

Pro-imperialist opposition is dealt blow in Venezuela

Election board rejects petition for referendum to oust Chávez
Workers and peasants press their struggles for jobs and land

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

The campaign by the pro-imperialist opposition to oust Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez from power has been dealt another blow. On September 12 the country's National Elections Council threw out a petition with more than 3 million signatures, which opposition forces gathered the first half of this year, demanding a referendum to recall the president.

At the same time, land takeovers and distribution of land to peasants who have none have accelerated this year, according to a number of Venezuelan farmers and unionists interviewed by the *Militant* in mid-September. "Thousands of families now have titles to 1.2 million hectares [3 million acres] of land," said Angel Sarmiento, a peasant in San Carlos, Cojedes state, September 14. Yhonny García and others interviewed said that dozens of factories the owners shut down are now occupied and being operated by the workers—a new development since the beginning of this year. García, a unionist in Maracaibo, Venezuela's second-largest city and capital of Zulia, the country's top oil producing state, spoke to the *Militant* September 16.

The recall petition drive, the third attempt to oust Chávez, was spearheaded by the opposition coalition Coordinadora Democrática (Democratic Coordination). Fedecámaras—the country's main employ-

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Supporters of Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez celebrate outside September 12 National Elections Council meeting, where body rejected petition initiated by big business, and backed by Washington, demanding referendum to oust Chávez.

Appeal to readers for funds to replace stolen camera

On September 10, the *Militant's* camera bag—including our new Canon EOS 10 D digital camera and three lenses—was stolen at an event in New York covered by a *Militant* reporter. The total loss amounts to \$4,000. We appeal to our readers for contributions to help us replace this equipment. Please send your special contribution (earmarked for the camera) to the *Militant* at 152 W. 36th St. Room 401, New York, NY 10018.

Socialist Workers candidate for California governor addresses U.S. soldiers abroad



Militant/Diana Newberry

Joel Britton (center), SWP candidate for California governor, campaigns in downtown Los Angeles September 13. With him is campaign volunteer Darryl Sheppard (left), who came from Washington, D.C., to campaign with Young Socialists for Britton.

Three-judge panel of U.S. court rules that California recall vote must be put off

On September 15, a three-judge panel of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals approved a request by the American Civil Liberties Union to postpone the vote on whether to recall California governor Gray Davis. The full court will review the ruling. The judges made the decision on the grounds that antiquated voting machines in several California counties must be replaced prior to the ballot. If the ruling stands, the election will be moved from October 7 to March of next year.

Minnesota unions join nationwide immigrant rights Freedom Ride

BY BECKY ELLIS

ST. PAUL, Minnesota—Local 789 of the United Food and Commercial Workers union hosted a fund-raiser here September 13 to make it possible for 80 workers from Minnesota to participate in the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride. The effort is backed by a number of other unions in the region.

Buses from nine cities will take part in
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Palestinians protest Israeli plan to exile or kill Arafat

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON—The Israeli government announcement that it plans to exile or murder Palestinian Authority president Yasir Arafat sparked numerous protest demonstrations in the West Bank and Gaza and elsewhere in the Mideast in mid-September. The Israeli cabinet declared September 11 that it would "act to remove" Arafat.

"We must kill as many of the Hamas and Islamic Jihad leaders as possible, while
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U.S. Navy conducts exercises to prepare to stop, board ships from Iran, N. Korea

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

Working with the governments of Australia, Britain, Germany, Japan, and other imperialist powers, Washington has launched a series of 10 naval exercises to prepare to stop and board on the high seas merchant ships that it claims are carrying "weapons of mass destruction." These maneuvers began September 13 in the Coral Sea off Australia. Among the operations' first intended targets

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Exclusion of Cuban musicians sparks protest at Grammys

BY LAWRENCE MIKESH

MIAMI—Some 130 people gathered outside the American Airlines Arena in the city’s downtown area to protest the denial of invitations and visas for the Cuban nominees for this year’s Latin Grammy Awards, held here September 3.

“Music yes, Embargo no!” and “Music yes, Censorship no!” shouted the protesters, largely in Spanish, as each limousine pulled up delivering invitees to the awards ceremony. The demonstration was sponsored by a range of organizations of Cuban Americans opposed to Washington’s economic war on Cuba. These included Alianza Martiana, Antonio Maceo Brigade, José Martí Association, Association of Workers in the Cuban Community (ATC), and the Cuban American Defense League.

Seven musicians—including members of the bands Los Van Van and Los Muñequitos de Matanzas—had applied for U.S. visas in order to enter the United States to attend the ceremony, which was televised. Despite numerous requests from the band members, their representatives in the United States, the Cuban Ministry of Culture, and the Cuban Music Institute, the Latin Recording Academy, the organizers of the Latin Grammy awards, refused to send the letters of invitations needed by the artists to apply for visas at the U.S. Interests Section in Havana. Three applications were

denied—from Juan Formell, leader of Los Van Van, which was nominated for Best Contemporary Tropical Album; Zenaida Romeu, a musician nominated for Best Flamenco Album; and Diosdado Ramos, leader of Los Muñequitos de Matanzas, which was nominated for Best Folk Album. Other applications remained pending through the end of the event.

The Cuban musicians found out about these nominations through the U.S. media. Three weeks after the nominations were made public, however, they had not received invitations. U.S. law requires letters of invitation from U.S. entities as a requirement for Cubans seeking permission to travel to the United States.

Cuba’s deputy minister of culture Abel Acosta said the Latin Recording Academy failed to send letters of invitation that the nominees needed to apply for U.S. visas. Acosta, who held a news conference in Havana along with several of the nominated musicians, said the letters never arrived even though officials early on reminded academy representatives of the complicated visa process.

State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said on September 3 that none of the Cubans would be able to attend because their visa applications arrived too late. According to new regulations Washington adopted in the last two years, visa applicants



Militant/Seth Galinsky

September 3 rally in Miami at Latin Grammys to protest the exclusion of Cuban artists nominated for awards. Participants chanted, “Music yes, Censorship no.”

from Cuba need to submit the necessary documents for a visa a minimum of eight weeks before the proposed travel dates.

Although the Grammy’s organizers did not send the invitation letters, they did send tickets necessary for admission to the event. These tickets were sent not only to the nominees, according to Acosta, but to now-deceased artists—including the late Compay Segundo, Frank Emilio, and Armando Romeu.

A coalition of dozens of Cuban American counterrevolutionary groups had planned a protest outside the award ceremony if Cuban musicians attended. The right-wingers later called off their action, when it became clear the artists from Cuba had been denied. “If the agents of Castro aren’t coming, we don’t see a need to protest,” said the rightist coalition’s spokesman Francisco Garcia. In solidarity with the excluded nominees,

Cuban musicians who live outside of the country and are opposed to such acts that impede freedom of expression and the arts boycotted the September 3 event here.

The nominees in Cuba, meanwhile, performed a concert in Havana the next day, September 4, to protest this anti-Cuba act. Musicians who did not receive U.S. visas in time to attend the ceremony last year did the same thing. On September 6, about 100 supporters of freedom of expression in Miami attended a showing of that concert, filmed in the Karl Marx theater in Havana.

U.S. gov’t puts new restrictions on Cuban diplomats

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON—The U.S. State Department has imposed new restrictions on diplomats at the Cuban Interests Section here. As published in the August 25 Federal Register, the measures deny Cuban diplomats the right to “purchase, lease, or sell any vehicle in the United States.” They apply to officials of the section and their families, along with staff members—regardless of nationality or immigration status.

The State Department claimed that the

restrictions, which do not apply to vehicles already acquired, are in retaliation for similar steps taken against members of the U.S. Interests Section in Havana.

The decree permits the purchase of vehicles “from a vendor located outside the United States...provided that such a vehicle is less than four years old.” A diplomat can also buy a car from a member of a foreign mission or an employee of its staff, provided that the latter is “not a U.S. citizen, permanent resident alien, or

a person regarded as permanently resident in the U.S.”

Another provision bars Interests Section officials from renting or leasing vehicles for more than 30 days at a time. This denies them the lower rates that often come with longer-term rental and lease agreements. Furthermore, they will not be able to buy leased vehicles. Many lease agreements credit a portion of the lease payments toward the vehicle’s purchase.

Cuban diplomats cannot dispose of a vehicle within the United States, states the order, “by any method or means including, but not limited to, sale, lease, loan, or gift...including sale for scrap or salvage.” To dispose of a vehicle that is beyond repair, they will have to export it, or work through a foreign embassy.

The new restrictions follow Washington’s announcement in March that diplomats at the Cuban Interests Section must get State Department permission to travel outside the Beltway, the section of interstate highway that surrounds this city. Two months later the U.S. government ordered the expulsion of 14 Cuban diplomats on charges of espionage.

The measures flow from Washington’s long-term opposition to the revolutionary government in Havana.

CORRECTIONS

The lead article in the September 8 issue, “Strikers in Chile resist effects of social crisis,” contained two errors. The general strike organized by the Central Workers Union took place August 13, not August 14. Moreover, the stoppage was not the “first nationwide walkout since 1973 coup,” as the lead subhead stated. It was the first general strike in 17 years. In 1986 workers brought Chile, still ruled by the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet, to a standstill in a two-day general strike.

In the same issue, a letter to the editor titled “Nicaragua anniversary” said that among the honored guests at the official July 19 event in Managua celebrating the anniversary of the 1979 Nicaraguan revolution was Jorge Mas Santos, the current head of the Cuban American National Foundation (CANF)—a Miami group that seeks the overthrow of the Cuban Revolution. The late founder of CANF was Jorge Mas Canosa. His estranged brother, Ricardo Mas Canosa, was the one who attended the July 19 celebration and declared his support for the 2006 presidential campaign of Daniel Ortega, a leader of the Sandinista National Liberation Front.

In the article “Calero meets New Zealand meat workers,” printed in the September 22 issue, the last name of Doug Solomon, a worker quoted in the article, is misspelled “Soloman.”

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Opposition is dealt blow in Venezuela

Continued from front page
ers' association—has been at the center of this campaign. These are the same forces that carried out an unsuccessful coup to topple the Chávez government in April 2002. They also organized a two-month bosses' "strike" last December and January, which temporarily crippled the country's economy, especially the oil industry. Both times massive mobilizations by working people pushed back the coup plotters, who have enjoyed Washington's tacit or explicit support.

Thousands of Chávez supporters celebrated the election board's ruling in downtown Caracas, the country's capital, September 12. National Elections Council president Francisco Carrasquero said the decision was made on the grounds that the signatures were gathered before the midpoint of Chávez's term, an election law violation.

Opposition leaders vowed to start a new petition campaign October 5. "We are going to sign again for the millions of Venezuelans...who live in insecurity," said Enrique Mendoza, the governor of Miranda state and the main leader of the Coordinadora Democrática (CD). Mendoza is also a former leader of COPEI, a Social Christian party that alternated in the government for decades with the social-democratic Democratic Action, the other main capitalist party, until Chávez was elected in 1998.

In numerous telephone interviews, however, Venezuelans from various walks of life told the *Militant* that Mendoza's defiant statements are simply cries of desperation. "The opposition's attempts this year to get rid of the president by legal means have basically hit a dead end," said Antonio Aguillón, a unionist in Caracas. Aguillón said the country's constitution mandates that a request for a recall referendum can only be made once during a president's term. "It's virtually precluded now that another referendum effort will succeed in the next three years," he said.

The relative weakness of the CD recall referendum campaign was indicated by the size of the demonstrations the two sides organized recently. While the big-business media claimed a mass turnout, "About 30,000 people showed up for the opposition rally August 20," the day the referendum petition was filed with the National Elections Council, said Aguillón, who was on the scene. Over the past year, the CD had often mobilized more than half a million people for anti-Chavez rallies. Other Venezuelan reporters the *Militant* contacted put the crowd at the August 20 action at 15,000 people.

In contrast, hundreds of thousands turned out for an August 23 march in Caracas to mark three years of the Chávez presidency and denounce the demand for a recall.

Chávez was elected president in 1998 and again two years later with wide popular support against the traditional capitalist parties. Private property in the means of production has remained largely intact under his administration, with economic power still firmly in the hands of the country's wealthiest families. Chávez's nationalist regime, however, has increasingly come into conflict with the majority of Venezuela's capitalist class. The clash turned into a collision in the fall of 2001. At that time, the government passed legislation that, if implemented, would cut into the prerogatives of finance capital. These measures include an agrarian reform law, protections for working fishermen from overfishing by large commercial companies, and the allocation of state funds for cheap housing and other social programs. The new administration has also drawn the ire of Washington and the local bourgeoisie for cultivating closer political and economic ties with revolutionary Cuba.

Deep economic crisis

Venezuela faces a deep economic crisis due to the capitalist economic depression throughout Latin America, and similar conditions around the world. This situation was exacerbated by the bosses' "strike" that ended February 4. Unemployment is at 18 percent now, according to government statistics and other reports. The country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) shrank 18 percent the first half of 2003, compared with the same period a year earlier. In the

first six months of this year, Venezuela's imports also plummeted by half.

"There are some signs of a recovery," though, stated Antonio Aguillón. "Projections now indicate that on average the GDP will fall 6 percent by the end of the year, a third of the drop in the first half." Aguillón and others pointed to the recovery in oil production as the most important factor.

