

THE MILITANT

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Opposition to U.S. intervention marks Summit of Americas

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Tokyo sends first combat troops abroad since 1945

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, DC—An advance team of 39 Japanese troops left for Iraq January 16, arriving in Kuwait the next day. It is the first time since the end of World War II that Tokyo has deployed combat troops abroad. A Japanese air unit had arrived in Kuwait December 27, but the latest group was the first contingent of ground troops. The move is aimed at strengthening the capacity of Japanese imperialism to defend its interests around the world, as it increasingly joins Washington in the “global war on terrorism,” by rebuilding its army and accelerating construction of “missile defense.”

The Japanese government is now dispatching up to 1,000 troops to southern Iraq to join the U.S.-led occupation of the country. Many of the troops will be in place in February.

Japanese defense minister Shigeru Ishiba noted recently that Tokyo gets 90 percent of its oil from the Middle East, the largest percentage of any single country. “The reason we can lead such an affluent life, such as using electricity to this extent, driving cars as much as we like, avoiding the cold, and having fruit in winter, is because we have a stable oil supply from the Middle East, isn’t it?” Ishiba said in an interview reported in the January 16 *International*

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Washington wants airlines to turn over passenger records

BY PATRICK O’NEILL

Washington is taking steps toward requiring U.S. airlines and airline reservation companies to hand over all passenger records for scrutiny by the U.S. government this year. According to an article in the January 12 *Washington Post*, “all travelers passing through a U.S. airport are to be scored with a number and a color that ranks their perceived threat to the aircraft.” The government order could be issued as soon as February, the *Post* said.

A second program the government is supposed to introduce this year would seek to speed frequent flyers through security lines in exchange for volunteering personal information to the government, according to the *Post*.

These initiatives expand the new tracking program facing most travelers into the United States from abroad. Since January 5, visitors from all but 27 countries, arriving at 115 airports and 14 seaports, have been fingerprinted and photographed to determine their identity and crosscheck it against lists of so-called terrorists and criminals. In introducing the program, DHS head Thomas Ridge described it as “an important new element in the global war against terrorism.”

The measures, which have received bipartisan support, build on previous encroach-

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Striking Utah miners on labor tour in Bay Area

San Jose Labor Council invites miners, backs UMWA-organizing fight

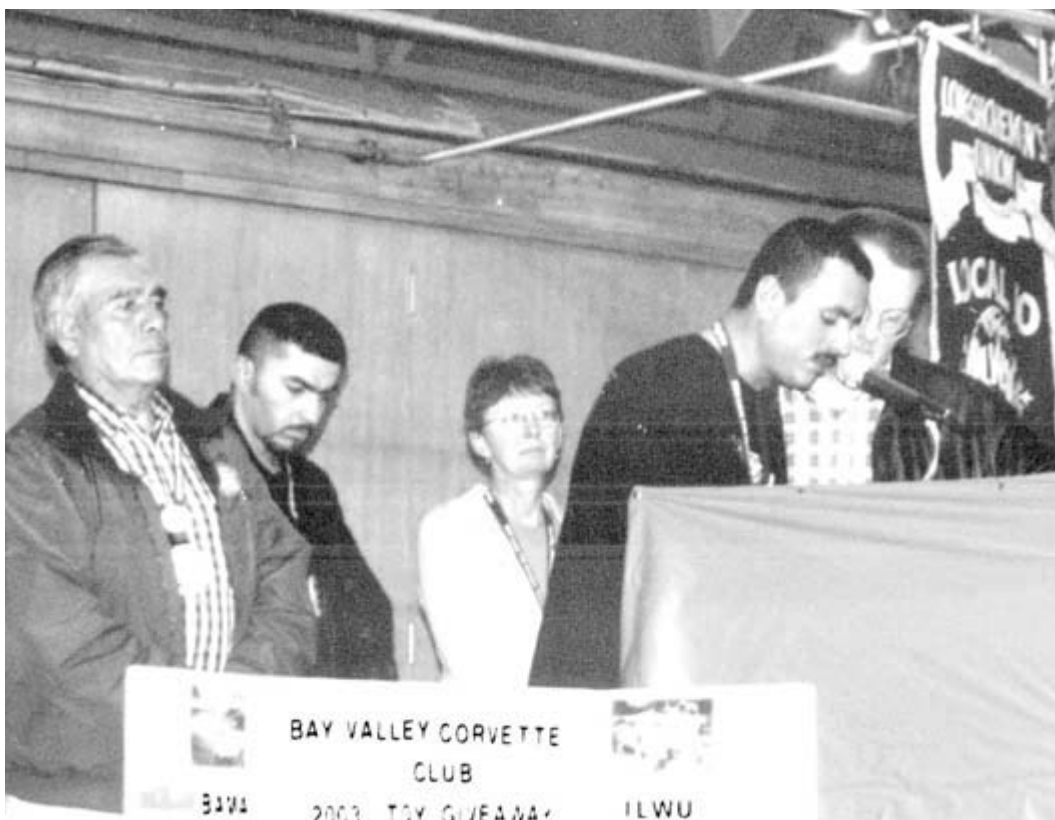
BY BERNIE SENTER

SAN FRANCISCO—Juan Salazar, Ricardo Chávez, Benito Meza, and Alyson Kennedy arrived here January 12 for an intensive effort in the Bay Area to win solidarity with their struggle for union recognition at the Co-Op mine near Huntington, Utah. In the first five days of the labor tour, the coal miners spoke to 600 people and raised more than \$8,500. The Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (AFL-CIO) in San Jose organized the tour.

