regime of Joseph Stalin, led Spanish revolution to defeat.

lar Front.² But they have at their disposal for deceiving the masses large cadres of propagators of this holy formula, sincere ones and cheats, simpletons and charlatans. Louis Fischer³, with his ignorance and smugness, with his provincial rationalism and congenital deafness to revolution, is the most repulsive representative of this unattractive brotherhood. “The union of progressive forces!” “The triumph of the idea of the Popular Front!” “The assault of the Trotskyists on the unity of the antifascist ranks!” ...

The theoreticians of the Popular Front do not essentially go beyond the first rule of arithmetic, that is, addition: “Communists” plus Socialists plus Anarchists plus liberals add up to a total which is greater than their respective isolated numbers. Such is all their wisdom. However, arithmetic alone does not suffice here. One needs as well at least mechanics. The law of the parallelogram of forces applies to politics as well. In such a parallelogram, we know that the resultant is shorter, the more the component forces diverge from each other. When political allies tend to pull in opposite directions, the resultant may prove equal to zero.

A bloc of divergent political groups of the working class is sometimes completely indispensable for the solution of common practical problems. In certain historical circumstances, such a bloc is capable of attracting the oppressed petty-bourgeois masses whose interests are close to the interests of the proletariat. The joint force of such a bloc can prove far stronger than the sum of the forces of each of its component parts. On the contrary, the political alliance between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, whose interests on basic questions in the present epoch diverge at an angle of 180 degrees, as a general rule is capable only of paralyzing the revolutionary force of the proletariat.

Civil war, in which the force of naked coercion is hardly effective, demands of its participants the spirit of supreme self-abnegation. The workers and peasants can assure victory only if they wage a struggle for their own emancipation. Under these conditions, to subordinate the proletariat to the leadership of the bourgeoisie means beforehand to assure defeat in the civil war....

Alliance with the bourgeoisie’s shadow

Politically most striking is the fact that the Spanish Popular Front lacked in reality even a parallelogram of forces. The bourgeoisie’s place was occupied by its shadow. Through the medium of the Stalinists, Socialists, and Anarchists, the Spanish bourgeoisie subordinated the proletariat to itself without even bothering to participate in the Popular Front. The overwhelming majority of the exploiters of all political shades openly went over to the camp of Franco. ...The Spanish bourgeoisie understood from the outset that the revolutionary mass movement, no matter how it starts, is directed against private ownership of land and the means of production, and that it is utterly impossible to cope with this movement by democratic measures.

That is why only insignificant debris from the possessing classes remained in the republican camp: Messrs. Azaña, Companys,⁴ and the like—political attorneys of the bourgeoisie but not the bourgeoisie itself. Having staked everything on a military dictatorship, the possessing classes were

able, at the same time, to make use of their political representatives of *yesterday* in order to paralyze, disorganize, and afterward strangle the socialist movement of the masses in “republican” territory.

Without in the slightest degree representing the Spanish bourgeoisie, the left republicans still less represented the workers and peasants. They represented no one but themselves. Thanks, however, to their allies—the Socialists, Stalinists, and Anarchists—these political phantoms played the decisive role in the revolution. How? Very simply. By incarnating the principles of the “democratic revolution,” that is, the inviolability of private property.

¹ The Russian Social Democratic Party split into two groupings, the *Bolsheviks* (majority), led by Lenin, and the *Mensheviks* (minority), led by Martov in the party’s second congress in 1903. The Bolsheviks advocated a revolutionary course of an alliance of the working class and peasantry that could overthrow the tsar and establish a government of the toilers. The Mensheviks called for an alliance with the bourgeoisie in the struggle to get rid of the monarchy. When the tsar was toppled in February 1917, the Mensheviks took part in a coalition government with sections of the bourgeoisie, which was subsequently overthrown in the October revolution.

² *Georgi Dimitrov* was a Bulgarian communist who had moved to Germany. He attracted world attention in 1933 when the Nazis imprisoned and tried him and others on charges of having set the Reichstag on fire. He defended himself courageously at the trial and was acquitted. He became a Soviet citizen and served as executive secretary of the Stalinized Comintern from 1934 to 1943. He is credited with being the chief author of Comintern’s Popular Front policy adopted at its seventh congress in 1935.

³ *Louis Fischer* was a European correspondent for the U.S. magazine *The Nation* whom Trotsky accused of sympathies with Stalinism during the Moscow trials.

⁴ *Manuel Azaña y Díaz* was prime minister of the Spanish republican government in June 1931 and again in 1936. He was president of the republic from May 1936 until his resignation in Paris in 1939.

Luis Companys y Jover became head of local government of Catalonia for a period during Spanish civil war. He belonged to Catalan Esquerra, a bourgeois nationalist party.