Venezuela is the world's fifth-largest petroleum producer. Oil production by Petróleos de Venezuela (PdVSA), the state-owned monopoly, is now up to 3.2 million barrels per day (bpd), the same level as a year ago. It fell last December, at the high point of the employers' lockout, to 250,000 bpd. In the aftermath of the bosses' strike, the government fired 18,000 of PdVSA's 30,000 employees. The majority of those dismissed, more than 10,000, were administrative and managerial personnel. The government replaced the company's management virtually in its entirety. "The big majority of oil workers and other working people who mobilized to minimize sabotage and get the pumps and refineries going again are now more confident they can produce without the *escudidos*," said Yhonny García, using a derisive term—literally "the squalid ones"—used widely in Venezuela to describe the pro-imperialist opposition.

Workers occupy dozens of plants

García and others said working people across the country are now more self-confident and have intensified their struggles for jobs and for better living and working conditions, despite the difficult economic situation. "There are now about 45 privately owned plants that workers occupy across the country," García pointed out. Factory takeovers began in January, he said, as working people battled to defeat the bosses' lockout.

Some of the largest companies that workers took over after the owners shut



Vivian Iglesias, one of 1,000 Cuban doctors currently practicing in Venezuela, finishes house call July 15 in Caracas shantytown of Resplendor. These doctors live and work in neighborhoods where residents previously had little or no access to health care.

them down and refused to reopen them include the Constructora Nacional de Válvulas (CNV), which produces valves for the oil industry, and Venepal, the Venezuela Paper company. Some 10,000 people work in the Venepal complex in the state of Carabobo, the country's industrial heartland. The CNV plant in the state of Miranda employs 5,000 workers. Its owner, who was once president of PdVSA during the reign of COPEI and Democratic Action, according to García, has gone to court demanding the workers be evicted. Mobilizations around the plant by other unionists and working people from nearby communities have ensured that CNV workers maintain control of the production facility so far, García said.

"Up to now, the government has not tried to evict workers in any of these

plants," García stated. "In some cases, the National Guard has been sent to occupied plants for security and sometimes to help with transportation of goods in and out of the factories."

Some in the labor movement now call on trade unions to take the initiative to expand the occupations. "Workers should take control of all shut-down factories nationwide," said Cruz Camacaro in a June 11 interview with *Aporrea*, an Internet publication in Venezuela. Camacaro is the president of Sintra-Insemosa, the union organizing workers at SEMOSA, a meat-processing company in the state of Lara. Management shut down the plant during the nationwide bosses' lockout last December. On February 4, the workers reopened the plant and started production. The owners then fired

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SWP candidate speaks to U.S. GIs abroad

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on their farms by the banks.

"We defend affirmative action. We back women's access to abortion," he continued. "We call for an end to Washington's economic war on Cuba and support normalizing relations.

"We call for immediately and unconditionally bringing the troops home from the Balkans, Korea, Iraq and Afghanistan—end the occupation by U.S. forces now!" (see page 10 for entire statement).

This revolutionary working-class program—disseminated not just by the candidate, but also by the Young Socialists for Britton, who are among the candidate's most enthusiastic campaigners—has sparked interest among working people in South Central Los Angeles and other working-class districts in this city and across the state. Workers and youth have stayed to listen and exchange views with the street campaigners and have picked up campaign literature, Pathfinder books, and copies of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*. Discussions have taken up most of the political issues of the day.

Ricardo Hernández, a sewing machine operator, for example, met Britton in the downtown garment district here September 13. Hernández told the socialist candidate that he opposes the recall of Democratic Governor Gray Davis. "We should let him finish his term," the garment worker said.

Britton responded that while he did not campaign for placing the recall on the ballot, he is urging a "yes" vote to remove Davis from office. "Whenever working people have the opportunity to remove a capitalist politician from office we should take advantage of it," he said.

"The bosses rule over us through the Democratic and Republican parties," Britton stated. "The bosses don't just run the garment shops and other factories, they run the government. We need to build a movement that will replace the exploiters with a workers and farmers government."

Hernández countered that he liked Davis because he had signed a law recognizing undocumented workers' right to a driver's license without having to show a Social Security card.

Britton said that Davis's September 5 ap-

proval of the bill, which will go into effect January 1, was a by-product of years of protests by workers and immigrant rights organizations. The governor had vetoed similar legislation twice before, Britton pointed out. He noted that Davis had said he would support a driver's license bill on the condition that it require applicants to have jobs, and allowed the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to conduct background checks. The recent legislation dropped both provisions.

"The fight around the driver's license is far from over," Britton noted. "For one, the DMV has not issued details on how immigrants will get their licenses. Many are concerned that the DMV will allow the police and other cop agencies easy access to its records, including addresses and fingerprints. "I am opposed to discrimination against immigrants," Britton said. "The government uses repressive measures to heighten insecurity and fear among immigrants, hoping to maintain them as a super-exploitable labor pool and to discourage involvement in unionization efforts and other social and political fights."

Between 1980 and 2000, California's Latino population doubled to 11 million people, or almost one-third of the population. Most are of Mexican origin.

Britton has discussed the socialist alternative with workers looking for jobs, as well as employed workers dissatisfied with low wages. In the past year, some 8,700 garment manufacturing jobs have been slashed in Los Angeles County. The industry today employs 64,000 workers—a 12 percent decline from a year ago.

The candidate has also called for guaranteed health, disability, and pension benefits, along with lifetime health care. These demands have come up in discussions on the sharp attack on workers' compensation just approved by the California State Legislature. Davis says he will approve the \$5 to \$6 billion in expenditure cuts proposed there—which will affect programs for vocational rehabilitation, chiropractic treatment, and physical therapy.

"I am opposed to these cuts," Britton said in an interview. "If the bosses wanted to reduce injuries, they would slow down the speed of the assembly lines. We don't have to accept their speedup drive. The

frequency of carpal tunnel and other repetitive injuries is unnecessary. There are many factories where workers, desperate for a job, offer their limbs in exchange for a weekly wage.

"What is happening is outrageous," Britton added. "Under capitalism health care is an industry designed to make profits off of human misery. We need to build a movement that will put an end to this, like in Cuba."

On September 11 the socialist candidate joined a Young Socialists for Britton campaign table at California State University's Long Beach campus. One student expressed interest in having Britton speak before his class. The young socialists are taking the campaign to the campuses, setting up meetings, and arranging interviews with campus newspapers and radio stations. A series of campaign activities will be held at California State University, Monterey Bay in Seaside, and in the Napa Valley September 24–26.

Meanwhile, the campaign continues to receive numerous e-mail inquiries. One woman liked what Britton had said in defense of the Cuban Revolution on Channel 11 Fox News. "I really like what you wrote in the voter info guide. I hope your words are real," wrote a San Diego resident. Another told Britton that she is "considering voting for you, and would greatly appreciate if you would be willing to answer a few questions about your platform." Her questions covered women's rights, education, unemployment benefits, regulation of monopolies, and legalization of drugs.

Britton has submitted a two-minute video, "State Your Case," to LA36, a public-access educational channel in Los Angeles. On September 16 he will be interviewed on "Bull Sessions," a program on KPAY News, Clear Channel Chico-Radio. KPAY is the leading news talk station in Butte County.

The Gateway company has offered free digital cameras to the 135 candidates in the race on the condition they are used to take photos of the candidates campaigning. The photos are posted on the Internet and are available to the public. Britton accepted the offer. His photos can be found at www.candidatecamera.com. On this web site's home page click "campaign albums" and then click "Joel Britton."

UK workers discuss antideportation fight

BY PAUL DAVIES

LONDON—"The lessons of this fight can be shared," Róger Calero told locked-out members of the Transport and General Workers Union picketing car parts manufacturer Dynamex Friction. Calero met the workers as a part of his "Fight to Win" tour, following his successful campaign to prevent the U.S. authorities from deporting him.

Calero is an editor of the Spanish-language monthly *Perspectiva Mundial* and a staff writer for the *Militant*, both published in New York. He was involved in a six-month fight against the U.S. government's efforts to deport him. Last December, immigration agents arrested him at the Houston Intercontinental Airport while he was on his way home from reporting trips to Cuba and Mexico. Washington said it intended to send him back to his native Nicaragua because of a plea-bargain conviction 15 years ago, while Calero was in high school, for selling one ounce of marijuana to an undercover cop.

Under the mounting pressure of his defense campaign, the U.S. government dropped its effort to deport him in May.

The pickets told Calero about the challenges that they now face following U.S. factory owner Craig Smith's decision to sell the company to a former manager, who hired 60 of the 90 scabs that Smith was using in order to avoid paying the locked-out workers any compensation. "He should take his union-busting back to America," said Searle Owen, one of the locked out trade unionists.

"The main thing is that he is a boss doing what all bosses do—looking for ways to drive down wages and conditions," Calero responded. "We have to figure out who we are up against—the bosses act together internationally to defend their class interests and we, who have a lot more in common as a class, have to act internationally too."

Rol and Dewi Williams told Calero that the cops had raided the plant on one occasions to check up on scabs, who they described as "criminals" and "drug dealers."

"These people appear to be taking our jobs," Calero responded. "But the important point in all this is to always take the moral high ground. The labor movement must oppose any attempts to criminalize one section of the working class. The same cops who went to harass the scabs here recently will be used to harass union fighters like yourselves, tomorrow."

Around 40 people attended a meeting called by the Róger Calero Defense Campaign at the Pathfinder Bookshop in London. Jane Evans, a member of the Communist League, a sister organization of Calero's party, the Socialist Workers Party, described some of the recent attacks on immigrant workers, including the raid by 50 cops and immigration agents at the Cookie Man factory in Esher, Surrey. The aim of these types of attacks, she said, "is to drive immigrant workers down within the workforce, to scapegoat a section of the working class as part of their drive to divide and weaken all workers."

She pointed to the resistance of immigrant workers, including 28 African refugees who set up a makeshift refugee camp in Brixton, South London, to highlight the refusal of state authorities to grant them benefits.

One participant at the meeting asked how other workers who are immigrants facing deportation and who don't have the resources of a party, as Calero had, can fight to defend themselves. "I would say to them—it could be your party, too," said Calero. "Secondly, there was no secret how this fight was won. We kept reaching out and found others who could be inspired by this fight, including in the unions, and also other people facing very similar situations to the one that I was in."



BY PETE CLIFFORD

WEST LOTHIAN, Scotland—"That's good," said Mohammed Naveen Asif, a leader of the Glasgow Refugee Action Group, to Róger Calero after hearing how he'd won his fight against the U.S. government's effort to deport him. The two met September 6 at a protest rally at Dungavel Immigration Detention Centre, some 40 miles south of Glasgow. Attended by 2,000 people, the action was called by the Scottish Trades Union Congress (TUC).

Asif and others formed their group two years ago after mass protests on the Sighthill housing estate in Glasgow. The protests were organized in response to the racist murder of a Kurdish worker. Earlier this year they heard about Calero's fight from Lawrence Mikesch, a spokesman for the Calero defense committee who lives in Miami.

The rally chairperson welcomed Calero to the event, and reported that the Scottish TUC had backed his fight.

Several participants were keen to hear Calero describe his case and to tell their own story. Katawandja Djuma, from the newly formed Scottish African Refugee Community Association, said that his organization had been formed in response to racist attacks against African immigrants on the Springburn estate. "A jail is a jail," he told Calero, as they discussed a view put forward by some involved in the September 6 protest that what is needed is a more "humane" way to detain asylum seekers.

The previous evening Calero had spoken to eight of his defenders at a meeting in the Bathgate Trades Union Centre in West Lothian. A former vehicle worker said that while he was pleased Calero had won, he thought that he and his party—the Socialist Workers Party—were fighting a losing cause. Another participant disagreed, saying, "we need a movement to win."

Calero discussed the lessons of his antideportation struggle. "We're losing too many battles today," he said, "but my fight and others show that we can win."

Also speaking was Pamela Holmes, who said that members of her organization, the Communist League, have recently established a unit of the party in Central Scotland. They have made the defense campaign an important part of their work, she said. The



Militant/ Jim Spaul

Róger Calero (left) visits picket line of workers at Dynamex Friction—including Rol Williams (center) and Dewi Williams—in Wales, September 4. The unionists have been on the picket line for nearly two and a half years.

meeting raised £162 campaign expenses and future defense efforts.

In Glasgow, Calero met up with four members of the Volunteer Tom Williams Republican Flute Band. Band members, who are of Irish descent, had earlier endorsed and publicized Calero's fight. They described the ongoing anti-Irish discrimination in Scotland. Some had joined a 60-strong picket outside the Glasgow City Chambers July 23 at a civic reception for the rightist Orange Order, which supports

British rule of Northern Ireland.

The flute band's web site will be opening a new features section with a piece on Calero's victory along with the story of Ciarán Ferry. Ferry is a former Irish republican prisoner presently facing a deportation order in a jail in Denver, Colorado. The threat "is an attack on the rights of all those who live and work in the U.S., and it's an example of how the attack on immigrants is the spear point of the assault on all working people," Calero said.

Tel Aviv plans to exile or kill Arafat

Continued from front page

minimizing collateral damage, but not letting that damage stop us," said an editorial in that day's *Jerusalem Post*. "And we must kill Yasir Arafat, because the world leaves us no alternative."