The miners addressed the executive board of International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10, as well as the local’s membership meeting. They also spoke at executive board meetings of Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees (HERE) Local 2 and Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 790 in San Francisco, and Teamsters Local 287 in San Jose.

The workforce of 75 at the Co-Op mine was fired to the person by the bosses September 22 for protesting unsafe working

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Militant/Bernie Senter

Striking miners address January 15 meeting of International Longshore Workers Union Local 10 in San Francisco. From left, Ricardo Chávez, Benito Meza, Alyson Kennedy, and Juan Salazar. In the first five days of the tour the miners spoke to 600 people and raised more than \$8,500.

Los Angeles unions plan Jan. 31 rally to support striking grocery workers

BY JAMES VINCENT

LOS ANGELES—The labor movement in this city is planning a demonstration on Saturday, January 31, to back 70,000 striking and locked-out grocery workers.

The Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, has issued a call for a “Day of Solidarity, Massive March and Rally” for noon that day at the Great Western Forum in Inglewood, California. Union organizers say they expect to mobilize more than 20,000 unionists and other supporters of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) strike. Many unions are organizing buses.

The UFCW struck Vons and Pavilions stores, owned by Safeway Inc., October 11; Ralphs, which is owned by Kroger,

and Albertsons locked out UFCW members the next day. All four stores are part of the same collective bargaining unit of the union. The strike and lockout affects more than 850 stores in Southern California.

The grocery bosses are seeking \$1 billion worth of health-care cuts, a wage freeze for the first two years of the contract, and a substantially lower pay and benefit scale for new hires.

The strike enjoys wide support in Southern California. “We’ve been out for more than three months and it has not been easy,” said Jessie González, a union representative for UFCW Local 1442 in Santa Monica. “We’ve gotten fantastic, unbelievable sup-

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Militant/James Vincent

UFCW members picket Vons supermarket January 17 in Santa Monica, California.

HQ Building Appeal hits \$180,000, rapid collection of funds needed

BY NORTON SANDLER AND ARRIN HAWKINS

The target for full collection for the \$180,000 January 2004 Headquarters Building Appeal is rapidly drawing near. This special appeal is funding the construction of the new Pathfinder Bookstore in New York and the national office of the Socialist Workers Party and the newsroom of the *Militant* and the Spanish-language monthly *Perspectiva Mundial*.

As the *Militant* goes to press, \$79,235 has been collected, with the amount pledged at \$181,000, just over the target.

“Our progress means double-pane windows can be installed now rather than later. Full collection of all the money pledged to

the fund is needed by January 31, to buy the construction materials necessary to keep the volunteer crew working and on the schedule that will ensure the project is completed by the end of February,” said Joel Britton, who is one of the one of the four national chairpersons of the Appeal, along Arrin Hawkins, Martin Koppel, and Janice Prescott.

“We are urging supporters in every area to get in as much of the total as possible over the next few days, as we continue to get new pledges and contributions to make sure we go over the top,” said Britton in a January 18 interview. Compounding the challenge of full collection is the fact that a number of contributors had their checks returned

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Haiti's bicentennial marked by pro- and anti-gov't rallies

BY STEVE WOLF

MIAMI—Haiti's official celebration of the 200th anniversary of its independence from France January 1 was marked by pro- and anti-government rallies amidst a deep economic and social crisis. About 100,000 people turned out in Port-au-Prince to cheer President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the featured speaker at the anniversary rally.

South African president Thabo Mbeki was the only foreign head of state present. Washington sent its local ambassador and Maxine Waters, a congresswoman from California who is a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, to represent the U.S. government.

The government, which is facing persistent calls to step down by an opposition coalition backed by Washington and Paris, tried to use the bicentennial of the Haitian Revolution to boost its position. The only successful national slave revolt in history took place in Haiti 1791–1804, resulting in the overthrow of French colonial rule and the establishment of a republic.

At the same time as the bicentennial rally, government opponents held smaller actions, clashing with Aristide supporters in the capital. Protesters organized by the Democratic Convergence coalition and the "Group of 184" demand Aristide's resignation.

Aristide, a bourgeois nationalist figure, first won election in 1990. He was a prominent opponent of the decades-long Duvalier dictatorship, which was backed by Washington and Paris, and then other military officers who succeeded the Duvalier regime. On Sept. 30, 1991, Aristide was overthrown by a military coup and went into exile in the United States. On Oct. 14, 1994, U.S. troops invaded Haiti and restored Aristide to power. He stepped down in 1996 as part of an agreement with Washington to serve out his first term and then leave office. He then ran again and was re-elected in 2000. His current term expires in 2006.

The opposition claims that the 2000 elections were fraudulent. Opposition deputies have boycotted the National Assembly and refuse to participate in upcoming legislative

elections.