For Further Reading

The Spanish Revolution (1931–39)
by Leon Trotsky
Price: \$30.95



Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Spain
by Felix Morrow
Price: \$19.95

Order online at
www.pathfinderpress.com

An uptick in labor resistance

Picket lines, solidarity rallies, union organizing efforts, and other labor actions from Wisconsin to Georgia, and from North Carolina to Mississippi point to an uptick in labor resistance in the United States to the bosses' drive to shore up their profit rates at the expense of the living and working conditions of working people.

Among those on the front lines are members of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 538 in Jefferson, Wisconsin, who launched a strike almost four months ago against Tyson Foods (see ad below). Threats of Tyson-like takebacks have sparked a strike by Machinists in Waukesha, Wisconsin, rallies by General Electric workers, and organizing drives by catfish workers in Mississippi. Garment workers at Point Blank Body Armor in southern Florida—who waged a six-month strike for union recognition at one of the largest clothing plants there and returned to the job in February, forcing the company to rehire all dismissed employees—continue their struggle for a union contract. Coal miners from Appalachia to the country's western slopes showed up in force at recent hearings to oppose attempts by the coal bosses and the government to institute higher coal-dust levels underground that will cost many more workers their health and lives. Many of these workers have also pitched on other social struggles.

A decade-long retreat of our class bottomed out at the end of the 1990s. We entered a period of renewed resistance by workers and farmers. The pace of the manifestations of this sea change in the class struggle, of course, goes through ebbs and flows. Resistance speeds up and broadens for a while, and then slows down. We are now on a slightly upward portion of this curve.

This is happening as the unions, the sole mass institu-

tions of the American labor movement today, continue to weaken. The traditions promoted by the union officialdom—a product of their bourgeois outlook and values, and their petty-bourgeois conditions of life—leave them utterly unready for what can suddenly erupt under the current crisis-ridden conditions of world capitalism. Above all they are unprepared for the struggles building up underneath, not to mention frightened by that prospect. They, too, can never understand the capacities of the ranks.

There are variations to this picture, though, and there will be more down the road. UFCW Local 789 in St. Paul, Minnesota, for example, which meat packers at Dakota Premium Foods successfully voted as their union through a two-year-long fight, has set an example in organizing solidarity with their embattled brothers and sisters in Jefferson and other struggles in the Midwest.

What's important for class-conscious workers across the United States is joining this labor resistance in its myriad manifestations, organizing to involve co-workers and other fellow toilers—on the job, at factory gates, in rural areas, and workers districts—and drawing in young people attracted to the working class, the only class that can change the world. Reporting on all these skirmishes in a timely manner for the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, which enable thousands of workers to get the broader picture of the struggle, is part of this effort.

As more workers get integrated into the vanguard of our class through these battles, an increasing number will open up to figuring out what it takes to stand up not just to one company but the entire profit system. They will be more interested in discussing a revolutionary perspective and program, like that described in the editorial below.

2004 campaign well under way

The 2004 presidential election campaign is well under way. The arguments by Democratic politicians and their supporters against the Republican White House, on everything from Washington's war drive in the Mideast to how to deal with the accelerating economic crisis, have been marked by partisan electioneering. These twin parties of the U.S. employers share the same basic foreign and, increasingly, domestic policies, designed to protect the interests of the ruling class of billionaire families. Their policies are fueled by the 30-year-long decline of the capitalist system that is now sliding into a worldwide depression. It is in response to these economic pressures that the U.S. rulers—like their counterparts in Britain, France, Japan, and other imperialist countries—are being driven to intensify their attacks on the wages and social gains of workers and farmers at home, while marching toward military assaults in the Mideast and elsewhere as they compete ruthlessly with their imperialist rivals abroad to redivide the world's markets and territories.

The U.S. government scored gains through its relatively easy conquest of Iraq and is now stepping up its military pressures against Iran and north Korea. But while the "loyal opposition" in Congress has backed the strategic course of its government, squabbling only over tactics, liberal Democrats anticipate a rough road ahead for Washington in the not-so-distant future, and are increasingly certain that their moment is coming to stand at the helm of U.S. imperialism and "save America." As the unfolding depression gives way to an inevitable credit crunch, mass layoffs, and a wave of bankruptcies and foreclosures, these liberal politicians will get wind in their sails.

Today these liberal forces are becoming energized around their efforts to get a Democrat into the White House in 2004. Middle-class radicals who back them seek to rally support around a "Dump Bush" front. As usual, they justify support to the Democrats as a "lesser evil" to the Republicans. In face of the accelerating economic and political turmoil in the world, their tone has become more shrill, as they falsely portray the Bush administration as "fascist" and Rumsfeld, Cheney, et al., as a "clique" that is somehow imposing its will on the U.S. government. In the name of "stopping Bush" and supporting the Democrats, for example, it appears the Green Party will not field a candidate. No political party in the workers movement has publicly said it will run a presidential candidate in 2004 except the Socialist Workers Party.