Some 5,000 people condemned the threats at a rally in the Rashidiyeh refugee camp in southern Lebanon. The previous day tens of thousands demonstrated at Arafat's compound in Ramallah in the West Bank. Israeli attacks over the past 18 months have left the compound partially destroyed. During that time Arafat has been allowed outside the compound's grounds only once. Israeli warplanes repeatedly screech so low over the area that their weapons can be seen under their wings, reported the September 11 *New York Times*.

Some 125 members of the Palestine National Council resident in Jordan voted September 13 to renew Arafat's term as head of the Palestine Liberation Organi-

zation, and warned that harming him was "a red line that cannot be crossed."

The Israeli cabinet declaration followed the September 6 resignation of Palestinian prime minister Mahmoud Abbas, who had been praised by Washington for his support of the U.S.-backed "roadmap to peace." Over the past week the Israeli armed forces have carried out two attempts to assassinate Hamas leaders, and Hamas launched two suicide bombings that killed 15 people.

Following the cabinet's declaration, the statements by Israeli officials grew more threatening. "Arafat can no longer be a factor in what happens here," Ehud Olmert, Israel's vice prime minister, told Israel radio. "The question is: How are we going to do it? Expulsion is certainly one of the options, and killing is also one of the options. In my eyes, from a moral point of view, this is no different than the eliminations of others who were involved in activating acts of terror." The Israeli armed forces have carried out a

series of assassinations of Hamas and other leaders over the past two years. Olmert said Israel could also sever Arafat's communications with the outside world.

The U.S. government, which has refused to talk to Arafat since June 2002, expressed muted concern at the threats. Washington is the main sponsor of the "Road Map" agreement, through which it seeks to stifle the Palestinian resistance. The agreement promised a Palestinian state in 2005 in exchange for guarantees by the Palestinian Authority of the security of the Israeli state.

"The United States does not support either the elimination of him or the exile of Mr. Arafat," said Secretary of State Colin Powell September 14 during a visit to Iraq. "I think you can anticipate that there would be rage throughout the Arab world, the Muslim world, and in many other parts of the world. And I don't see how, at this delicate moment, that would serve the cause of moving forward on the road map."

Naval exercises aimed at Iran, north Korea

Continued from front page

are ships from Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

The same week, the U.S. government took other steps in its campaign to force these governments to abandon development of any means of nuclear defense. On September 11 the White House claimed the DPRK had developed a missile with the range to hit any area of the United States. The next day the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) passed a U.S.-sponsored resolution giving Tehran an October 31 deadline to prove it is not developing nuclear weapons. The United Nations agency will place the matter on the UN Security Council agenda for possible sanctions if the Iranian government does not comply.

The threat of being stopped on the high seas will make it "expensive and difficult" for the two countries to transport arms components, an unnamed U.S. State Department official told reporters. *USA Today* said that such actions are "intended to squeeze the North Korean economy by threatening its exports of missiles and other weapons."

The "Proliferation Security Initiative" would involve 10 sets of maneuvers in the Arabian Sea, the Mediterranean Sea, and elsewhere over the next six months, accord-

ing to the September 9 State Department press briefing in Washington. The imperialist forces of Australia, Germany, Japan, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States will take part, along with those of Poland.

The Chinese, Russian, and south Korean governments have said they will not join the exercises. Along with Pyongyang and Washington, they participated in the recent talks in Beijing that renewed pressure on north Korea to abandon its nuclear arms program.

The legality of the searches will be decided on a "case by case" basis, said the U.S. official. White House spokespeople have expressed frustration at the outcome of one such recent action. Last December, Spanish and German navy ships seized a north Korean vessel heading for Yemen with a cargo of missiles. After protests from the DPRK and Yemeni governments the boat was released. The shipment was allowed to proceed, reported the September 10 *USA Today*, "because Yemen is an ally in the U.S. war on terrorism and promised the purchase would be its last from North Korea."

While saying that it will participate in a new round of talks with the governments of the United States, Japan, south Korea,

China, and Russia, Pyongyang stated September 12 "the U.S. demand for the DPRK's dismantling of its nuclear weapons program through irreversible verification is unacceptable." Such a stance, said the *Rodong Sinmun* newspaper, "means that the DPRK should completely disarm itself and succumb to the U.S."

Iran, likewise, is the target of increased pressure from the imperialist powers. On September 12 a meeting of the IAEA adopted a motion demanding that Iran "prove" it is not developing nuclear weapons. Sponsored by the Australian, Canadian, and Japanese representatives, the resolution was promoted by Washington and, according to the AFP, "won firm support from key allies France and Germany." It instructed Iran to "remedy all failures" in compliance with IAEA inspectors, who began their work in February. The inspectors claim that Iran has hidden its attempts to enrich uranium.

Earlier, Tehran's foreign minister, Kamal Kharrazi, accused "some Western countries" of a "deliberate attempt...to torpedo the process of cooperation and remove the agency [IAEA] from the process."

"The prevailing view seems to favor consensus," Kharrazi added. "This can lead to accelerated cooperation on our part."

Campaign launched to boost Pathfinder sales

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON—Supporters of Pathfinder Press are organizing an international campaign to increase the sales of Pathfinder books and pamphlets by 10 percent for the second half of 2003. The campaign will focus on raising sales to commercial bookstores and libraries, and in Pathfinder bookstores across the United States and in Australia, Canada, Iceland, New Zealand, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

Several Pathfinder stores have taken goals above the 10 percent target, and many are restocking for the campaign. Pathfinder supporters around the world must average sales worth \$21,000 a month the rest of the year to reach the target of \$126,000 for the second half of 2003. The figures in July and August were just over \$18,000 a month.

Pathfinder publishes the writings and speeches of outstanding communist and working-class leaders, such as Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, founders of the modern communist movement, and V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky, leaders of the Bolshevik-led Russian Revolution.

The publisher's titles span four decades and more of the writings and speeches of leaders of the Cuban Revolution, including Fidel Castro and Ernesto Che Guevara.

Books and pamphlets by other revolutionary leaders, from Malcolm X to Thomas Sankara, the leader of the 1983–87 revolutionary government in the West African country of Burkina Faso, are included in the publisher's catalog. James P. Cannon and Farrell Dobbs are among the leaders of the Socialist Workers Party in the United States published by Pathfinder.

Titles such as *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium*, and *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions* by Socialist Workers Party

national secretary Jack Barnes, along with the *New International* series distributed by Pathfinder, present a Marxist analysis of the world today and a revolutionary road forward for the working class.

Confident in campaign's success

Supporters of the international communist movement organized in the Pathfinder Printing Project are mapping out plans for the sales campaign. In a September 8 phone interview, Maceo Dixon and Jane Roland, who are members of the project's sales coordinating committee, expressed confidence that the goal will be met.

"We know there is a market for these books because of what is happening in the world," Roland said, pointing to Washington's ongoing push to war and the deteriorating living and working conditions facing working people. "We just need to get out to the bookstores and convince book buyers and librarians that there are people who want these books," she said—"people looking for the scientific explanation of the world they provide."

Roland has noticed increased interest in non-English political books by librarians and bookstore buyers. An increasing number of bookstores that are oriented to the Black community have also shown interest in getting titles in Spanish and French, she said.

Dixon, who helps to ship orders from Pathfinder's Atlanta distribution center, said that in the first half of this year many sales have come from classroom adoptions. These are titles that university professors have decided to add to their course reading lists. "We have received orders ranging from 30 to 150 copies of a wide variety of titles including the *Communist Manifesto*, *Rosa Luxemburg Speaks*, and titles on Black studies and Marxist economics," he said.



Militant/Bob Buchan

Pathfinder display at the Fête l'Humanité festival in Paris September 12–14, 2003.

"Now is the time to go after these adoptions," Dixon added, "as many professors are finalizing their reading lists for the winter and spring 2004 classes." He noted that "we get a steady request each month from prisoners for Pathfinder catalogs."

Pathfinderpress.com sales increase

Sales through the pathfinderpress.com web site have steadily increased this year, Dixon said. He urged campaigners to promote the site at literature tables, on the job, in trade union activity, and through Pathfinder bookstores.

Pathfinder will be represented at a number of book fairs over the course of the six-

month campaign, Dixon said. Volunteers from Atlanta, New York, and the United Kingdom will participate in the Fiesta Humanidad in Madrid, Spain, in mid-September. Other teams will take part in the Fête l'Humanité in Paris and in the Gothenburg, Sweden, book fair.

Teams will staff stalls at the New York is Book Country fair, the Los Angeles Latino and Family Book Fair, and the Baltimore Book Fair, all in September; the Northwest Bookfest in Seattle in October; and the Miami Book Fair in November. "We have also been invited to participate in the Third World Studies book fair that will take place

Continued on page 10

Four weeks left to complete fund

BY ANGEL LARISCY

With a month to go, supporters of the \$80,000 Socialist Workers Party-Building Fund face a challenge to meet their goals by the October 15 deadline. At the end of the ninth week, collections are behind schedule by more than \$34,000. An average of \$11,770 per week needs to be collected nationally to complete the drive.

Key to accomplishing this are political events organized for SWP leaders to speak on world politics and the opportunities open today to join with unionists, youth, and others who are resisting the attacks by the capitalists on our rights and living standards.

On the September 13–14 weekend James Harris and Martín Koppel, spoke in Houston and Newark, New Jersey, respectively, on two important anniversaries in 2003—the 50th anniversary of the July 26, 1953, attack on the Moncada Barracks that is celebrated as the opening battle of the Cuban Revolution, and the 30th anniversary of the Sept. 11, 1973, military coup in Chile that overthrew the government of Salvador Allende.

"This shows the two roads possible today—and highlights the need for a revolutionary party today," said Harris. "Build-

ing the revolutionary party is one of the most difficult things there is to do...but it's worth dedicating your life to accomplish."

Participants in the Houston meeting came from as far as Waco, Texas, and New Orleans, and contributed more than \$1,000 to the fund, reported Steve Warshell.

Nancy Rosenstock reports that one of the two high school students attending the Newark meeting said he wanted to campaign with Young Socialists for Britton in the California gubernatorial elections.

A September 14 program in Des Moines on "The Reality of the World Capitalist Crisis Today," was addressed by Ernie Mailhot and Rebecca Williamson. Kevin Dwire wrote that "a worker from Nigeria who attended stressed the importance of reaching young people and students with socialist ideas."

To contribute to the fund, send your donation to SWP, 152 W. 36th St., Room 401, New York, NY 10018. Please make your check out to SWP.

\$80,000 Party-Building Fund July 12–October 15: Week 9 of 13

	Goal	Paid	%
Twin Cities	4,300	3,465	81%
Utah*	1,100	750	68%
Miami	1,800	925	51%
NE Pennsylvania	2,000	750	38%
Newark	3,500	1,150	33%
Tampa	1,800	550	31%
Detroit	2,500	750	30%
San Francisco	8,000	2,150	27%
Houston	3,500	860	25%
Atlanta	5,200	1,189	23%
Pittsburgh	3,600	830	23%
New York	10,000	2,231	22%
Boston	2,800	575	21%
Los Angeles	7,500	1,470	20%
Des Moines	1,450	270	19%
Birmingham	1,400	240	17%
Chicago	4,200	675	16%
Washington, D.C.	2,700	340	13%
Seattle	6,000	525	9%
Cleveland	1,000	55	6%
Omaha	1,300	75	6%
Philadelphia	3,200	150	5%
Western Colorado	2,700	35	1%
Other		1,146	
Total	81,550	21,156	26%
Goal/Should be	80,000	55,200	69%
*Raised goal			

An Evening in Solidarity with Cuba Cuba Speaks for itself!



Cuban Foreign Minister Felipe Pérez Roque will address the latest developments in U.S.-Cuba relations, Cuba's assesment of the international situation, an update on the achievements of the Cuban Revolution, and the Cuban 5 held in U.S. federal prisons.

Sat., Sept. 27, 6:00 p.m.

Church of the Intercession, Broadway and West 155th Street. (IRT #1 & #9 or C to 155 St.), NYC

To purchase tickets call: (212) 926-2730

Sponsored by a coalition of dozens of organizations.

Harlem Welcomes President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela Hugo Chavez Frias



An Evening of Solidarity with The Bolivarian Revolution

Riverside Church, Riverside Drive
between 120th and 122nd Sts., NYC

Fri., Sept. 26, 6:00 p.m.

Admission by tickets. Tel. (212) 924-8585.

Organized by The Coalition to Welcome President Hugo Chavez

—CALENDAR—

Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride.

Will set out from nine major U.S. cities and cross the country in buses in late September. They will converge on Washington, D.C.; travel to Liberty State Park in New Jersey Oct. 3; then Flushing Meadows Park, Queens, New York for a mass rally Oct. 4, 2003. Sponsors include AFL-CIO, National Council of La Raza, UNITE, United Food and Commercial Workers Union. For more information go to <http://www.iwfr.org>

NEW JERSEY

Newark

U.S.-Cuba Relations: Why Washington's Cold War against Cuba Doesn't End. Speaker: Mary-Alice Waters, President of Pathfinder Press. Wed., Oct. 1, 2:30 p.m. Rutgers University, Paul Roberson Campus Center, Room 232, 350 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Sponsored by Student Government Association.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

March for an End to the Occupation of Iraq; Money for Jobs, Education and Health Care; Fight Back against the Patriot Act. Sat., Oct. 25. Sponsored by Act Now to Stop War and End Racism (A.N.S.W.E.R.) and United for Peace and Justice.