Backing the opposition claims, Washington and international financial institutions it dominates have curtailed promised aid and loans to Haiti over the last year. Since 1994 Washington has given \$850 million in "assistance" to Haiti, including \$72 million in 2002. According to Irwin Stotsky of the University of Miami Center for the Study of Human Rights, the bulk of these funds went to support U.S. troops in Haiti and military-supported contractors like Halliburton. The rest, supposedly earmarked for health, nutrition, and education purposes, go mostly to private groups, not the government. The European Union has also frozen its funds for any projects in Haiti.

These steps by the imperialist powers have exacerbated the already existing deep economic and social crisis in Haiti. The UN Development Program's Human Development index ranks Haiti as 134th out of 162 countries.

More than 47 percent of Haiti's adult population is illiterate. Nearly half the population is malnourished, even though 66 percent work in agriculture. Life expectancy for males is just 49 years and for women is 50 years, in part due to the AIDS epidemic.

In 2002 Haiti exported goods worth \$298 million, mostly to the United States. That same year its imports amounted to \$1.14 billion—an \$800 million trade deficit.

The country's foreign debt in 1999 was \$1.2 billion. Coffee and mango exports have plummeted recently. Like many Third World nations, Haiti has been hard hit by the lowest prices for coffee beans in decades.

An estimated \$600 million a year sent into Haiti by relatives of Haitians in the United States and other countries helps prevent a total collapse of the economy.

When Washington returned Aristide to power in 1994 they imposed numerous conditions on him including: lowering tariffs on goods from the United States; floating the *gourde*, Haiti's national currency; privatizing state-owned industries; and implementing austerity programs prescribed by the



Militant/Eric Simpson

Supporters of Haiti's president Jean-Bertrand Aristide rally December 26 outside offices of Haitian group Veye Yo in Miami's Little Haiti neighborhood. Mobilization was held in response to pro-imperialist, anti-Aristide action across the street.

International Monetary Fund.

The *Miami Herald* noted that Haiti's government lowered tariffs on chicken and rice to a maximum of 5 percent, compared to 40 percent in most Caribbean countries. "Haiti's chicken industry went beak-up," the *Herald* said. Imports of U.S. rice have doubled since 1995, but local rice and chicken growers are disappearing. Haiti, the *Herald* continued, "the hemisphere's poorest nation, with a per capita income of less than \$1 a day, is also home to the hemisphere's most open market."

While on most economic questions Aristide has implemented U.S. demands, Washington was angered when he established normal diplomatic relations with Cuba in 1996. There are currently 800 Cuban medical personnel providing sorely needed health care in Haiti.

The opposition parties, ranging from ultrarightist groups to social democrats, have used the economic and social crisis to press their demand that Aristide resign. Students at the national university have also joined these protests.

But these groups have no program beyond demanding Aristide must go. They say their goal is to "establish a climate of security and confidence for the normalization of the country." Some former supporters of Aristide's Lavalas party have gone over to the opposition. One of the most prominent opposition spokespeople is Andre Apaid, owner of Alpha General Assembly, a textile

company with investments in the Dominican Republic. Making clear which side they're on, the U.S. State Department condemned the Haitian government for its "response to the political demonstration that occurred January 7 in Port-au-Prince," White House spokesperson Richard Boucher said. "A government that wishes to be considered democratic cannot continue to use street gangs as an instrument of terror and intimidation."

During the last four months, at least 45 people have been killed and more than 100 wounded in clashes between pro- and anti-Aristide forces. The opposition has also organized "strikes" by businessmen, including a two-day lockout January 8–9.

Aristide has agreed to a Catholic church proposal that the National Assembly be replaced by an interim governing council with nine members drawn from the Supreme Court, political parties, and "civil society", to advise the president. But the opposition insists Aristide resign immediately.

The events in Haiti are a big topic of discussion among Haitians in south Florida. Like the majority of working people in Haiti, most of them supported Aristide. One Lavalas supporter who works at Point Blank Body Armor near Fort Lauderdale, Florida, said in an interview, asking that his name not be used, "I don't like the Democratic Convergence. I'm not happy with the policies Aristide is carrying out, but I think he should stay in office until the end of his term."

Eric Simpson contributed to this article.

THE MILITANT

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The 'Militant' has consistently called for the unconditional withdrawal of U.S. troops and other occupying forces from Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as the Balkans, Korea, and Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. It has also provided the facts and a Marxist analysis of U.S. imperialism's new military strategy couched as the 'global war on terrorism.' Don't miss a single issue!



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Ecuador: thousands protest gov't austerity

BY RÓGER CALERO

Thousands of demonstrators occupied the offices of the Ministry of Labor in the three main cities of Ecuador January 7 to protest government austerity measures and to call for the resignation of Ecuador's president Lucio Gutiérrez.

Some 3,000 unionists, members of indigenous organizations, and others marched through the streets of Quito, the country's capital, and other provinces. The actions marked the beginning of a round of protests the organizers say will not stop until the government responds to their demands, or steps down and allows an "alternative government to run the country." The demonstrators protested recent legislation freezing wages for state employees until 2005, and other measures demanded by capitalist investors.