The hunt for some "progressive" wing of the capitalist class is used to promote the false idea that a "better" form of imperialism, a reformed or gentler capitalism, is possible. This argument is always used by capitalist politicians and their lieutenants in the labor movement to tell workers to put off their struggles, to ask farmers to suspend their fight for land, to argue that oppressed nationalities should postpone their fight for national liberation.

The two-party system, however, is how the U.S. billionaires maintain their political dominance. For instance, many of the key aspects of the employers' assault on working people under the Bush administration were put in place by the Democratic Clinton-Gore White House, from the expansion of the federal police to the doubling of the prison population, the stiffening of anti-immigrant and "antiterrorist" legislation, the establishment of "homeland defense" to police working people at home, and military attacks on Iraq, Somalia, Afghanistan, and other nations.

The acceleration of the class struggle internationally has now begun to pose the central political questions facing humanity, because Washington has included revolutionary Cuba in its "axis of evil" political offensive. But Cuba is not Iraq. The imperialists confront a formidable obstacle in Cuba because in that country working people overthrew capitalist rule and have a revolutionary leadership. The debate around Cuba touches all those around the world who consider themselves communists and those who look to Cuba's revolutionary leadership as a living voice of the socialist perspective. This has opened up the great political debate that will be at the heart of world politics for a long time: who will rule society and how, what kind of political party is needed to lead a social transformation—the question of socialist revolution and working-class leadership. The Cuban Revolution, fascism, imperialist war—the debates on these issues open up the possibility to take up the crucial questions of the history of the workers movement. Lessons from the past—from the October revolution in Russia to the Spanish Civil War—suddenly seem more relevant.

Joining these issues, the Socialist Workers Party will use the upcoming elections to offer a working-class voice and a revolutionary perspective. The socialist candidates point to the ongoing resistance of working people against the employer assault as they join in, reaching out broadly to fellow workers, youth, and others attracted to this perspective. In face of capitalism's economic catastrophe, socialists put forward a program in the interests of working people. This program includes key demands such as a sliding scale of hours and wages to create jobs for all and protect workers from the ravages of unemployment and inflation. It calls for defending affirmative action and canceling the Third World debt.

Socialists seek to provide a scientific explanation of how capitalism works, which is at the heart of the systematic, patient work necessary to present a clear revolutionary perspective. The Socialist Workers candidates will be involving young socialists in broad street campaigning, in working-class struggles and other political activities, and in reading and studying Marxism.

Well before the next U.S. presidential election, we urge you to join socialist workers in campaigning for the socialist alternative in this year's races and in 2004.

U.S. vs. Iran

Continued from Page 3

adopted that line in remarks on June 16. "If Americans are smart," he said, "they should negotiate with those who can work with them to put an end to mischief and calm the region. You cannot do this with boisterous threats. But unfortunately the White House has chosen this road, which is fatal to it and is causing us trouble."

Rafsanjani implied that the U.S. government was behind the current student-led actions. Ayatollah Ali Khamanei, who carries the title of "supreme leader," has also accused Washington of orchestrating the unrest, pointing in particular to the role of California-based pro-monarchy TV channels, broadcasting in Farsi, that have called for increased participation.

Bush tries to rhetorically co-opt protests

Four days after the protests broke out, President Bush declared that they represented "the beginnings of people expressing themselves toward a free Iran." White House spokesman Ari Fleischer opposed the crackdown by Tehran, professing "great concern [at] the use of violence against Iranian students peacefully expressing their political views."

Richard Perle, an adviser to Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, said June 16, "Young Iranians will find better uses for their limited resources than building nuclear power in a country so rich in oil. We can already see signs that Iranians... would like to see regime change. They should be encouraged." Iran's foreign ministry protested the "blatant interference" of U.S. government officials in the country's internal affairs.

"This is a student movement, not an American movement," chanted some 500 students outside their dormitories in Tehran in answer to charges that they were tools of Washington, according to the Iranian Students News Agency (ISNA). Reporters for the U.S. big-business media also noted that most of protesting students were angered by Bush's meddling, and that only a small minority had expressed support for U.S. intervention. "We want no shah, we want no supreme leader," went another chant.

The politically diverse actions began June 10 after word got out that the government was considering privatization of at least some education services. Many students acted to defend the improvements in the schooling system that were a gain of the 1979 revolution. Following the shah's overthrow, the government constructed schools and libraries in many villages, and substantially expanded access to tertiary level education.