—FUND EVENTS—

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

The Crisis of Imperialism and Prospects for Building the Revolutionary Workers Movement Speaker: Argiris Malapanis, Militant editor. Sat. Sept. 27. Dinner 6:30 p.m., program: 7:30 p.m. 4229 S. Central Ave. Tel: (323) 233-9372.

PENNSYLVANIA

Philadelphia

The Fight for Workers Rights and the Prospects for Revolutionary Struggle Today Speaker: Betsy

Farley, Socialist Workers Party, Sat., Sept. 27. 6:00 p.m. 5237 N. 5th St. Tel: (215) 324-7020. Donation \$5.

FLORIDA

Worldwide Capitalist Crisis, Working-Class Resistance and the Revolutionary Party. Speaker: Margaret Trowe, SWP.

Tampa

Sat., Sept. 20. Dinner 6:30 p.m., program 7:30 p.m. 1441 E. Fletcher Suite 421. Tel: (813) 910-8507.

Miami

Sun., Sept. 21. Reception 1:00 p.m. program 2:00 p.m. 8365 NE 2nd Ave., Suite 206, Tel: (305) 751-7076.

WASHINGTON

Seattle

The Road of Moncada and Party Building Today. Speaker: Olympia Newton, Young Socialists leader, Sun. Sept. 21, Reception 2:00 p.m., program 2:30 p.m. Rainer Cultural Center, 3515 S. Alaska St. Tel: (206)323-1755.

‘I see two Californias: that of the workers, and that of the bosses’

California Channel interviews Joel Britton

Below are major excerpts from the transcript of a September 5 interview that California Channel, a Sacramento-based cable TV station, conducted with Joel Britton, Socialist Workers candidate for California governor.

❖

Question: I’m John Hancock, president of the California Channel. With me now is Joel Britton, an independent candidate for governor of California. Welcome Mr. Britton.

Answer: Thank you.

Q: In 60 seconds, who is Joel Britton?

A: I’m a retired meat packer. I’m also a leader of the Socialist Workers Party and a longtime activist in the trade union movement, having been a member of both the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union when I was working in a couple of oil refineries in Southern California, and a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers union when I was working in meatpacking and meatprocessing plants in the Chicago area.

Q: Why are you running for governor?

A: I’m running to present a revolutionary, working-class point of view that working people need who are fighting every day, especially in factories where the offensive of the bosses is the most severe. They’re fighting to defend their union, their working conditions, and for a better life. And I believe I can articulate, I can represent the aspirations of people in this situation who are facing a terrible attack right now on wages, working conditions, union rights. ...

Q: How do you feel you are qualified?

A: I’ve spent my entire adult life fighting for what I currently represent. ... I have a lifetime record...in building the kind of movement that can be part of working people achieving our own government—workers and working farmers.

Q: What do you see as the most important responsibility of being governor?

A: To use the office to promote the fight of working people for a better life, which would include, even though this is a state and not a federal office, ...campaigning and urging others to join me in opposing the military adventures of Washington abroad. I would join the millions of people around the world calling for U.S. troops out of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Africa, being opposed to Plan Colombia in South America. The federal government, which is the government of the employing class of this country, is hell-bent on revolutionizing the armed forces of the United States, reorganizing them to try to save the system for the wealthy and I am opposed to that. I would use the office of governor to promote that point of view.

Q: What are your views on campaign finance reform? Do you believe reform is necessary and if so what would you propose?

A: What I believe goes under that category is not useful. It’s a sham. Common Cause and the other organizations that have put forward these various tinkering with the system have done nothing to change the essential nature of electoral politics in the United States, which is run by a two-party system, both of which represent the wealthy class in this country, the class that owns the capital, that owns the banks and so forth. I don’t support their tinkering with that at all. I’m for the labor movement getting into electoral politics in its own interests instead of supporting mostly Democrats and an occasional liberal Republican as well. The labor movement should promote independent working-class political action, and if that were to happen I would not favor restrictions on spending. ...

Q: How are you funding your campaign?

A: I’m asking working people and students to contribute. So far the contributions have

ranged from \$1 to \$200. Among the young people that I’ve explained my campaign to are some of the 84 young people from Los Angeles who went on the Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange this past summer.... They got a chance to look at a country where working people have taken control out of the hands of big business—both Cuban business and U.S. and other foreign business interests. A number of them have expressed interest in joining my campaign actively as well as contributing a dollar or two or five dollars, ten dollars, in that range.

There are two Californias

Q: What do you feel should be the defining issues of this election?

A: The interests of working people. There is no such thing as California interests. There is a “we” and a “they” that we have to consider. Working people need to recognize in political life as they do in many cases in their personal life that this is a class-divided state and country and world. And working people need to join together in solidarity with each other and fight for a new system—a system based not on exploitation and oppression but on freedom, equality, and human solidarity.

Q: So if elected what would be your top three priorities and how would you get those accomplished?

A: Given the high unemployment in the state of California, an immediate priority has to be promoting a fight by working people, and anyone who is willing to join in, for a massive public works program to rebuild the housing, schools, clinics, child-care centers, hospitals, anything else we need, making jobs available to all through this massive effort at union-scale wages and with equal treatment for all and affirmative action measures for people who have been held out of the work force in a discriminatory manner.

Also part of this picture is supporting the fight for equal treatment of immigrants. Anyone who is here in California should be treated equally. That means the right to drive a car; the right to work; the right to medical care; the right to education for their children and themselves. So I’m supporting the effort to highlight these immigrant rights issues by supporting the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride that’s taking place. It’s leaving Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Seattle on September 20, and heading for Washington, D.C., Liberty Park in New Jersey, and New York City for a big protest to highlight this issue.

Q: And a third priority?

A: The defense of women’s rights is extremely important. The Supreme Court ruled in 1973 in *Roe v. Wade* for the privacy rights that allow women to have the choice of bearing children or not. I’m as opposed to forced sterilization as I am in favor of the right to terminate a pregnancy and the right to abortion.

Q: What do you see as the key factors that will shape California’s economy in the future?

A: Again, these are not just California factors because California is part of the United States and the United States is part of a big capitalist world. Overproduction is one, that is, not overproduction in terms of what people need in the world in terms of food, a roof over our heads, usable drinking water and electricity and so forth, but in terms of what can be made or provided at a profit under capitalism. So it’s overproduction in that sense. And this is a problem that is always there. It goes in different cycles, but it’s always there as long as capitalism exists. Another is inflation. We’ve had some years of relatively low inflation but there are tremendous potential developments that can lead to rampant inflation that can wipe out working people’s savings, retired people’s modest nest eggs and so forth.



Militant/Bill Kalman

Joel Britton, left, Socialist Workers candidate for California governor, is interviewed by John Hancock at the California Channel’s Sacramento studio September 5.

Q: What is, in your view, the state’s role in economic development? How do you balance the need to create jobs with the need for business to be conducted in a fair and an open manner?

A: I don’t have a balanced view on that. I’m for building a strong enough movement of working people so that we have a workers and farmers government. Working people will be the ruling class, like now we have a class of capitalists that rules over us. So, I don’t consider it to be a balancing of interests. I think there are antagonistic interests and I’m for the working-class side in that fight, which is inevitable and will not go away as long as capitalism is with us.

Q: We have in California an environment where utility costs are rising, where unemployment rates are rising, workers’ compensation rates are skyrocketing. Many California businesses are seeing greener pastures in other states. As governor, how would you convince them to stay put in California?

A: There’s all this weeping and wailing about workers’ compensation. The bosses, if they want to spend less on workers’ compensation, they could consider slowing down the assembly lines, they could consider slowing down the rate at which hogs go by us in the slaughterhouses, which cause injuries, unnecessary injuries. These are not injuries caused by carelessness of workers. These are injuries caused by the pace of work and the pressures of work. There’s a tremendous amount of physical pressure as well as psychological pressure in industry today. So, that would be step one. And then, workers’ comp should be part of a broader social security system so that insurance rates on small businesses, for example, shouldn’t be a crushing burden. I’m against small businesses being driven out of business by these kinds of expenses and pressures. If this was handled as one big social security system, then it would be possible for that burden to be lifted off of small business people.

‘I look back to the Paris Commune’

Q: In light of recent budget battles, and predictions that we start the next fiscal year with a \$12 billion deficit, how would you propose to balance the state budget?

A: Working people need to recognize, this is not our budget—this is not our government. So, we have to stay strong in opposing the burden of this crisis. There is a crisis of sorts, but it’s not of our doing, and it’s not our crisis. And, the burden of this crisis should not be on our backs. The two alternatives that the candidates of the Democratic and Republican parties and most of the other candidates are presenting, one alternative is more taxes, and even when they say it’s going to be mostly on the rich and so forth, the whole trend is toward more regressive taxation on working people, the very people in the worst position to be able to pay for it. Everything from sales tax to all kinds of income tax. Or they say we have to cut services. I’m opposed to cutting any social welfare services or workers’ comp or anything that’s in the interest of working people.

Q: Are there specifically any areas where you feel expenditures should be reduced or increased?

A: Well, I’m not for tinkering. If people want to study the kind of government I’m for, it wouldn’t have the kind of bloated bureaucracy and massive numbers of armed men and women to protect and serve the

interests of the capitalist class that this government has. I look back to the Paris Commune, which is the first time the working people in the world actually took power and held power for a time—in 1871 in France; the Russian Revolution in 1917, where in the early years of that revolution you had a revolutionary workers and farmers’ republic. It later, under Stalin, degenerated into a bureaucratic regime, but even with that, to this day, the capitalists haven’t been able to restore capitalism in those huge areas of the world. And then, most refreshingly, in my lifetime, we had the Cuban Revolution, where it was proven that working people in our epoch can take power and hold power and wield power on behalf of working people not only in Cuba, but in solidarity with the struggles of working people in other parts of the world, as they showed by sending hundreds of thousands of volunteers to fight in Africa against the racist South African government, from the mid-70s to the late ’80s, for example.

Q: What steps do you think should be taken to ensure that Californians have access to affordable housing?

A: This would be part of the massive public works program that we working people need to fight for, and force the powers that be to agree to, to accept. That there be a massive housing construction program so that nobody lives in substandard housing. And it should be affordable. We should emulate what the working people of Cuba did in the very early days of that revolution, which is why Washington began to get so hostile toward Cuba, which was to slash rents to a small fraction of what they had been before the revolution.

Q: What about energy? How do we guarantee that Californians have access to an affordable energy supply adequate to their needs?

A: Again, the “we” in this case, I would say, should be that working people should fight to force U.S. imperialism, which represents big oil interests and the big oil industry—which I used to work for, which I noted at the time contributed financially to both the Democratic and Republican candidates for governor, and U.S. Senate and so forth—that we should fight for U.S. imperialism to be out of the oil-producing regions of the world. No military troops, no controlling of those resources. That’s not “our” oil. That’s the oil of the peoples of those regions. And that would be step one. To just get a basic station identification of who we are and where we are in the world. And a workers and farmers government would be more than able to organize trade with those countries that have oil.

Q: Without referencing opponents, why should Californians vote for you to be our next governor?

A: Because they have an opportunity to vote for someone who stands for the interests of working people. That stands for the same things now, as a retired meat packer, and leader of the Socialist Workers Party, that I stood for, when I first realized in my youth, when I was 20 years old, that we needed revolutionary socialist change and not Band-Aid solutions. Not just reformist tinkering with the system.

Q: What are your positions on Proposition 54, the so-called racial privacy initiative? Do you disagree or agree with this controversial initiative banning governmental

Continued on page 7

The revolutionary potential of U.S. working class

Socialist Workers gubernatorial candidate discusses record of communist activity

Joel Britton, Socialist Workers candidate for governor of California in the October 7 recall election, granted an interview to the *Militant*. Argiris Malapanis and Martin Koppel, editors of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, respectively, conducted it September 3. The second part of the interview is printed below. Part one appeared in last week's issue.



Question. You referred to some of the important developments in the civil rights struggles that were taking place when you joined the communist movement in Chicago in 1962 and later. You mentioned the campaign to defend Robert F. Williams and others in Monroe, North Carolina, where Black rights fighters had organized armed self-defense of their community against racist thugs and night riders. As you explained, socialists took part in the defense campaign for Williams, who had left the country to avoid arrest on FBI frame-up charges of kidnapping. Could you say more about your activity in the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance during these and other events in the Black liberation struggle?

Answer. In Chicago during those years, our movement helped organize speaking engagements for fighters from Monroe to tell their story. This was part of the defense campaign, not only for Robert Williams, who by then was in exile in Cuba, but for others who faced frame-up charges. We organized meetings on campuses and other public events.

In the fall of 1962 I helped organize a visit to Chicago by William Worthy, a journalist for the *Baltimore Afro-American* and an outspoken advocate of Black rights. He was sentenced to jail after defying Washington's bans on travel to China and Cuba. Following his conviction he spoke in a number of cities to publicize his case.