"If the government insists on following the mandates of the IMF [International Monetary Fund] we will accelerate the president's departure," said Jaime Arciniegas, president of the United Workers Front (FUT), one of the organizations sponsoring the actions.

The protests were called by a coalition of labor and political groups known as the Front of Opposition to the Government. In addition to the FUT, the Front includes the Coordinating Committee of Social Movements, and the two largest indigenous organizations in the country—the National Federation of Peasants, Indigenous, and Black Organizations (FENOCIN), and the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE). The actions coincided with the first anniversary of the Gutiérrez government, and come four years after a popular rebellion led by indigenous people toppled the government of former president Jamil Mahuad in 2000.

"We declare Lucio Gutiérrez a traitor for not adhering to the principles and program that allowed him to be elected," read a resolution adopted by the opposition coalition at a December 22 meeting in Quito.

In the document, the signatories vowed not to allow the continued privatization of the country's oil resources and the electrical and phone companies. The resolution also opposes the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas, a trade accord pushed by Washington to bolster its imperialist domination of the region, and the increasing U.S. military presence in the country.

Gutiérrez was voted into office on the basis of his opposition to his predecessors' austerity measures and professed support for those most affected by the depression conditions in the country. An army colonel at the time of the Mahuad government, he was among a number of military officers who backed the protest actions that brought down the regime. Gutiérrez was elected with large support from the indigenous groups, which participated briefly with him in the national government.

Since he came to office last January, however, Gutiérrez has pushed a number of austerity measures demanded by the IMF, including eliminating government subsidies on basic items such as cooking gas, gasoline, electricity, and fuel, arguing these are necessary to get the "house in order" and stimulate the economy. Ecuador is saddled with a foreign debt of \$14.1 billion. Some 44 percent of the country's \$7.1 billion budget will be used for interest payments on this debt this year. These measures have been met by resistance from working people. A round of protests last year forced the government to suspend the price hikes on gasoline and cooking gas.

In June, the government was forced into an agreement with striking schoolteachers demanding wage increases and the allocation of more funds for public education.

Noting that the government had only suspended the increase of the gas prices because these were a "social detonator," Napoleón Saltos of the Coordinating Committee of Social Movements said the government will persist in trying to comply with IMF demands.

In the face of the threat of growing protests the government has asked for "patience and time." "We must be proud of the political and economic stability the country has achieved," said Alfredo Palacio, the country's vice president.

Despite giving lip service to its supposed commitment to resolve the needs of the country's toilers, the government's policies are bound to clash with the expectations of working people.

Gutiérrez has defended his course saying that what he promoted during the election campaign was a third alternative, "a bridge that will unite the left—that at times is too radical, too sectarian, but nevertheless has many important positive things—with the right that sometimes only defends its own interests, forgetting about the social sectors. I want to take what is good from the left and the right. That is my vision," he said.

"He is a traitor," Gilberto Talahua, a



Teachers protest outside government palace in Quito, Ecuador, in November to demand pay increase. Recent rallies have condemned government's austerity program, carried out under the dictates of the International Monetary Fund.

leader of Pachakutik, an indigenous political party supported by CONAIE, told the *Washington Post* in October. "He'll always work with this group of rightists, and the fact of the matter is, he has become a president of the business class."

In the meantime, trade unions and other organizations have called more actions for the end of January. Gutiérrez has also called on members of his party, Sociedad Patriota (Patriotic Society), to mobilize in support of the government.

Opposition to U.S. gov't foreign policy marks Summit of Americas in Mexico

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Summit of the Americas, held in Monterrey, Mexico, January 12–13, was marked by opposition by bourgeois governments—particularly those of Argentina, Brazil, and Venezuela—to Washington's preparations for expanded intervention into and domination of Latin America and worldwide.

The final declaration by the heads of state from the 34 countries present said there was agreement in principle for the formation of a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), but did not specify a date for its implementation. The U.S. delegation, headed by President George Bush, sought a 2005 deadline.

The FTAA is an initiative by Washington intended to open up the underdeveloped countries on the continent to further penetration, and thus domination, by U.S. finance capital. The U.S. rulers seek to use such a pact to beat down trade and investment barriers throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, while maintaining in place U.S. tariffs and strengthening Washington's edge over its rivals in the European Union.

A U.S. proposal to exclude "the most corrupt" governments from these regional meetings was not included in the final declaration. A number of representatives of Latin American governments argued that it was too vague and some said that Washington would use the clause to isolate its rivals, such as Venezuela's president Hugo Chávez.

The most pointed remarks by the U.S. president were reserved for the one government from the Americas not in attendance—Cuba—which has been excluded from participation in these meetings. Bush reiterated his administration's call for a "rapid and peaceful transition to democracy in Cuba."

Workers and farmers on the island ousted the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista on Jan. 1, 1959, through a popular revolution. Successive U.S. administrations, Democratic and Republican alike, have strengthened policies aimed at overturning Cuba's socialist revolution—including numerous attempts to assassinate Cuban leaders and an economic war that continues to this day.

Bush held what were reported as contentious meetings with Brazil's president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, and Argentina's president Nestor Kirchner. Along with the Chávez government in Venezuela, those of Argentina and Brazil have been dubbed an emerging Latin American "axis of evil" by U.S. congressman Henry J. Hyde, a Repub-

lican from Illinois.