More than once the regime has been forced to retreat from this kind of frontal attack on jealously guarded conquests of popular struggle. While the revolutionary momentum of 1979 no longer exists, working people, including women and the oppressed nationalities, still engage the rulers in a periodic tug-of-war as they try to take away hard-won gains.

Following the first couple of days of protests, government officials hurried to assure working people that the proposal would not be enforced. The section of the government usually dubbed conservative also used the issue in their factional disputes with the administration of President Mohammed Khatami. Demonstrations denouncing the privatization proposal were organized out of weekly prayer meetings in Tehran June 13.

Demonstrations pick up momentum

In spite of the official disavowal of the privatization proposal, the protests picked up momentum, expressing broader opposition to the clericalist, reactionary stamp of the Islamic Republic and frustration with the self-styled "reformers" led by Khatami. The Iranian president has issued no statement during the recent events.

According to an ISNA report, Habibi, the secretary of the Islamic Students Association at Tehran's Amir Kabir University, told a June 16 campus rally that the "reform" movement associated with Khatami has failed, and that "our society now needs a new dialogue." The rally demanded the release of all political prisoners.

Meanwhile, middle-class opposition forces that orient to Washington have tried to increase their political foothold during the protests.

Organizers have said they will continue mobilizing until early July, when they will mark the anniversary of massive 1999 protests that were met with brutal force by extralegal vigilantes and police. At that time pro-regime goons broke into student dormitories in Tehran, beating students indiscriminately and setting their rooms on fire.

Each year, students have honored the memory of Ezzat Ibrahim-Nejad, a conscript soldier and protester who was murdered while visiting a friend at his dormitory, and have continued to demand that his killers be brought to justice.

The protests four years ago drew support from wide layers of working people. This year's actions have so far remained relatively narrow.

As in 1999 the students have faced attacks from both the police and knife-, club-, and gun-wielding vigilantes. At the height of the protests the government was forced to take unprecedented action in reigning in the activities of the vigilantes, arresting some and issuing arrest warrants for their leaders. By the fifth night of demonstrations the actions of the repressive forces had helped limit the size of the protests. Police began cracking down harder, singling out leaders of the protests for arrests and also detaining some members of the bourgeois opposition.

Ma'mud Shirvani contributed to this article.

SOLIDARITY SUNDAY JUNE 22

JOIN TYSON STRIKERS IN JEFFERSON, WISCONSIN

Rally at Tyson Foods Plant Gate * 1:30 - 2:30p.m. * Followed by Free Music in Rotary Waterfront Park

Some 470 meat packers, members of UFCW Local 538, continue to walk the picket lines in their nearly four-month-old strike against Tyson Foods. Their resistance to the company's demands to cut wages and benefits—the "ten commandments"—has won support of meat packers and other workers throughout the Midwest since the February 28 walkout. We urge you to build and take part in this rally.

For more information: Tel: 608-244-5653, www.tysonfamiliesstandup.org

Queen's man in Australia forced to resign

BY RON POULSEN

SYDNEY, Australia—The effective head of state in Australia, Peter Hollingworth, was forced to resign as governor-general May 25. Hollingworth quit his post after a year and a half of mounting public controversy and political pressure over his role in covering up child sexual abuse by priests. Hollingworth was Anglican archbishop of Brisbane in the early 1990s. He was only the second governor-general in Australian history to quit.

By appointing Hollingworth as the first priest to governor-general in June 2001, Liberal Party prime minister John Howard not only aroused concerns in some ruling-class circles over separation of church and state, but also embroiled the already troubled post in the growing crisis of the church here.

Gains of women spark crisis

This crisis of the Anglican church in Australia has deepened as the oppressive stance towards women by the church hierarchy has more and more run up against the historic advances in the fight for women's liberation. These gains are based on the entry of greater numbers of women into the labor force since World War II. Today, women make up nearly 43 percent of the workforce. The women's movement of the 1970s grew alongside the protest movement against the imperialist war in Vietnam and the struggle for Aboriginal rights. The right to equal pay in some job categories was won in historic test cases in 1968 and 1972.

Legal victories registering gains after these earlier struggles have been extended sometimes in private enterprises through strikes and other fights. Women working at HPM Industries in Sydney, for example, members of the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union, won a fight for equal pay with men doing the same jobs within their enterprise agreement after two weeks on the picket line in 1998.

Women have also made gains in their right to choose abortion. Today access to abortion rights differs state by state. While abortion remains on the crimes act, legal precedents from the 1970s have established in fact the right of women to choose abortion.

Women won other rights that are codified in the federal Sex Discrimination Act, which was passed in 1984.

With Howard's backing, Hollingworth had resisted growing calls to resign since the furor enveloped him in February 2002. But he couldn't withstand the intensified pressure after the release in early May this year of an Anglican Church inquiry aimed at stemming the crisis and refurbishing the image of the church.