We also worked with young supporters of Worthy in Washington, D.C., to organize a demonstration outside a ceremony in which the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith gave a civil liberties award to Robert F. Kennedy, the U.S. attorney general. The students used the occasion to win support for Worthy's fight. Students were at the beginning of organizing what led, on a mass scale, to the establishment of Black student unions on campuses across the country. It was a time when there were still no Black Studies departments.

Self-defense of Black communities

In the spring of 1963 I traveled to Atlanta to a gathering of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee—SNCC—as part of a delegation of young socialists from Chicago. Two white guys and a Black woman driving through the South at that time was quite a head-turner—I thought some of those heads were going to snap off!

In early 1965 I visited McComb, Mississippi, where there had been some of the heaviest Ku Klux Klan bombing attacks against the civil rights movement. I spoke with young Black rights fighters there who explained how they would organize, all through the night, to have an armed guard on at least one porch on every block of the Black community to deter the Klan from driving through. This example of armed self-defense was not reported in the media generally, but I covered it for the *Militant*



Militant/ Ryan Scott

Some 600 farmworkers and supporters marched in Watsonville, California, August 17 to demand undocumented workers have the right to a driver's license. Supporters of the socialist campaign have joined this and other similar actions in California.

at the time.

From there I went to Jackson, Mississippi, where the Freedom Democratic Party held a one-day convention.

The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party was formed by Blacks in that state who had been excluded from the Democratic Party's segregated delegate selection process. Rebuffed at the national convention in its challenge to the "regular" Mississippi delegates, the group, led by Fannie Lou Hamer, announced its own candidates in the November 1964 elections. The gathering I attended, on February 21, was adjourned following the announcement that Malcolm X had just been assassinated in New York.

In Montgomery, Alabama, I visited E.D. Nixon, a seasoned leader of the NAACP and of a local of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters who had been a central initiator of the bus boycott there in 1955–56. Black working people and youth in that city boycotted the buses because of segregationist policies that forced Blacks to give up bus seats to whites. In the years following that successful battle the civil rights movement grew into the massive struggle that overthrew the system of legal segregation in the South known as Jim Crow.

I met with Nixon in his living room at a time when this fight was still on. He explained how he and other working-class leaders of the bus boycott had persuaded a new minister in the area, the young Rev. Martin Luther King to stand at the head of the movement. They needed a preacher to be most effective in this fight and the older and more established ones, he said, were under many pressures. Much of the media coverage of these events has implied that Rosa Parks—who had refused to give up her seat on a Montgomery bus and was arrested—acted simply as an individual. But she had been E.D. Nixon's secretary and her action took place in the context of a broader fight.

E.D. Nixon was an outstanding example of the working-class base of the Southern civil rights movement and the savvy of its leadership.

From speaking with Farrell Dobbs and other leaders of the Socialist Workers Party I had learned that SWP members had worked within their unions to get station wagons donated in response to an appeal from the bus boycott movement in Montgomery. Farrell had driven the first of many station wagons to Montgomery, collaborated with Nixon, and spoke out in support of the boycott as

against racist discrimination, discrimination medically and the other ways. That's totally false. We can lead a fight around all these things without promoting the government keeping all these statistics.

Q: In the 30 seconds or so remaining—Governor Davis has indicated that he intends to sign AB 205 by Assemblywoman Jackie Goldberg, which would give same-sex couples virtually the same rights and responsibilities as marriages. As governor, would you sign that?

A: I haven't seen the bill. I'd have to see it. I and the Socialist Workers Party are for equality, in terms of civil unions, whether it's men-women, men with men, women with women.

the party's presidential candidate in 1956.

Q. Can you say something about your participation in the protests against the "Willis Wagons" in Chicago?

A. In 1963–64 there were protests against the school board because of the temporary, trailer-type buildings that were used to supplement the over-crowded public schools in Chicago. Those buildings were called "Willis Wagons"—Willis was the school superintendent. The *Militant* reported that 225,000 people took part in a school boycott there, which we supported, of course. It was the largest school boycott up to that point, although it would soon be exceeded by one in New York.

I recall joining in protests at one of the sites where the "Willis Wagons" were being used and participated in one demonstration of 75,000 that filled Soldier Field, the stadium of the Chicago Bears. It was the largest demonstration I had been at. The march was in solidarity with the struggle against Jim Crow in the South but many who joined in from the big South and West side Black communities had the Willis Wagons, Chicago's segregated housing, schools, and job market on their minds as well.

Q. You mentioned watching Malcolm X on the late-night TV show hosted by Irv Kupcinec in 1962 and the impact he had on you. Were there other occasions when you met or heard Malcolm?

A. I had a brief encounter as I was selling the *Militant* at the Chicago opera house where Malcolm X was appearing in a debate. We didn't have tickets to go in, so we were in the foyer. Malcolm, who was with Kupcinec, walked into the building near where a couple of us were hawking the *Militant*. Malcolm greeted us and told Kup, "It's a good paper. You should buy it." My recollection is that he did.

In November 1963 I attended the big public meeting in Detroit where Malcolm spoke the weekend of the Grassroots Leadership Conference. The talk he gave became known as the "Message to the Grass Roots"—it's published in *Malcolm X Speaks*.

The response of the audience to Malcolm's speech had a big impact on me. There were 700–800 people there, mostly workers, overwhelmingly Black. Seeing working people in those numbers cheer Malcolm's staunch presentation of his revolutionary views—his support for the Cuban Revolution, the Chinese Revolution, the colonial revolution, and his revolutionary opposition to the rulers in this country—convinced me totally of the revolutionary potential of the working class in the United States. I was already convinced of this intellectually, from reading about what the Cuban workers and farmers had accomplished. But this experience had a deeper impact than just reading.

Q. You are listed on the ballot as a "retired meat packer." From your campaign literature it's clear you have been involved in the labor movement for many years. What has been your activity in the unions?

A. For the recall election, candidates were allowed three words to designate their occupation or vocation. "Retired meat packer" was my second choice, given the "nonpartisan" provisions of the election code. I had chosen "A socialist worker," but that designation was not allowed by the election authorities, among other reasons because it's

similar to the name of a party—my party. So I chose "Retired meat packer."

It's worth noting that there is a lot of interest among reporters in finding out my views as a retired meat packer.

In recent years I was part of a fight by members of the United Food and Commercial Workers union at the American Meatpacking Corp. in Chicago, where I worked, against the illegal shutdown of that plant in 2001. I was one of the dozen named plaintiffs in a class-action lawsuit against AMPAC. A judge denied our claim, but we made our mark, hitting the company for what it had done.

Earlier, I was an oil worker at two refineries in Southern California for more than 10 years, and an active member of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers [OCAW].

Union solidarity

In the 1980s and early 1990s, I worked with others in my union to organize public meetings in solidarity with the South African liberation struggle. I also collaborated with other members of my union locals to build actions opposing U.S. military intervention in Central America.

When I ran for mayor of Los Angeles as the Socialist Workers candidate in 1989, we had a very successful campaign forum at my union hall. The convener of that meeting was one of my co-workers at the Chevron refinery and the elected head of the OCAW unit at Chevron.

As an active member of my local I went to Austin, Minnesota, to promote solidarity with the meat packers striking Hormel during the 1985–86 walkout by members of Local P-9 of the United Food and Commercial Workers. After visiting their picket line, I helped organize to get union fighters from P-9 to speak before my local on several occasions to win support for their battle.

I also worked with other OCAW members to take part in actions in support of the strikes in 1989–91 by members of the Machinists union against Eastern Airlines and by the United Mine Workers against Pittston Coal.

Q. To return to a point we began the interview with, the leading Democratic and Republican candidates—Cruz Bustamante and Arnold Schwarzenegger—have both dismissed accusations by their critics about their past as "follies of youth."

As we discussed, for example, right-wing commentators and politicians have attacked Bustamante for having been a member of the Chicano student group MEChA, which they portray as radical. You have defended MEChA against the slanderous accusation that it was "violent" and racist" [see last week's issue].

In trying to fend off these criticisms, Bustamante has said that his friends who were student activists during his college days are now professionals who are "mainstream" and doing well. What about you?

A. I remember that in October 1968, after right-wing Cuban-Americans set off a bomb at the SWP headquarters in Los Angeles, we immediately held a press conference. We told the press we weren't going to be intimidated. We said we were not going to back away from our defense of the Cuban Revolution. We were not going to give up our determination to emulate the example of Cuban revolutionaries by building a movement that could lead a revolution of workers and farmers in the United States.

I retain these communist views today. And I'm proud of the revolutionary activities I was involved in during my youth and that I continue to be involved in.

Many of the people who were my comrades-in-arms in those years remain so today. We built a movement, an organization. My party, the Socialist Workers Party, has a continuity going back to the October 1917 Russian Revolution and to the founding of the modern communist movement in 1847. We have kept in print an arsenal of literature containing the political lessons of this movement that remain as valid today as when they were first published.

Unlike other candidates in the California governor's race, my comrades are not professionals. They are professional revolutionaries. And I'm proud of that.

California Channel interview

Continued from page 6
agencies from collecting racial data?

A: I think there's a great deal of fakery on both sides of this issue. You have someone who's been leading the fight against affirmative action claiming to be for a color-blind society. We're not going to have a color-blind society as long as we have capitalism. And unless you are building a movement that can be part of leading a revolutionary struggle against capitalism, you're doing nothing toward that end. And on the other hand, the liberals of all different varieties, including civil-rights figures, are campaigning for a "no" vote on the basis that unless this measure is defeated, we can't fight for affirmative action, or we can't have fights

Revolution unleashes artistic creativity

The following is an excerpt from *Art and Revolution*, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month in September. The author, Leon Trotsky, was a central leader of the Bolsheviks and the October 1917 Russian Revolution. Copyright ©1970 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.



BY LEON TROTSKY

It is untrue that revolutionary art can be created only by workers. Just because the revolution is a working-class revolution, it releases—to repeat what was said before—very little working-class energy for art. During the French Revolution, the greatest works which, directly or indirectly, reflected it, were created not by French art-

the October Revolution.

It is not surprising, then, that this contemplative intelligentsia is able to give, and does give, a better artistic reproduction of the revolution than the proletariat which has made the revolution, though the re-creations of the intelligentsia are somewhat off line. We know very well the political limitations, the instability and the unreliability of the fellow travelers....

Does that mean that the party, quite in opposition to its nature, occupies a purely eclectic position in the field of art? This argument, which seems so crushing, is, in reality, extremely childish. The Marxian method affords an opportunity to estimate the development of the new art, to trace all its sources, to help the most progressive tendencies by a critical illumination of the road, but it does not do more than that. Art must make its own way and by its own means. The Marxian methods are not the same as the artistic. The party leads the proletariat but not the historic processes of history. There are domains in which the party leads, directly and imperatively. There are domains in which it only cooperates. There are, finally, domains in which it only orients itself. The domain of art is not one in which the party is called upon to command. It can and must protect and help it, but it can only lead it indirectly. It can and must give the additional credit of its confidence to various art groups, which are striving sincerely to approach the revolution and so help an artistic formulation of the revolution. And at any rate, the party cannot and will not take the position of a literary circle which is struggling and merely competing with other literary circles.

The party stands guard over the historic interests of the working class in its entirety. Because it prepares consciously and step



Self Portrait by Russian artist Ivan Klyun (1873-1943). The Bolshevik party under the leadership of V.I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky rejected the idea that the revolutionary party should support one form or school of artistic expression over others. The revolutionary government provided the economic basis for the blossoming of artistic creativity and broad artistic freedom, while defending the basic interests of the proletarian revolution. Klyun, like many artists of his generation, flourished in the early years of the revolution until Lenin's death in 1924. Subsequently Klyun and others were stifled or banned under the Stalinist counterrevolution and its restrictions on art imposed under the banner of state support for "socialist realism."

by step the ground for a new culture and therefore for a new art, it regards the literary fellow travelers not as the competitors of the writers of the working class, but as the real or potential helpers of the working

class in the big work of reconstruction. The party understands the episodic character of the literary groups of a transition period and estimates them, not from the point of view of the class passports of the individual gentlemen literati, but from the point of view of the place which these groups occupy and can occupy in preparing a socialist culture. If it is not possible to determine the place of any given group today, then the party as a party will wait patiently and gracefully. Individual critics or readers may sympathize with one group or another in advance. The party, as a whole, protects the historic interests of the working class and must be more objective and wise. Its caution must be double-edged. If the party does not put its stamp of approval on the Kuznitsa, just because workers write for it, it does not, in advance, repel any given literary group, even from the intelligentsia, insofar as such a group tries to approach the revolution and tries to strengthen one of its links—a link is always a weak point—between the city and the village, or between the party member and the nonpartisan, or between the intelligentsia and the workers.

Does not such a policy mean, however, that the party is going to have an unprotected flank on the side of art? This is a great exaggeration. The party will repel the clearly poisonous, disintegrating tendencies of art and will guide itself by its political standards. It is true, however, that it is less protected on the flank of art than on the political front. But is this not true of science also? What are the metaphysicians of a purely proletarian science going to say about the theory of relativity? Can it be reconciled with materialism, or can it not? Has this question been decided? Where and when and by whom? It is clear to anyone, even to the uninitiated, that the work of our physiologist, Pavlov, is entirely along materialist lines. But what is one to say about the psychoanalytic theory of Freud? Can it be reconciled with materialism, as, for instance, Karl Radek thinks (and I also), or is it hostile to it?