Bush did not meet with Hugo Chávez, whom U.S. officials recently accused of working with Cuba to destabilize "democratic governments" in the region. At a January 6 press conference, Roger Noriega, assistant secretary of state for Western Hemisphere affairs, accused Cuba of "actions to destabilize Latin America [that] are increasingly provocative to the inter-American community."

Cuba and Venezuela

Two days later, U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell defended Noriega's comments, adding that "Cuba has been trying to do everything it could to destabilize parts of the region."

Unnamed U.S. officials told the Associated Press that "Cuba and Venezuela are working together to oppose pro-American, democratic governments in the region with money, political indoctrination, and training, such as in Ecuador and Uruguay. They also implied that "Venezuelan resources may have helped in the October ouster of Bolivia's elected, pro-American president, Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada."

The Venezuelan government has come under Washington's fire for taking measures that cut into the profits of finance capital, including a land reform law and a bill extending new rights to exploited independent fishermen. Washington is also hostile to Venezuela's normal diplomatic and economic relations with Cuba.

At the summit, Chávez said that his government would sign the final declaration "with reservations." He called the FTAA "an infernal machinery that, minute by minute, produces an impressive number of poor." He skipped the official summit dinner calling it a "waste of time" and said he spent the lunch time on the phone with Libyan leader Moammar Qaddafi to discuss a summit between Latin American and African nations.

In a speech at the summit, Chávez thanked Cuba for its help, noting that 1 million people in Venezuela have learned to read and write partly because of Cuba's help with his government's literacy program. He also noted that Cuban doctors now offer treatment free of charge to more than 10 million of Venezuela's 23 million people. Just two days before the Monterrey summit, Chávez rejected U.S. criticism of the ties between Caracas and Havana, and told Washington to "stop sticking its nose" in the internal affairs of his country.

Following the Monterrey meeting, Chávez flew to Havana to meet with Cuban

president Fidel Castro. Thousands of Cuban doctors and literacy workers are helping the Venezuelan government carry out a nationwide literacy campaign and provide medical care to workers and peasants in the most remote areas of the country.

Argentine foreign debt

Days before the summit, Argentina's president Nestor Kirchner "tossed diplomacy out the window," according to an online article by the Knight Ridder news agency. At a public ceremony outside Buenos Aires Kirchner condemned interference in Argentina's affairs by the U.S. administration. "We have stopped being a carpet. We can accept or arrange meetings but nobody orders us... because we are a country with dignity," Kirchner said.

Kirchner's remarks came in response to comments by Noriega, of the U.S. State Department, condemning the refusal of Argentina's foreign minister, Rafael Bielsa, to meet with "dissidents" during a recent trip to Cuba. A cabinet member of Argentina's government has also said that his government will not vote against Cuba in the annual meeting of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, despite pressure from Washington, according to the *Washington Times*. Kirchner also scuttled legislation that would have paved the way for U.S. troops to participate in training exercises with Argentine forces, reported the *Times*.

According to Knight Ridder, Kirchner told journalists that Argentina would "win by a knockout" if a hastily arranged meeting between him and Bush during the summit took place. Kirchner was bringing a proposal that his government pay \$.25 to the dollar to resolve Argentina's more than \$88 billion foreign debt. Buenos Aires defaulted on its foreign debt payments two years ago and suffered an economic collapse.

Some government officials at Monterrey strongly criticized Washington for failing on its promises that "free trade" capitalism and democracy would stabilize and bring prosperity to Latin America.

Brazil's president described as a decade of "desperation" the last 10 years of U.S.-sponsored packages of "market reforms," known as the "Washington Consensus." As a result, he said, Latin America lives with "the awful reality of widespread and disgracefully increasing poverty."

A media session scheduled to take place following Bush's meeting with da Silva lasted 20 seconds amounting to a handshake and pat on the back. Bush's

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Airport ‘security’

Continued from front page

ments on working people’s rights under the banner of “homeland security.” These range from the establishment of a domestic Northern Command for the U.S. armed forces, to the maintenance of a “no-fly” list of hundreds of U.S. residents whose alleged “terrorist” ties mean they cannot board commercial aircraft in the United States.

The proposed measures to track domestic travelers involve the construction of a nationwide database of personal information by the government and would draw millions more into this net. Passenger records—including name, address, telephone number, date of birth, and travel itinerary—would be fed into the database. Each traveler will be compared against “wanted criminals and suspected terrorists contained in other databases,” reported the *Post*.

The scheme is the second version of the government’s Computer Assisted Passenger PreScreening Program, or CAPPS 2. Earlier versions were publicized midway through last year.

Under CAPPS 2, each traveler will be assigned a color and numerical score representing the level of threat they allegedly pose to “national security.” A passenger who receives a red rating will be stopped from boarding (other consequences have not been described); yellow will mean more searches and interrogations at the checkpoint; and green will supposedly increase the chances of an unblocked passage.

A passenger’s choice of routes and airports that the government considers to be more popular among “terrorists” will be grounds for bumping up a traveler’s security-risk rating. Officials say they estimate that about 5 percent of travelers will be branded red or yellow.