The report concluded that Hollingworth

committed "grave and serious" errors of judgment while he was archbishop. It concluded it was "untenable" that he "let a known pedophile continue in the ministry." It also said that he did not handle "fairly, reasonably or appropriately" complaints against a former bishop who had sexual intercourse with a 15-year-old girl under his care in the 1950s.

On February 18, 2002, the governor-general sought to defend himself on ABC TV's *Australian Story*. His interview only compounded the crisis. Questioned about the case of a 14-year-old girl who was sexually abused by a priest in charge of a church-run boarding school, he said this "was not sex abuse... no suggestion of rape... my information was that it was, rather, the other way around." Hollingworth was forced to apologize as public anger erupted over his smug remark revealing the reactionary "woman-as-temptress" prejudices of the church hierarchy.

The last straw was the publication, two days before his resignation, of a letter from him blithely stating that another 14-year-old girl had "started" a sexual relationship with her school coach. The child's mother condemned Hollingworth's remarks aimed at shifting blame onto her daughter as, "not a slip-up but a state of mind." She called for his sacking.

Capitalist parties debate form of rule

The queen of England is still formally the head of state for Australia but is ceremonially represented by the governor-general. This "vice-regal post," a relic of Australia's origins as a British colonial-settler state, is at the "constitutional apex of Australia's parliamentary federation," as the *Australian Financial Review* put it May 27. The current scandal has revived discussion in the bourgeois press over this form of head of state.

Simon Crean, leader of the Australian Labor Party (ALP), which is the opposition, demanded from the start of the scandal that Hollingworth "must resign" or "failing that, the prime minister must dismiss him." The Queensland Labor premier, Peter Beattie, who tabled the Anglican Church report in parliament, warned the crisis could "irreparably damage the vice-regal office."

On May 15, the federal senate, in which Labor, the Greens and the Democrats hold a majority, passed an unprecedented motion calling for the resignation or sacking of the governor-general, saying he was both "unable to fulfill his symbolic role as a figure of unity for the Australian people" and "no longer able to exercise the constitutional powers of his office in a manner that will be seen as impartial and non-partisan."

The Liberal Party deputy leader and federal treasurer Peter Costello distanced him-

self from Howard's appointee, as did some other government ministers. Costello told Channel Ten: "It is the prime minister's appointment. It's not a cabinet, it's not a parliamentary, it's a personal appointment." He said that any dismissal could only be based "solely on the advice of the PM [prime minister] rendered to the Queen." Costello is publicly identified as a "republican."

A spokeswoman for the queen of England said resolving the crisis was "a matter for the Australian government and for the Australian prime minister." Since a 1931 agreement between London and Canberra, the head of state here by convention has been chosen by the Australian prime minister and rubber-stamped by Buckingham Palace.

The Australian constitution doesn't specify grounds for removal of the de facto head of state. As a result, the rulers resorted to escalating media pressure to force Hollingworth's hand. Some in the ruling class said this was a "witch hunt" or "trial by media."

A problem this scandal posed for the capitalist class is that, aside from the symbolic and ceremonial role, the post holds "reserve powers" to resolve constitutional crises, in particular the removal of governments not to the liking of Australia's rulers.

In the mid-1970s, as the first worldwide recession since World War II shook all the imperialist countries, the ruling class here sought to reverse gains the union movement won during the boom years of the previous two decades. However, working-class expectations had risen under Prime Minister Gough Whitlam's Labor government. His administration faced an escalating campaign by the conservative parties and monopoly media. In November 1975, the Australian rulers used governor-general John Kerr to sack Whitlam, triggering greater class polarization.

Mass walkouts and demonstrations were headed towards a general strike until Labor and union leaders reasserted control and put a brake on the mass mobilizations. The Australian Labor Party went down to defeat in the subsequent elections. The governor-general's role was shaken. Kerr later resigned.

In 1932, during the Great Depression, the ruling class had used a state counterpart of the governor-general, New South Wales governor Philip Game, to dismiss Labor premier Jack Lang. Lang's government had



Queen of England (right) and former Australian governor-general Peter Hollingworth (left) in Adelaide, Australia, Feb. 27, 2002. The first priest to become the country's formal head of state, Hollingworth resigned May 25 after covering up and attempting to justify child abuse and violations of women's rights by other clergy.

defied wealthy British financiers by refusing to pay interest on loans the government had taken from these bondholders.

Nationalist appeal

The current crisis follows a national constitutional referendum held in 1999 on making Australia a republic. Both sides of the debate in bourgeois politics appealed to Australian nationalism. Majority sentiment for a republic was divided over how to select or elect the head of state. The only option—that of a president selected by the prime minister and ratified by a two-thirds majority of the House of Representatives—was narrowly defeated.