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

ists, but by German, English, and others. The French bourgeoisie, which was directly concerned with making the revolution, could not give up a sufficient quantity of its strength to re-create and to perpetuate its imprint. This is still more true of the proletariat, which, though it has culture in politics, has little culture in art. The intelligentsia, aside from the advantages of its qualifications in form, has also the odious privilege of holding a passive political position, which is marked by a greater or lesser degree of hostility or friendliness towards

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The silver lining— “Britons sinking under weight of debt cause boom in bankruptcy”—*The Times*, London.



Harry Ring

Block-buster—On an edge of the Los Angeles downtown area, run-down, relatively low-rent housing is being torn down. Together with homeless street

people, area residents are being hit by this urban removal. Why? To build spiffy residential lofts and commercial buildings.

P.S.—To cheer things up, a block party was organized by the Volunteers of America and a city committee said to represent those being driven out. Declared a spokesperson: “Sometimes we forget people in recovery, and people that are working trying to get out of homelessness, have to experience some joy every now and then.”

How about a block party?—An 11-acre estate, a stone’s throw

from L.A., is up for grabs. Includes a kitchen with a fireplace. Seven bedrooms, seven full bathrooms, and five half bathrooms, along with a 3,000 bottle capacity wine cellar. Asking price: \$40 million.

Compulsive pill poppers ?—A study of 24 compulsive shoppers found significant improvement among them after taking antidepressant pills. That’s according to some scientists at Stanford University. Others specialists dissented. Said one: “Of course, antidepressants help the disorder, in the same way they would help alcohol dependency. They’re simply another addiction.”

Shrine of the Gap—On the market, an edition of the New Testament in fashion magazine format for young women ages 12 to 17.

Vegetarian or vegan?—Studying the Good Book, some nutritionists contend that today Jesus would be a vegetarian.

Where the prez gets his checkup?—“WASHINGTON, D.C.—Greater Southeast Community Hospital, the city’s main health care center for the poor and uninsured, lost its accreditation. [A commission] cited problems with blood transfusions, infection

control, and screening of staff and physicians. The hospital may lose most or all of its paying customers because private insurance companies usually won’t cover unaccredited institutions.”—*USA Today*.

Vanguard of civilization—In Burlington, North Carolina, an inmate was charged with attacking a jailer. The sheriff said it was partially due to overcrowding. The holding cell for those awaiting trial was designed to hold 12 people. As many as 30 are thrown in. Inmates sleep on the floor and tables. The judge said the summer heat doesn’t help any.

‘Conflicting Missions’ wins U.S. historians prize

The following are excerpts from an article that appeared in the July 29 *Granma Internacional*, a weekly published in Havana in English, Spanish, and other languages. The article was printed with the headline “(Cuban) Missions in Conflict: The Villain Is Henry Kissinger.” The book described below—*Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959–1976*—was written by Johns Hopkins University professor Piero Gleijeses. It was first released in the United States in early 2002 by the University of North Carolina Press. The Spanish-language edition of the book was subsequently published in Cuba and launched at the 12th Havana International Book Fair last February. Minor stylistic and grammatical corrections to the portions below were made by the *Militant*.

BY GABRIEL MOLINA

HAVANA—The U.S. Society of Historians of American Foreign Relations’ (SHAFR) 2003 first prize came as something of a shock to its winner.

Piero Gleijeses, professor at Johns Hopkins University, author of the book *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa 1959–1976*, couldn’t believe that he was worthy of such a distinction, “given that the principal message of the text is the altruistic Cuban aid to Africa that, among other results, propitiated the release of Nelson Mandela,” he informed *Granma Internacional*.

In fact it is extremely unlikely that a work that gives a positive balance to the Cuban Revolution would be awarded at any point. But now, in a year when campaigns against the island are multiplying in the United States and Europe, comes this astonishing result. The professor didn’t believe it until the decision was made official.

Gleijeses wrote *Conflicting Missions* after extensive research, during which he consulted declassified CIA files on Cuba, and others on Russia, Germany and South Africa, as well as press articles in the Congo, Guinea Bissau, Tanzania and other nations. As he admits, his method of investigation demanded time, memory, organization: “reviewing newspapers, archives, libraries—especially the presidential ones that are important—as national libraries hardly ever have CIA or White House documents. National archives up until 1974–75 are poor and slow to be declassified; the Carter one is the richest on his period and they are still being

declassified.”

The author is an acknowledged researcher of more than 40 years of experience and has written outstanding books such as the one related to the U.S. invasion of the Dominican Republic in 1965 and *Shattered Hope: the Guatemalan Revolution and the United States (1944–54)* in which he utilized sources from the Department of State historians’ office and volumes of the Foreign Relations of the United States publication in order to demonstrate how the CIA organized the downfall of the government of Jacobo Arbenz. Gleijeses confesses that this book opened the gates to Cuba, although this was in no way easy, nor was it anything other than conflictive.

“The importance of the prize lies in that the society, not being a left-wing organization, has acknowledged the value of a work whose author does not belong to the SHAFR, and which reveals the debt of the Africans to Cuba. From the early days of its Revolution this little country was very altruistic with Algeria during the war against French colonialism and with a large part of Africa, up until the war in Angola in 1976.

“The other unusual message in *Conflicting Missions* is that the United States does not come out very well. And even so it has gained a U.S. prize,” he added. “This is because it has been strongly documented in order to get over messages that the public does not like. If it had been an establishment kind of book what has happened wouldn’t have been so surprising.”

The book has three English editions, the last in February this year and can be found in Spanish, edited by the Cuban Ciencias Sociales publishing house.

“The thesis is that no country has maintained such an altruistic policy over such a long period,” Gleijeses confirmed. “It was present during the Bolshevik Revolution, during the Haitian one, with its aid to Bolívar. But in my research, that of Cuba reaches up until the end of the 1980’s.”

Based on the impression that he had, confirmed in his subsequent research, he states that the same elements of altruism, respect for the movements and governments that Cuba aids and almost sustains have been maintained post-1976. Cuba has avoided perceiving them with any superiority.

The essayist had access to transcripts of the 1981 conversations of Fidel Castro, Raúl Castro and Jorge Risquet with the Angolan leaders and comments: “The Cubans must have been very annoyed because there had been threats in ’79–80 from Reagan and the Soviet Union was weakening, but Cuba sent additional aid to Angola and maintained the same respect.

“There were a few ‘cuckoldings’ on the part of Lusaka such as the agreement made with the racist regime of South Africa without even informing Cuba. However, in the talks between Fidel and [Angolan president José] Dos Santos one could appreciate a magisterial knowledge, much education, with impact despite the offense, and always with great respect. Technical aid payments were behind and from October 1983 these were granted free of charge and moreover, given that regular medicines could not wait for a letter of credit, they were dispatched without concern as to whether they would be paid for.

“It’s very impressive. It will be part of

something that I am planning to do: to research Cuban foreign policy from 1959 to 1989. It’s not going to be declassified yet, but is a tremendously beautiful history, which I think will interest Fidel. For example, you have his visit to Argentina, where he was received how he was precisely because of the projection of the Cuban Revolution. That book is a dream of mine.”

The professor organizes his classes at Johns Hopkins in the following way: U.S. politics from independence up until World War I, history of the cold war, international relations from the Congress of Vienna up until World War II; in terms of Cuba, U.S. government opposition to its independence from Jefferson up until 1820, Narciso López in 1850, and from Martí and Bolívar to Fidel.

“Sometimes the students look at me as if I’m crazy, but they can’t object, because it’s all fully documented and evidenced. A few of them say that I’m prejudiced, but as I really know the material they respect me even though it’s a conservative university, whose dean was Wolfowitz. This challenge



Tricontinental
Cuban volunteers in Congo, 1965. Left to right: Roberto Chaveco, Rogelio Oliva, José Martínez María Tamayo, Che Guevara.

makes me seek out strong evidence and hard information. For example, I reviewed 41 U.S. journals and 12 European ones on the 1898 war in Cuba. I know that debate better than anyone.”

With his little gray beard, thin and nervous, Professor Gleijeses is a great communicator and conversationalist. His critics say that the book on Cuba only goes up to 1976 or is just about Africa, “because they have no other way of refuting it. Nobody can deny Cuba’s altruism, which emerges from the documents investigated.”

“The difference between my work and that of García Márquez’s *Operación Carlota*, for example, is the extensive use of documents from all kinds of sources.”

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —



September 22, 1978

LOS ANGELES—School buses rolled here September 12, culminating a fifteen-year legal battle to begin desegregation.

The busing began despite the best efforts of racists and white “liberal” school board members to prevent it.

First day attendance figures were not available as the *Militant* went to press, but the racists appeared to have failed in their call for a boycott massive enough to wreck the busing plan.

In an eleventh-hour suit, the racist outfit Bustop had won a state appeals court ruling that would have postponed desegregation indefinitely.

When desegregation forces appealed this reactionary order to the state Supreme Court, the white liberal Democrats on the school board—elected as “integrationists”—joined with the racists in asking the high court to uphold the shelving of the busing plan.

The alliance of the school board majority with the racist Bustop gang is particularly outrageous, given the minimal nature of the plan they’re trying to kill.

With 600,000 pupils, the Los Angeles school district is the second largest—and one of the most segregated—in the nation.

Of those 600,000 pupils, only 30,000 are

involved in the mandatory busing plan.

Meanwhile, there are 260,000—more than a quarter of a million!—Black and Chicano students who remain in inferior, totally segregated schools.



September 21, 1953

There is a reign of terror in Iran. For weeks mass arrests have been taking place throughout the country under the military dictatorship of Zahedi.

Among the Government employees alone the victims number into the thousands. The Sept. 13 *N.Y. Times* reported that “Premier Zahedi has dismissed or suspended 3,000 government employees as members of the Tudeh (Communist) party....”

The same *Times* dispatch says: “General Zahedi is reported to have said that only when the government feels itself secure from disorders provoked by the Tudeh or Mossadegh sympathizers, will it be able to carry out the program of internal reforms” and negotiate with Britain “over the nationalized oil resources.”

After more than two years of revolutionary opportunities, the counter-revolution triumphed on Aug. 19 by a military coup.... This triumph came on the heels of a “failure” only a few days before when the Shah fled abroad. What made this triumph possible was the policy of the Stalinists.

Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959–1976

By Piero Gleijeses

Documents Cuba’s role in aiding the African national liberation struggles, from Algeria to Angola. \$24.95



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Vote Socialist Workers!

The *Militant* turns over its editorial space this week to publish the statement below that Joel Britton, Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of California, recorded September 16 for U.S. military personnel abroad. The SWP leader recorded the message through the Federal Voting Assistance Program of the Department of Defense.

My name is Joel Britton. I am running for governor of California as the candidate of the Socialist Workers Party and am on the ballot as: “Joel Britton—Independent, Retired Meat Packer.”

I have also been an oil refinery worker. I am a long-time trade unionist, Black rights and antiwar activist, and serve on the National Committee of my party.

With this message I am appealing to California voters abroad, especially to the workingmen and women in uniform now serving in Iraq, Afghanistan, south Korea, at Guantanamo Bay, and elsewhere. Exercise your constitutional rights as citizen-soldiers to discuss with fellow soldiers and sailors the burning issues facing working people and youth. Please consider casting an absentee ballot for a fighting working-class alternative to the twin parties of imperialist war and occupation, economic exploitation and depression, and racist oppression.

Working people in California and all over the United States have been hit by devastating attacks on our standard of living and rights—high unemployment, cuts in wages and benefits, speedup and rising injuries on the job, union-weakening or -busting moves.

The Socialist Workers campaign opposes all the moves by the ruling rich, and the Democratic and Republican parties who govern on their behalf, to put the burden of the crisis of their economic system on the backs of working people.

My campaign’s “Jobs for All!” program calls for a massive program of government-funded public works and a shorter workweek at union scale to spread around the available work. We call for a big increase in the minimum wage. We call for cost-of-living protection in all union contracts, unemployment payments, and other social benefits. We demand debt relief for working farmers and a stop to the foreclosures on their farms by the banks.

We defend affirmative action. We back women’s access to abortion; it is a woman’s right to choose.

We call for an end to Washington’s economic war on

Cuba and support normalizing relations.

We call for immediately and unconditionally bringing the troops home from the Balkans, Korea, Iraq, and Afghanistan—end the occupation by U.S. forces now!

The same ruling families who are attacking the living standards of working people here are responsible for Washington’s wars, which are to defend U.S. investments and profits made abroad and to beat out capitalist competitors in Europe and Japan for control of oil and other resources. Working people need to fight to nationalize the energy and power companies, taking them out of private hands and running them as public utilities for the benefit of the majority, and under workers control.

We support struggles against police brutality and demand an end to the death penalty. We are opposed to the attempts of the bosses to divide our class between those who are born in the U.S. and our fellow workers born in other countries. We support the right of immigrant workers to a driver’s license and for freedom from harassment by immigration police.

We stand with workers and farmers across Latin America, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia who are struggling against social and economic catastrophe and imperialist domination.

We call for canceling the Third World debt that is channeling wealth from countries oppressed by imperialism to the wealthy of the U.S., Europe, and Japan.

Capitalism—a system based on the rule of a tiny minority of wealthy families—has nothing to offer working people and youth, either at home or abroad.