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA), formed in November 2001, will run the program. TSA preparations to roll it out have struck some snags, as airline bosses have tried to cover themselves from legal challenges by passengers or civil liberties groups for privacy rights violations and have therefore been reluctant to openly join or stick with pilot screening programs.

Northwest Airlines, the fourth-largest U.S. airline, is one example. In September company officials denied that they had handed passenger information, stating they “did not provide that type of information to anyone.” On January 16, however, Northwest admitted that from October to December 2001 it had turned over passengers’ credit card details, along with names, addresses, and telephone numbers to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration for experiments dubbed “data mining.”

“Northwest Airlines had a duty and an obligation to cooperate with the federal government for national security reasons,” said a company statement.

Jet Blue also cooperated with a similar program run by a “defense contractor.” According to the *Post*, the airline abandoned the scheme after it was sued by passengers for breach of their privacy rights. “The participation of two airlines in separate programs demonstrates the industry’s clandestine role in government security initiatives,” the *Post* said.

Delta Air backed out of another attempt to try out the CAPPS 2 system after facing threats of a boycott campaign by civil liberties groups.

‘Trusted traveler’ scheme

TSA officials have announced the trial of a component of the CAPPS 2 program involving a “registered traveler” scheme, under which passengers will be encouraged to voluntarily submit their personal details to the government. Individuals who make it through the checks will qualify as “trusted travelers” and will supposedly be granted

speedier check-ins. TSA administrator Dave Stone emphasized that such passengers would still go “through a basic level of screening.”

Civil liberties groups and individuals have criticized the new measures for intruding on privacy rights, while accepting the government’s framework that the goal is to stem “terrorist attacks.” Barry Steinhardt, the director of the technology and liberty program at the American Civil Liberties Union, told *Post* reporters that “terrorists” will learn one way or another how to “game” the system.

Richard Sobel, described as a privacy policy researcher at Harvard Medical School, said that “dragnet systems” like CAPPS 2 “are feel-good but cost-inefficient. The government would do much better using resources to better identify people and deter people who might cause some harm than to use resources devoted to the 99 percent of people who are innocent.”

Democratic Party politicians, who present themselves as better qualified to defend “homeland security” than their Republican rivals, have supported the fingerprinting program and the CAPPS 2 proposals to expand it. New York senator Charles Schumer told a January 13 news conference that DHS should expand the use of its screening technology to cover foreign visitors to the city’s passenger ship terminal.

“If there’s anything we’ve learned since 9/11,” Schumer said—referring to the attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center in 2001—“it’s that you can’t be too careful. If we plug up one hole dealing with anti-terrorism but leave another one open, they’ll find the one that’s open.” A spokesman for U.S. Customs and Border Protection said that the screening program would be expanded to all points of entry over the next year or two.

Liberal editorial writers have also given the thumbs-up to the tighter border-controls.



Getty Images/AFP/Robyn Beck

Customs agent fingerprints and photographs visitor to U.S. January 5 at Los Angeles airport. Each year, 24 million visitors, mainly from Asia, Africa, and Latin America, will undergo such screening.

“The claim that checking visitors’ fingerprints violates their privacy is misplaced,” wrote the editors of the *New York Times* January 7. “Flying a commercial airliner to another country always entails a surrender of some measure of privacy.” The editorial described the system as “only the first step in the nation’s struggle to keep better track of who arrives and who leaves the country.”

The visa-tracking system is known as US-VISIT, or U.S. Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology. According to a January 13 Associated Press report, up to 24 million visitors a year will pass through it, pressing their index finger against a scanner and having their photographs taken as they go through Customs.

Visitors are being fingerprinted from all but the 27 countries whose citizens can enter the United States without visas. Since the 27 countries are concentrated in Europe, and also include the imperialist countries of Australia and New Zealand, it is overwhelmingly travelers from the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and Latin America who are being targeted.

To protest the U.S. fingerprinting pro-

gram, the Brazilian government began submitting visitors from the United States to the same checks January 5. “If there are already 27 countries, then why not 28?” asked President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva following a January 12 meeting with an unresponsive U.S. president George Bush.

According to the *New York Times*, Brazilian officials explain that their citizens do not represent any “terrorist” threat. The *Times* said that U.S. officials have “identified the border region where Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay come together as a haven for Islamic terrorists” and a hotbed of trade in allegedly dubious passports. In an escalation of the dispute, Brazilian authorities arrested an American Airlines pilot January 14 after he protested the fingerprinting and photographing procedure at the São Paulo airport by making an obscene gesture. Eleven other crew members on the same flight from Miami were refused entry into Brazil and detained after the police said they had refused to be fingerprinted and behaved in a “derisive” manner. They were ordered to return to the United States on the next available flight that night.

British Columbia paperworkers hold the line

BY NATALIE STAKE-DOUCET

DELTA, British Columbia—Some 300 paperworkers at the Domtar paper mill in Delta, British Columbia, have been on strike since November 18. The workers, who are members of Local 789 of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union (CEP), say they drew the line at the raft of concessions demanded by the company in contract talks.