Nick Minchin, a government minister who supports continued links to the British monarchy, recently warned of "enormous dangers" in changing the method of selection for constitutionally "the most powerful office in the country."

Howard has defied political pressure to alter the power of the prime minister to handpick the governor-general. NSW Labor premier Robert Carr defended the prime minister's "prerogative" to select the head of state. In ruling out the unprecedented action of dismissing the governor-general last year, Howard said he feared this would set off "a constitutional earthquake." This remains a concern among the rulers behind their debate over reforming the post.

Linda Harris Contributed to this article.

LETTERS

Malcolm X important today

The *Militant's* May 26 reprint of excerpts, with the original photo, of the June 28, 1964, speech by Malcolm X at the first public rally of the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU) at the Audubon Ballroom was highly stimulating and newsworthy for a number of reasons. Because this particular speech, that included quotes from the Statement of Basic Aims and Objectives of the OAAU, appeared on his birthday, which occurs during the annual worldwide celebration of African Liberation day that extols him as one of the African people's foremost freedom fighters.

But more importantly it appeared in a progressive, widely distributed publication at the height of U.S. aggression and war against the democratic rights of Muslims, poor workers, and disenfranchised people both at home and abroad. Because the U.S. war on terrorism in Afghanistan and Iraq—that could engulf Iran, Syria and North Korea—is being waged in conjunction with a deliberate large-scale frontal attack on civil liberties in the U.S. as well.

Tactically Malcolm's fearless revolutionary example, in addition to his numerous audio, video, and cassette tape record-

ings, documentaries, speeches, and books—especially *Malcolm X Talks to Young People, February 1965: The Final Speeches*, and *By Any Means Necessary*, which are regularly featured in Pathfinder's Books of the Month club—have the intrinsic power and potential to reform and revolutionize prisoners, expand consciousness, and mobilize Black, poor, and oppressed people into an effective international fighting force for change.

That is why I support efforts to get these kinds of political consciousness-raising books into the hands of prisoners, and a petition drive to make May 19, Malcolm X's birth date, a national holiday.

Shakir Muhammad
Alexandria, Virginia

Brother Calero's victory

Thanks for your unifying efforts, and for the support of working people and those who feel and participate in our struggles.

It was a victory to learn that *compañero* and brother Róger Calero had received his green card and documents. This is a class victory, between Róger and the working class, and the U.S. government that has always had in its history a "racist profile" against the people

from the south, carrying out persecutions in disregard of our rights. This victory is a step to legitimize our rights and our demands, and to be able to defend ourselves. Furthermore, this time they did not get away with it.

In the brutal and ignorant campaign of this administration against the rights of immigrants, they look for any "pretext" to take advantage of. For example, the case of Calero when he was a student, or the case of a 25-year-old Pakistani, Shaheed Yacoub, a Christian, who came with his parents when he was only four years old, who when he was a student took a walk-man from a classmate. She turned him in, and they began a case against him.

Last year, at the beginning of December, they revoked his residency and put him in this prison. A judge ordered his deportation to Pakistan. He does not know anybody over there. Shaheed Yacoub, #74295, is in cell #9 at the York County Jail.

In my case, because I accused them for their barbaric and inhumane practices against my rights and the rights of thousands of those detained by immigration, they took revenge. They have me in this situation, under physical and psychological torture—a psychological war against my human and

legal rights.

But our duty is not to surrender. As an Arab saying goes, "Shame is behind us, but victory is ahead of us!"

I believe brother Róger and I have chosen to continue forward. Congratulations. The struggle continues until the final victory.

Farouk Abdel-Muhti,
York County Jail
York, Pennsylvania

Farouk Abdel-Muhti, an outspoken advocate of the Palestinian struggle for self-determination, was jailed without charges more than a year ago.

He is facing deportation from the United States, where he has lived since the 1970s. Abdel-Muhti has been imprisoned indefinitely, first in several prisons in New Jersey, and more recently in a penitentiary in York, Pennsylvania. Abdel-Muhti is appealing for public support to press the government for his release, and to drop its deportation proceedings against him.

'Militant' readers are urged to send a letter of protest to David J. Venturella, Assistant Deputy Executive Associate Commissioner, Office of Detention and Removal, tel. (212) 305-2734, fax (202) 353-9435, e-mail David.j.venturella@usdoj.gov

Please also call York County Jail warden Thomas Hogan at (717) 840-7580.

To write to Abdel-Muhti, address correspondence as follows: Farouk Abdel-Muhti #75122, York County Jail, 3400 Concord Road, York, PA 17402-9580.

—Editor

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

The Spanish-language monthly magazine *Perspectiva Mundial* offers a six-month subscription for \$3 and a one-year subscription for \$6. Please send a check or money order, earmarked "Prisoners Fund," to the Militant, 152 W. 36th St., #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 and indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name. Where necessary letters will be abridged.