Our socialist campaign welcomes the resistance by those working people who are fighting to organize a trade union or to strengthen the one they have, the better to defend ourselves from the rulers’ attacks. We believe it is possible to build the kind of workers movement in the United States that can follow the example set many years ago in Cuba, where a U.S.-backed dictatorship was overthrown, national sovereignty won, Cuban and foreign big business taken out of private hands and put into the hands of the people. We too can one day be part of a revolutionary struggle for a workers and farmers government.

If you want more information, photos, and articles on the socialist campaign for governor, contact www.themilitant.com

Vote for “Joel Britton—Independent, Retired Meat Packer.” Vote Socialist Workers.

France: 15,000 die in heat wave

BY PATRICK O’NEILL

As the death toll from the August heat wave in France and its aftermath climbed to 15,000, French officials have continued to stress the extent of the “natural disaster” and minimize their own responsibility for the tragedy.

Isabelle Dubois-Costes, a spokesperson for General Funeral Services, the country’s largest undertaker, announced the 15,000 figure September 9, basing her estimate on the increase in funerals over the previous year. The company first revealed the true scope of the disaster in August by estimating 10,000 deaths at a time when the government was claiming no more than 3,000. Government officials have since released an official count of 11,435, but promise “final figures” later this month.

Jean-Francois Mattei, the minister of health in France’s conservative coalition government of Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin, admitted September 11 that the government made no preparation for the heat wave’s impact. “There was neither a true alert in the sense of an alarm being given nor was there any advance preparation,” he told a parliamentary inquiry.

The government initially downplayed reports of the disaster and waited days before taking emergency action. Air-conditioned tents and refrigerated trucks were pressed into service as the bodies overflowed morgues and hospitals.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Raffarin blamed “society” in general for the abandonment of the elderly.

Speaking before the parliamentary inquiry, Mattei recounted his meeting in August with scientists at Atlanta’s U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention. The center deemed the exceptional temperatures, which stayed at 104 degrees Fahrenheit for days on end, a “natural disaster,” he said. “They told me that a heat wave such as the one France experienced from August 2 to 4 has not been seen in the northern hemisphere for a century.”

A few days earlier, an official report cited by Agence France-Presse placed the blame on “administrative confusion and the large numbers of doctors away on leave”—a charge leveled earlier by government spokespeople.

The deaths have put a spotlight on the decline in the French health-care system and other government-provided services resulting from cutbacks by both the current government and its Socialist Party-led predecessor.

Meanwhile, the Italian health ministry reported September 11 that at least 4,175 more people older than 65 died during the heat wave there than in the same period a year ago—a 14 percent increase. The British government reported an additional 907 deaths by mid-August. In the Netherlands, the official figure for the whole month was up to 1,400 deaths higher.

Trades and Labor Council, said he began to see the importance of the fight for immigrant workers’ rights during a union struggle at Dakota Premium Foods in South St. Paul three years ago. “Most of the workers there are immigrants,” he said. “Even though they won a union contract, the boss thinks he can continue to abuse them.”

Delegations from McCann’s union local have traveled to Jefferson, Wisconsin to support striking members of the United Food and Commercial Workers at Tyson Foods who walked out seven months ago. The Freedom Ride buses will stop at Jefferson and riders will walk the picket line.

Clerical workers who are members of AFSCME at the University of Minnesota staffed a table at the September 13 meeting, dispensing information about their fight against the university administration’s proposals to cut health-care payments. Many participants wore “I support U of M Workers” buttons. A local group of Aztec Dancers performed traditional dances.

The Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride buses will be sent off with a rally on September 25 at Powderhorn Park in South Minneapolis. The event will begin at 5:00 p.m.

Venezuela

Continued from Page 3

the unionists and succeeded in stopping production by blocking access to raw materials. Workers have been fighting since then to get their jobs back.

In other cases, workers are pressing the government directly to take action to reopen state-owned plants that closed due to the economic crisis. “At a large tube factory in the state of Guyana, the workers have been organizing protest meetings recently to demand that the government give them aid needed to restart the plant,” García said. The company went bankrupt a few years ago.

Struggles by peasants, fishermen

Peasants and other exploited producers are also taking action to press their demands.

“We are back at Palomita,” said Angel Sarmiento, who farms outside San Carlos, in the largely agricultural Cojedes state. He was referring to a land occupation by 400 peasant families in *La Palomita*, about five miles south of San Carlos. In early 2001, these peasants took over half of a 12,000-acre farm used mainly for cattle grazing by Compania Inglesa (English Company), one of Venezuela’s largest landowners. Sarmiento took *Militant* reporters to Palomita in July 2002. At that time, the farmers were producing but had a hard time making ends meet. They could get no credit from the banks because they had no title to the land they tilled. In January of this year, National Guard troops kicked out the peasants. The evicted families and their supporters then occupied the local offices of the National Land Institute (INT) and organized a delegation to visit Chávez in Caracas, demanding they be allowed to return.

“Two months ago, we succeeded,” Sarmiento said. “These peasants are back on the land. They also have agricultural certificates and can get credit.” These certificates are issued by INT in lieu of land titles in cases still in dispute.

Similar struggles are taking place elsewhere. While distribution of titles to landless peasants has been relatively slow in Cojedes, it has accelerated in other states, Sarmiento stated, especially in Barinas and Zulia. Under pressure from rural toilers, the government has distributed more than 2 million acres of land this year alone, he said.

Small fishermen benefited from a 2001 law excluding large commercial firms from fishing near coastal waters. They have now focused their fight on implementing provisions of the Law on Fishing and Aquaculture that grant them the right to get credits to establish cooperatives and market their catch directly, avoiding the robbery of middlemen. According to a September 15 report by Venezuelan journalist Miriam Carolina Pérez, the state of Nueva Esparta has just granted such a credit of 300 million bolivars (\$187,000) to 100 fishing families in the town of Parloamar.

Elsewhere, however, independent fishermen say they are not even close to getting credits, even after repeated protests. “We’ve had a cooperative for three years,” said Tomás Rodríguez, a fisherman in Cumaná, the capital of Sucre state, 300 miles east of Caracas, in a September 14 telephone interview. “We keep demanding the credit due, as the law says, and we see nothing. We’ll be going back to Caracas this year to protest.”

A follow-up article in next week’s issue will report on Plan Barrio Adentro—a project through which 1,000 Cuban doctors have volunteered to serve in some of the poorest neighborhoods of Caracas and elsewhere in Venezuela—and Mission Robinson, the government’s literacy campaign launched this year with assistance from Cuba. That article will also examine Washington’s course to undermine and eventually overthrow the Chávez regime.

Pathfinder sales

Continued from page 5

in Shreveport, Louisiana, in early November,” he said.

Reaching the goal, said Norton Sandler, a member of the Socialist Workers Party National Committee, “will take the political imagination and combined work of supporters of the communist movement and socialist workers who are active in their unions, standing as candidates for elective office, and shouldering responsibility with others in various coalitions doing work in defense of the Cuban Revolution.”

Sales of Pathfinder titles will be a central part of work by Socialist Workers candidates and their supporters as they soapbox at street corners and sell the socialist press at factory gates, he added. Socialists in the trade unions will find sales of Pathfinder titles an indispensable component of their political work over the coming months, as they fight alongside other workers to build their unions as part of resisting the assaults by the capitalist rulers in country after country.

Sandler noted that young people like those who attended the Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange in July are likely to continue adding to their Pathfinder libraries. Among those who will find these revolutionary books and pamphlets of interest, he said, will be the hundreds of workers, students, and youth joining the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride caravans across the country that will converge in a rally for immigrant rights in New York October 4.

The *Militant* encourages supporters of the effort to send in reports and photos of sales activities in their area.

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‘There is no electoral road to revolution’

Sept. 11, 2003, marked the 30th anniversary of the U.S.-backed military coup in Chile led by Gen. Augusto Pinochet. The coup overthrew the elected government of Socialist Party leader Salvador Allende. Bringing history into the present, the *Militant* reprints below excerpts from *Fidel Castro on Chile*, an Education for Socialists bulletin published by Pathfinder Press. The bulletin contains speeches by Cuban president Fidel Castro during his Nov. 10–Dec. 4, 1971, tour in Chile while Allende was president. The last two weeks we published the bulk of the bulletin’s introduction, written by Elizabeth Stone. This week’s installment consists of the final part of this introduction. Copyright ©1982 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.



(Last of three parts)

BY ELIZABETH STONE

Castro’s statements about the need to strengthen the mass struggle were in direct contradiction with the orientation of the Chilean Communist Party. The CP, with its 100,000 members, was the backbone of the Popular Unity (UP) government. It was also the main enforcer of the UP’s conciliationist line. The CP was to the right of Allende. It was especially in a constant fight against all forces that, like Castro, wanted to turn the rising struggles into a genuine working-class revolution.

Whereas Castro warned that the bourgeoisie in Chile was preparing to destroy its own bourgeois democratic institutions, CP leader Luis Corvalán told Chileans that “the armed forces were faithful to the law and to the legitimately constituted government.” While Castro was urging that the masses be organized to prepare for battle with the ruling class, the CP was playing a nefarious role in dividing working-class forces.

The treacherous lengths to which the CP went in their fight against the revolutionaries was reflected in a speech by CP leader Volodia Teitelboim in May 1972, charging that the “ultra-left” in Chile was equally responsible with the right wing for the violence. Teitelboim said: “There is an extreme right that traffics in arms and is aiming for a civil war. But there are also ‘ultra’ groups that call themselves ‘left’ who are following the same course, playing the role of partner in a mad waltz with their political opposites. They feed on each other...”

After the military coup, under the pressure of the events, the Stalinists were forced to criticize their policy in Chile. At the same time, however, they stuck by their concept of the peaceful road to socialism and reiterated the position that too much “radicalism” on the part of the so-called “ultra-left” played a role in bringing about the coup. An article by Alexander Sobolev in the February 1975 Communist Party USA’s magazine, *Political Affairs*, said: “The left-wing extremists elements played a provocative role in respect to the middle layers. They proceeded from the assumption that a socialist revolution was developing in the country and for this reason demanded the immediate socialization of all means of production...”

“The Allende government struggled against the ‘left-wing revolutionaries’ but could not fully paralyze their activities. Then, a large number of members of the Socialist Party sympathized with the ‘leftists.’ Reaction used this to drive a wedge

between the working class and the middle layers.”

History has shown that in every revolutionary situation, the middle class will move to the right when the working class shows itself incapable of decisive action against the bourgeoisie. If the working class is unable to mobilize a competing power to the capitalists, if it does not lead in providing radical solutions to the problems faced by the masses, including the poor urban middle class and peasantry, it is then that the right-wing and fascist movements gain momentum.

Castro often took up this theme of the need to win the middle class, but his advice was not that of retreating from revolutionary action so that the middle class would not be “frightened.” Instead, at the press conference in Santiago he urged the revolutionaries to intensify the struggle on every level:

“I have spoken of the necessity of uniting the revolutionary and the progressive forces. I said that yesterday, and saying it here now would only be repeating what I said about the need to struggle in the ideological field: the need to win over the middle strata of the population in this struggle, because both forces are engaged in this struggle; the need to develop an awareness; and the need to arm one’s spirit. In a word, the need to struggle, the need to keep the enemy from taking the initiative. I would say that these struggles are class struggles and they have their own laws, and so, passivity and a defensive attitude are very harmful. In these struggles, the revolu-



Presidential palace under assault during coup. Allende died during this attack.

tionary forces must be on the offensive at all times. This is a historical law, applicable to all countries and in all circumstances.

“I would tell you this: Apply the laws of history; apply the wise principles of Marxism. Do it intelligently and creatively, and you’ll see, you’ll win.”

Material aid

Through their advice and support, the Cuban’s tried to strengthen the revolutionary forces in Chile. They also went all out to campaign against the imperialist attacks. The attention of the Cuban people was focused on this, and there were mass rallies and page after page of coverage in *Granma* [Cuban daily newspaper].

When the imperialist attacks were having the biggest impact, the Cubans gave material aid. In 1972, Allende was invited to a rally in Havana where Castro proposed that each month every Cuban give up a part of their ration of sugar to be sent gratis to the Chilean people. Castro suggested that the proposal be discussed in the mass organizations, and then went on to say:

“We must raise a huge wall of solidarity around the sister nation of Chile! We simply cannot stand idly by! We mustn’t let the people of Chile be asphyxiated by imperialism! (shouts of ‘NO!’) We must raise a huge wall of solidarity like the one that was raised around the people of Peru at the time of the earthquake. We must raise a huge wall of solidarity like the one that was raised around the heroic people of Vietnam in their struggle for independence, a struggle that has been going on for ten years. (Applause and cries of ‘Cuba, Chile and Vietnam united they will win!’)

“The imperialists not only attack the peoples with explosives and napalm; they not only attack the peoples and try to bring them to their knees through the use of arms. They also try to bring them to their knees through starvation, through blockade, through economic asphyxiation. And in the same way that they have tried to bring Vietnam to its knees with bombs, they are trying to bring Chile down on its knees via economic asphyxiation.

“We are Latin Americans; we belong to that great community and some day we will be an integral part of it; the day when the wave of revolution sweeps away misunderstanding, chauvinism, balkanization and selfishness; the day when the wave of revolution sweeps away imperialist domination over the peoples of Latin America and with imperialism, the odious system of exploitation of man by man.