The central issue is the bosses’ attempt to break the Norske Pattern Agreement, under which a contract hammered out by the CEP with one company sets the pattern for negotiations with other bosses. According to the strikers, all the industry bosses except Domtar have already signed the pattern agreement.

Picket captain Dave Askew told the *Militant*, “The main issue is not to leave the pattern.” Another worker, who asked that his name not be used, chimed in: “We’ve bargained with patterns for 50 years. A couple of times we could’ve asked for more but stuck to the pattern. Getting out of the pattern means we’d be on our own. About 7,000 CEP members have signed the pattern already.”

The striker said that the workers had also rejected the company’s push to impose a two-tier wage system. “Students working in the plant would receive a ‘training’ wage,” he explained.

Askew mentioned other attacks. “The company wants us to pay towards our benefits,” he said. “They also raised not paying benefits at all for retirees. That’s really hard for people on fixed incomes. For something like that I’ll stay out forever.”

Strikers report that they have received strong support from other CEP locals. “From the national union we get \$250 [Canadian] a week strike pay,” said Askew. “But other CEP locals across BC are discussing contributing so that it would go up to \$400 a week” (Can\$1=US\$.77 cents).

The union web site says that Mike Verdiel, the president of CEP Local 76 of

Powell River, had visited the picket line and presented Local 789 with a check for Can\$5,000 as a token of support. On January 9, the *Vancouver Sun* reported that Domtar was eliminating 80 jobs at the struck mill, including those of 60 union members.

Woodworkers return to work

Meanwhile, 10,000 members of the Industrial, Wood and Allied Workers of Canada (IWA) employed in sawmills and logging operations along the coast of British Columbia returned to work December 17 after striking for three weeks. The stoppage was called off following the provincial government’s imposition of a back-to-work order. The edict imposed arbitration on the IWA and the bosses, organized in the Forest Industrial Relations (FIR). If the union and employers do not reach an agreement by

the end of May, the mediator has the legal authority to impose one.

The government’s intervention was announced at a press conference attended by British Columbia prime minister Gordon Campbell, FIR chairman Duncan Davies, and Dave Haggard, the president of the IWA. Although Haggard supported the government’s move, he said that he is concerned about the possibility the negotiations could reach the point of binding arbitration.

Scott Alexander, a spokesman for the forest companies described the government-appointed mediator as “tough and fair.”

Workers went on strike after the lumber bosses tried to unilaterally impose a contract. The proposal included cuts in pay for night shift and weekend work, and reduced compensation for time traveling to and from work.

California grocery workers

Continued from front page

port from the community, which the company did not expect.”

The call for a large show of support on January 31 comes at the same time that strikers are pressuring the UFCW to put up pickets at Ralphs supermarkets. The union pulled the pickets on October 31 in what was described by the union as a “goodwill gesture” to get negotiations going.

The second week of January, locked-out UFCW grocery workers in San Diego County began picketing Ralphs stores again. “A proposal for locked-out grocery clerks to picket Ralphs supermarkets’ loading docks as a wildcat action was instead given official sanction by San Diego Local 135 of the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union,” reported the January 13 *North County Times*.

The picketing of stores has started to spread to the other six striking UFCW locals. UFCW local 1167 has begun orga-

nizing pickets in front of Ralphs stores in the Inland Empire. Local 770, the largest grocery local on strike, has issued a call for “Back to Picketing at Ralphs ‘For a Day’” on January 18.

The increase in picketing comes in the wake of reports that Ralphs hired 50–100 locked-out workers using fake names and Social Security numbers. The UFCW has filed complaints with the National Labor Relations Board.

In addition, grocery workers here learned this week that Safeway, the third largest U.S. supermarket company, will close 12 Dominick’s stores in and around Chicago, laying off about 800 UFCW members.

“We are doing this for other people, not just us,” said Carmen Valdvia, a produce worker at Albertsons. “We look forward to the rally planned for January 31. No matter what, we’re hanging in there.”

Betsey Stone contributed to this article.

Workers’ Rights versus the Secret Police

By Larry Seigle

How, since the inception of the modern revolutionary workers movement in 1848, the ruling classes have responded with police spies, agents provocateurs, and political frame-ups. —\$5



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Salt Lake picket backs Co-Op strike

BY GUILLERMO ESQUIVEL
AND TERI MOSS

SALT LAKE CITY—A dozen Co-Op miners, their families, and 100 supporters picketed Standard Restaurant Supply Co., one of 46 businesses owned by the Kingstons family in the Salt Lake area. The Kingstons own the Co-Op coal mine in Huntington, Utah, where 75 mostly Mexican-born workers were fired en masse September 22 because of union activity.

“We are here because we’re fighting for justice, we’re tired of all the mistreatment, abuses, and lies we’ve endured for years at Co-Op mine—and all at minimum wage!” Domingo Olivas, a miner for six years at

Co-Op, shouted through a bullhorn in front of the restaurant supply business. “With your help, we can bring justice and win.”

The miners are stepping up their efforts to be represented by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) after they unanimously rejected a ploy by CW Mining, also known as Co-Op, to report back to work under the same working conditions as before. The bosses’ “offer” included the condition that the workers must accept the company-run union as their bargaining representative and not the UMWA.