Scotland march backs united Ireland

BY CAROLINE BELLAMY

EDINBURGH, Scotland—Up to 1,000 people marched here June 7 in support of the fight for a united Ireland and in memory of James Connolly, the Edinburgh-born revolutionary socialist and a central leader of the 1916 Easter Rising in Ireland (see below). Accompanied by six flute bands playing songs of the struggle and carrying the Irish tricolor, the Scottish saltire, and other banners—including the Palestinian and Basque flags—the marchers, who spanned generations, confidently asserted their right to march through the center of the Scottish capital.

“This is the 10th anniversary of this march. Ten years ago, the council said, ‘You’ll never have another republican march in Edinburgh.’ Well, we’ve shown them and it’s because people like you are prepared to come out on the street,” Jim Slaven of the James Connolly Society, which organized the march, told the rally afterwards.

In 1993 the James Connolly Society broke a ban on the march and went ahead with the demonstration. The police arrested 50 people and Slaven was jailed for refusing to pay a fine for organizing an “illegal” protest.

“In 1994, the Society stood me in the council elections on a republican platform to highlight the issue,” Slaven told the *Militant*. “By the end of the campaign people were asking candidates on the doorstep why they were banning the Connolly march. We also took the fight to them and held protests anywhere we could. It became more cost and trouble than it was worth for them to maintain the ban.” Last year, the group scored another victory



The Militant/Simone Berg
Volunteer Tom Williams Republican Flute Band from Glasgow in the June 7 James Connolly Day march of 1,000 in Edinburgh, Scotland, calling for united Ireland.

by pushing back police demands that they fly only one Irish tricolor on the march. Despite provocative numbers of cops partly in riot gear, who made a show of examining flags, march stewards ensured that the event passed off successfully.

Eoin O’Broin, Sinn Fein councillor for North Belfast, addressed the rally. “Irish

unity is going to happen!” he announced to cheers and applause. Referring to London’s cancellation of the elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly that should have taken place on May 29, he said, “The Good Friday Agreement is an essential part of our strategy. Why else would they cancel elections that would lead to further gains for Sinn Fein? Because they don’t like the results. They can run from us but they can’t hide. When we do have elections our political strategy will be there for all to see.”

In a later interview O’Broin said, “People are furious at what has been done. The British government just said that ‘the results will not be beneficial to the peace process’ and so they cancel the election. They are worried about challenges to David Trimble’s leadership, but the Unionists are only as strong as the British allow. We will be mobilizing people to get this message across, which will also empower them.”

David Trimble is the leader of the Ulster Unionist party, the main party in the six counties in the north of Ireland occupied by London that defends maintaining Northern Ireland as part of the United Kingdom. Sinn Fein is the party leading the struggle for a united Ireland.

O’Broin pointed to the 5,000-strong demonstration to commemorate the 1981 hunger strike in Belfast on May 4 and the many mobilizations across Ireland and in London and New York on May 29 to protest the cancellation of the elections. “We’re also looking to make August’s internment commemoration march following the West Belfast festival big this year,” he stated.

The Irish struggle takes on particular importance in Scotland as the Irish and those of Irish descent are the largest immigrant group, making up about 16 percent of the population. Large numbers migrated following the Irish famine of the 1840s, settling mainly in the central belt between Glasgow and Edinburgh and including these two cities.

Systematic job discrimination on the basis of religion parallel to that in Northern Ireland persisted until recent years. Its legacy still divides the working class today. A recent BBC poll showed that more than 13 percent of Scots had experienced some form of “sectarianism”, with Catholics four times more likely to be subject to attack as Protestants. One in five of those affected were physically assaulted.

“I’m on the march because I like to be seen to be involved with things I believe in,” said Billy Hughes from Granton in Edinburgh. “I’m half Irish myself. I think Irish people are discriminated against by the majority, labelled as terrorists or

terrorist sympathizers.”

“I’m in a flute band to support a 32-county socialist republic of Ireland,” said Kelly Phinn who plays in the Volunteer Tom Williams Republican Flute Band. “What else can you do to be involved?” A fellow band member who asked that his name not to be used said that he joined because, growing up, his was the only Catholic family in the close (apartment block). Pro-British, anti-Catholic Orange flute bands would make a point of stopping outside and banging their drums to intimidate the family inside.

Orange marches and loyalist band parades continue to be a feature of life here.

A season of marches was approved by West Lothian council on March 25, the largest involving up to 12,000 marching through West Calder, a town of around 4,000 people. This was in spite of residents’ concern over the size of the march and the consequent disruption. Local councillor Eddie Malcolm backed the decision saying, “I will defend the rights of anybody to march or protest providing it stays within the laws of the land.” In the neighbouring county of North Lanarkshire, councillors banned a Republican march in the town of Wishaw on January 25, hours before it was due to start on the pretext of “a threat of significant disorder.”