“We belong to Latin America. And for her sake, we are willing to fight shoulder to shoulder with the other peoples of Latin America; and for her sake and for Chile’s sake, Comrade Salvador Allende, we are not only willing to give our blood but our bread as well!”

As the coup drew closer, the Cubans once again offered their aid. On July 29, 1973, Castro wrote the following letter to Allende:

“Dear Salvador,

“Using the pretext of discussing with you matters related to the Conference of Nonaligned Nations, Carlos and Piñero are coming to see you. Their real objective is to get information on the situation from you, and to offer, as always, our willingness to cooperate in the face of the difficulties and dangers that block and threaten the process....

“I see that you are now involved in the delicate matter of the dialogue with the Christian Democrats, in the midst of serious events like the brutal murder of your Naval Aid-de-camp and the new strike of truck owners. I can imagine that tensions must be high and that you want to gain time to improve the balance of power in case fighting breaks out and, if possible, find a way to continue the revolutionary process without civil strife, avoiding any historic responsibility for what may happen. Those are praiseworthy objectives.

“But if the other side, whose real objectives we are not able to judge from here, continues to carry out a perfidious and irresponsible policy, demanding a price which is impossible for People’s Unity and the Revolution to pay, which is quite likely, don’t ever forget the extraordinary strength of the Chilean working class and the firm support it has always given you in difficult moments. In response to your call when the revolution is in danger, it can block those who are organizing a coup, maintain the support of the fence-sitters, impose its conditions and decide the fate of Chile once and for all if the need arises. The enemy must realize that the Chilean working class is on the alert and ready to go into action.”

After the military coup

After the military takeover, the Cubans once again offered material help to the Chileans, this time to the large numbers of exiles who came to Cuba to secure a livelihood and to get support in the continuing struggle against the junta.

The Cubans also joined with the exiles in drawing the lessons of the Chilean events, continuing to take the position that what had been needed was a revolutionary mobilization of the masses for combat with the ruling class.

Just a few days after Allende was killed, at a rally in Havana, Castro explained how



Chilean soldier guards Allende supporters rounded up and held in stadium after Sept. 11, 1973, coup. An estimated 3–4,000 people were killed during military coup and thousands more later.

Allende had refused the army’s offer of a safe plane ride out of the country and instead had taken the rifle Fidel gave him and led a group of supporters in a desperate battle to defend the Presidential Palace from the army. Castro praised Allende as a hero and a “fighter for socialism,” and then went on to give his own view of how the coup could have been prevented:

“But, what can you expect of fascists? They’ve even made a big thing of the rifle Allende fought with, the automatic we had given him, using it for their despicable ridiculous propaganda. But the facts have shown that there could have been no present for President Allende other than that automatic, used in defending the People’s Unity Government! (Applause)

“We were right in our premonition in giving the President that rifle. Never before has any rifle been taken up in the hands of so heroic a constitutional and legitimate president of his people! (Applause) Never has a rifle better defended the cause of the poor, the cause of the Chilean workers and farmers! (Applause) And, if every worker and every farmer had had a rifle like it in his hands, there wouldn’t have been any fascist coup! (Applause and shouts of ‘Fidel, For Sure, Hit the Yankees Hard!’)

“That is the great lesson which revolutionaries should draw from the happenings in Chile....

“The Chilean example teaches us the lesson that it is impossible to make the revolution with the people alone: arms are also necessary! (Applause) And that arms alone aren’t enough to make a revolution: people are also necessary! (Applause)...

“Chilean revolutionaries know that now there’s no alternative other than revolutionary armed struggle. (Applause) They tried the electoral way, the peaceful way, and the imperialists and reactionaries changed the rules of the game. The reactionaries trampled the Constitution, the laws, the Parliament, everything, and there’s no way out of the situation.”

— LETTERS —

California campaign

As a long-term reader of the *Militant* and supporter of the Socialist Workers Party, I have noticed Joel Britton’s campaign statement in the *Militant* does not say anything about how to vote on the recall. Is the recall a right-wing plot to subvert those who voted for Governor Davis? Does the recall itself subvert the “democratic” process? I decided since I never support capitalist politicians to vote for the recall on my absentee ballot. Was I correct? On the color blind initiative, is this the precursor of attacks to come the way the earlier attacks (Prop 209) were? Is it a last stand?

Lenore Sheridan
San Jose, California

French capitalism?

Interesting article. However, I fail to see how capitalism is responsible for a socialist government’s response to heat deaths.

Indeed, in a rampantly capitalistic society, such as the United States, social service agencies, governmental, non-governmental, religious and sectarian, act rapidly to assist the elderly in dealing with heat dangers. (Check out how many elderly died heat related deaths in the United States this past summer and you will find it is at least a magnitude fewer than the alleged 15,000 in France, despite the significant differences in population size). Hell, we even give away air conditioners to those who need them and the power companies make special arrangements to allow them to run them at either reduced rates or set up deferred payment plans.

I understand your having a different point of view. However, it is no excuse for lazy and illogical thinking or reporting of facts.

Gene Montalvo
By e-mail

From Pathfinder



Fidel Castro on Chile by Fidel Castro

Speeches and interviews from Castro’s 25-day visit to Chile in 1971. Castro warns of impending

counterrevolution and stresses example of the Cuban Revolution, in which workers and farmers mobilized to defeat imperialist intervention. \$12.00

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New Zealand farmers fight new tax

BY ANNALUCIA VERMUNT

WELLINGTON, New Zealand—Some 500 farmers from throughout New Zealand marched on parliament September 4 to protest the government's plan to introduce a NZ\$8.4 million research levy, a tax to reduce on-farm livestock methane emissions (US\$1 = NZ\$1.70).

A series of marches, rallies, and public meetings have been held throughout the country as Federated Farmers—an association whose membership is open to all farmers but is dominated by and campaigns for the interests of capitalist farmers—collected 64,000 signatures on a petition opposing the government levy. In presenting the petition, Tom Lambie, president of Federated Farmers, said that farmers “pay NZ\$77 million a year in voluntary levies, much of which funds a wide range of research from which all New Zealand benefits.”

The tax, which has been the object of widespread derision, has become popularly known as the flatulence tax. It has sparked determined opposition especially because it comes at a time when farmers, especially working farmers, are squeezed by rising costs and declining income from sales of meat and dairy products.

In Southland nearly 1,500 people turned out for a rally August 23. “If the government believes the agricultural greenhouse gas emissions research is in the public interest then the government should pay,” said Don Nicolson, Southland Federated Farmers president, at that action.

The new levy means farmers will pay about NZ\$0.09 a year for each mature sheep and NZ\$0.54 a year for each beef or dairy animal. The tax will cost each farmer approximately NZ\$300 per year on average.

Dairy farmer Malcolm Bailey said about 350 joined a protest in the rural town of Feilding. Explaining why he joined the protest against the new tax, Bailey said the imposition of a new tax “breaks a promise the government made. In principle farmers have a lot of tax credits.” He was referring to credits farmers get for planting trees that provide a carbon sink for greenhouse gas emissions.

Charlie Bannister, a retired farm contractor from the Wairarapa, reported that 50–60 people with 100 vehicles showed up at the Masterton protest. He said farmers are already spending NZ\$60 million on research, there is no need for the government to levy the additional NZ\$8 Million.

Beef farmer Chris Wall estimated that in the 2002/2003 season farmers paid an average of NZ\$21 in levies and charges for each head of cattle slaughtered. The numerous charges faced by farmers include meat inspection levies, herd testing, local

body charges for water and effluent, and accident compensation and vehicle registration fees.

Capitalist politicians have been using the Kyoto treaty to justify the imposition of the new tax. The Kyoto Protocol was cobbled together in Kyoto, Japan, in 1997 at an 11-day conference of representatives from 150 countries. From the first day to the last, the meeting featured contending imperialist powers promoting their national interests at the expense of their rivals and on the backs of working people, especially those in the semicolonial world. This treaty has been touted by its supporters as a means of limiting emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases alleged to result in “global warming.” The agreement would in theory require 39 industrialized countries to reduce their collective emissions of these gases to at least 5 percent below 1990 levels by sometime between 2008 and 2012.

The New Zealand government ratified the protocol in December 2002.

Member of Parliament Peter Hodgson defended the levy in the August 21 New Zealand *Herald* by pointing to this treaty. “The Kyoto protocol puts a price on greenhouse gas emissions to encourage cuts and make non-polluting energy sources more competitive,” he said.

Pointing to this accord as a means for gaining a competitive advantage through lowering greenhouse gas emissions, Hodgson stated, “The government will take responsibility for ensuring New Zealand meets its Kyoto target regardless of the



Militant/Christine Beresford

Farmers march in Wellington, New Zealand, September 4 against proposed methane gas levy, or “flatulence” tax, which will cost them NZ\$300 a year on average.

level of emissions from farming.

“If agriculture had to pay the full cost of its emissions, the bill would be up to NZ\$925 million a year from 2008.”

Denis Hocking of the Farm Forestry Association, however, estimates that 200,000 hectares of trees planted on farms since 1990 have already ensured that pastoral farming net emissions will be below the required level when the Kyoto Protocol comes into force.

The government's proposed levy comes at

a time when dairy and beef farmers are facing a drop in income. Westpac economists point out dairy payouts, which averaged NZ\$3.94 per kilo of milk solids between 1996 and 2002, are expected to be about NZ\$3.60 in this year—an 8.6 percent drop. Beef prices paid to producers have fallen from an average of NZ\$2.76 in the same six-year period to an expected NZ\$2.55 this year—a 7.6 percent decline.

Ruth Green contributed to this article.

21 arrested in Toronto ‘terror’ sweep

BY ELVIDIO MEJIA AND PATRICIA O’BEIRNE

TORONTO—“Being Pakistani is not a crime” and “Free the 19 now,” chanted 70 people outside the Toronto offices of the Department of Citizenship and Immigration August 28. The demonstrators demanded the release of 19 men arrested seven days earlier. Government officials claimed the men might have links to the Al Qaeda network.

The protest was called by the Canadian Muslim Congress. Abdul Rahman Malik, one of the organizers, said, “We cannot let this story go off the radar because they’ll arrest 19 today, 20 the next day, and 100 after that. This isn’t a Pakistani issue, a Punjabi issue, a Muslim issue. This is a civil liberties issue, this is a democracy issue.” Further protests are planned, including a public meeting on September 21.

Cops from the Toronto police force, the Ontario Provincial Police, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) carried out the pre-dawn raids. On August 29, police arrested a 20th person. Another surrendered to immigration officials September 2 after learning there was a warrant out for his arrest.

One of the 21 was later ordered released after an immigration adjudicator ruled there was no evidence to justify detaining him without charges. Two others have been granted bail.

Save for one—an Indian man—all those arrested were from Pakistan. None has been charged with any crime. The Immigration and Refugee Protection Act gives the federal government the power to detain indefinitely any foreign national deemed to be a threat to “national security.”

The CBC reported that “the arrests followed a seven-month investigation called Project Thread” involving the RCMP-directed Public Security and Anti-Terrorism unit (PSAT). Project Thread targets people with alleged ties to “terrorist” activities. A total of 31 people are named in Project Thread documents, raising the specter of further arrests.

The lawyer for Dennis Coderre, the minister of citizenship and immigration, told the press August 26, “I guess the easiest way of putting it is there is a suggestion they might in fact be perhaps a sleeper cell for Al Qaeda.”

In an August 26 opinion piece entitled, “Slender threads tie 19 to terror,” *Toronto Star* columnist Thomas Walkom wrote that officials based the arrests on PSAT claims that the arrestees lived with other male students and had a “minimal standard of living”; that most were studying in “a dilatory manner”; that some were acquainted with two people who once tried to go for a walk on the beach by the Pickering nuclear power plant, located near Toronto; and that some knew construction workers with access to gauges that could be used to make a “dirty” nuclear device. Walkom pointed out that such gauges are perfectly legal.

The document produced by PSAT, entitled “Reasons for detention,” referred to the national origin of 18 of the men as a

factor in the arrests. “The Punjab province in Pakistan...is noted for Sunni extremism,” it stated. It claimed that the detained men are connected by the Ottawa Business School, which it describes as “not a legitimate school.”

The sole Indian citizen among the detainees, the PSAT snoops said, “is currently enrolled in flight school.... His flight plan for training purposes took him over the Pickering Nuclear Power Plant.” A flight instructor at the school denied the claim, along with another PSAT allegation that the student was taking an unusually long time to finish the course.

Government officials also say that some of the men had fraudulent immigration documents, although no charges have resulted. The RCMP claims to be sifting through “vanloads of evidence.” Meanwhile, the detained men are supposed to have a review hearing within 30 days of their arrests.

Three days before the Toronto protest a demonstration was held in Ottawa to demand the release of five men held without charges for periods of up to several years. The participants delivered a petition with 4,500 signatures demanding the release of the five.

Women in Argentina demand abortion rights



Above and right, 10,000 women marched in Rosario, Argentina, August 17 to demand abortion rights. Right: woman on left wears scarf, given to marchers, that reads, “Right to choose.” March coincided with 18th National Meeting of Women (see banner above). The conference announced a campaign to press for the legalization of abortion and called a national march in Buenos Aires for September 26.



Further reading

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