Jack McConnell, the First Minister of the Scottish Parliament approved of the decision, saying that when processions are used to promote sectarianism, he would expect the police to “take action.” He has made no comment on the frequent Orange marches through the town.

In a blow to this denial of democratic rights, organizers have won an agreement to hold their march June 14. “They’re trying to make us hold it at 9:00 a.m.,” said a member of the Crossmaglen Patriots RFB from Wishaw, “but we’re pushing to have it later. I don’t think they’ll get away with banning it at the last minute this time.”

At the end of last year, McConnell pledged to “end an attitude [sectarianism] which, like racism, is a stain on Scotland’s reputation.”

In reality, this campaign has been a cover to push back growing expressions of Irish nationalism.

“The focus on the Irish community is ironic,” wrote Slaven in *An Phoblacht/Republican News*, “as it is our community that suffers disproportionately from intolerance and discrimination. The victim community is blamed for provoking the attacks.”

The British rulers push the notion that “both sides are as bad as each other” in irrational religious hatred, a myth that allows them to pose as neutral arbiters and hide the reality that it is London that creates and benefits from divisions among working people. In this framework, McConnell backed proposals requiring Catholic and other state schools to share facilities such as dining rooms, assembly halls, and playgrounds.

The state has funded Catholic schools in Scotland since 1918. They now account for about 18 percent of pupils in over 400 schools.

Though other state schools are routinely referred to as “secular” or “non-denominational,” they are in reality Protestant. A correspondent to the *Herald* newspaper recalled “visits by the local minister, being dragged along to the local kirk and singing from the Church of Scotland hymnbook.”

Damian Brogan and Lawrence Connolly explained on the Connolly march that they did not agree that separate schooling caused sectarianism. “One of the reasons there was a separate system in the first place was that Protestants wouldn’t have their children taught alongside Catholics,” Connolly said. “If they want to fight sectarianism they have to admit where it comes from in the first place. There are Catholic schools all over the world and you don’t have the same problems there.”

The 1916 Easter Rebellion

Printed below is an excerpt from the introduction to “The 1916 Easter Rebellion in Ireland: Two Views” from the Marxist magazine *New International* no. 1 (see ad below).

On Easter Monday, 1916, in the middle of World War I, some 1,200 members of the Irish Volunteers and the Irish Citizen Army seized the General Post Office and several other sites in Dublin. They were led by Patrick Pearse, a leader of the Irish Volunteers and of the Irish Republican Brotherhood, and by James Connolly, a revolutionary socialist and workers’ leader who founded the Citizen Army.

Under conditions of deepening opposition to British colonial rule and to the imperialist war, the rebels had counted on setting off a national revolt. While uprisings did erupt elsewhere in Ireland, the hoped-for general insurrection did not transpire. After days of bitter fighting, the survivors surrendered to overwhelming

British force on Saturday.

In the course of the fighting, British artillery leveled a large part of Dublin. Pearse, Connolly, and thirteen other Irish leaders were sentenced to death and shot.

Although the Easter Rebellion was crushed, it inspired a rising tide of struggle in Ireland. Sinn Fein, the nationalist political party, grew rapidly in the wake of the revolt. In 1919 the Volunteers (now incorporating the Citizen Army) adopted the name Irish Republican Army. A civil war developed.

In 1921 the British government, unable to crush this nationalist revolt by force, reached agreement with the bourgeois leaders of the Irish nationalist movement to partition Ireland. Eamon De Valera, a surviving veteran of the Easter Rebellion, later became president of the formally independent Irish Free State. The island’s six northern counties, however, remained under British colonial rule. The IRA and Sinn Fein opposed the partition and continued the fight for an independent, united Ireland.

The Easter Rebellion was the first major outbreak of revolt by the oppressed and exploited in Europe since the beginning of World War I. The Irish rebels’ stand, “We serve neither king nor kaiser, but Ireland,” was in stark contrast to the treacherous conduct of the majority of European labor and Socialist leaders, who told the toilers to put aside their fight for justice and a decent life for the good of “their own” governments’ war efforts.

At the time of the Easter Rebellion, the minority left wing in the international Socialist movement—those who opposed calling a truce with the exploiters in the class struggle and supporting the imperialist rulers in the war—was debating what policy to adopt toward the fight by oppressed nations for the right to self-determination. How to evaluate the Easter Rebellion became a part of that discussion.... VI. Lenin [the central leader of the Russian Revolution]...argued that the social revolution by the working class against capitalist rule is inconceivable “without revolts by small nations in the colonies and in Europe.”

From Pathfinder

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