Olivas was addressing a festive crowd on a cold afternoon among chants of “¡Sí, Se Puede!” (Yes We Can) and “Miners United Will Never be Defeated!” Passing motorists honked long and loudly in support. Labor, religious, community, and student groups turned out to back the striking miners.

Irma García, a student at the University of Utah and member of Student Labor Action Project (SLAP), came to the picket line. “I support this fight,” she said. “My parents were immigrants from Mexico and have worked at the mercy of others. These workers are a strong voice. They will have to hear us,” she stated, referring to the Kingstons.

SLAP is organizing a fund-raising concert at their campus on January 23 as well as a program featuring two Co-Op miners and one of the women who escaped the polygamous Kingston clan after she was forced to marry a relative and suffered physical abuse when she protested.

Among unionists present were members



Militant/Terri Moss

Supporters of Utah mine strike picket restaurant supply business of Co-Op owners

of the United Steel Workers of America (USWA) and Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical, Energy Employees (PACE). According to Buddy Beck, vice president of PACE Local 8-578, his local recently collected \$750 for the Co-Op miners, and another PACE local carried out a plant-gate collection that netted almost \$1,500 over two days. Refinery workers from four PACE locals were represented at the picket line. A USWA and a PACE local are each contributing \$200 toward a bus from Salt Lake City to Huntington for a solidarity rally there on February 7.

Nicole Jones from KRCL radio, which works with Utah’s Jobs With Justice, is backing the miners. She came with a

group that waved signs reading, “Support the Co-Op Miners,” and “Workers Rights=Human Rights.” Jones said her group supports this strike “because any immigrant worker deserves respect and safe working conditions. It is about time someone said this, and these workers are organizing to demand these rights.” Four locations throughout the city serve as drop off points for donations as part of a food drive by the radio station. Jones explained the volume of donations continues to be high through the efforts of “some people who don’t like the Kingstons, others who want to support the miners, and others who are union members who want to help workers trying to organize a union.”

Jesús Salazar, another miner and a leader of the strike, held a sign that read in big letters, “UMWA, Yes!” Salazar invited all present to reserve seats with Utah’s Jobs With Justice to go to Huntington for the February 7 solidarity rally. The miners leafleted the crowd with a list of their demands and an invitation to their next event.

Later that evening, Salt Lake City television stations Channel 13 and Channel 2 broadcast reports on the miners picket. *The Salt Lake Tribune* and *Deseret News* also covered the event.

Headquarters building appeal at \$180,000

Continued from front page by the post office. “The building where the headquarters will be located is a dual entrance building,” said Britton. “The post office,” however, “does not recognize both entries for mail delivery as we had originally thought, and some checks were returned as a result. For this reason, less than \$6,000 was received last week. Please send your checks again.” (See correct address in box below.)

Britton, along with Dave Prince from New York, met with a number of supporters of the appeal in San Diego and Los Angeles during the second week of January.

“A supporter of the fund in Waco, Texas, told his aunt in San Diego about the project, which she had been following in the *Militant*,” he said. As a result, she made a \$100 contribution. “She was ready to make a contribution when we met with her, but appreciated seeing the souvenir program from the December 15 public meeting that launched the fund.” She looked through the booklet, which includes the photo signature from *Rebellion Teamster*, commented on the importance of the 1934 Teamster strikes, and asked for a copy of the program. In her 80s today, this SWP supporter said her father was a participant in the first Russian revolution.

Another San Diego area supporter increased her contribution by \$150 to \$225 during the discussion, said Britton. “She had pledged \$50 based on a phone call several weeks ago when we first raised the idea of a trip to San Diego, but had sent in a check for \$75. This is one of many examples of people increasing their contributions when they hear more about our needs,” Britton said, “including installing new double-pane windows on the new premises now as opposed to later.”

The construction crew has just laid down bright, colorful tile in the kitchen and entryway of the new headquarters, said Chris Hoepfner, one of the organizers of the construction crew. The plumbing for the new kitchen is progressing, as is the sheetrocking of the walls (dry walling). There will be a lot of windows in the internal walls of the offices in the new premises, and the glass will be delivered from the manufacturer this

week for installation, he noted.

On Friday, January 16, crew members participated in a second lively class on “The Myth of Women’s Inferiority” organized by the New York SWP branch. It was part of a series on *Problems of Women’s Liberation*, a Pathfinder book by Evelyn Reed.

Party supporters have organized several evening meals for the crew that have provided delicious dinners at a modest cost to help reduce the expenses for the volunteers’ stay in New York.

Volunteers have come from California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Texas, Washington state, and Washington, D.C. Workers on the crew with construction skills are training those with less experience on how to do a professional job. More volunteers are welcome, Hoepfner said. Those with experience in painting, electrical work, and carpentry are especially needed in order to stay on schedule, as some volunteers go back to their jobs after a stint on the crew, he emphasized.

On January 18 several crew members took time out to talk to the *Militant* about the volunteer project.

Thanasis Kostopoulos, a Queens, New York, construction contractor, has been a great asset to the project, volunteering several times a week and putting his skills to work, helping to organize crews. “I met the Socialist Workers Party in D.C. at a protest march,” he told the *Militant*. “I was handed a lot of leaflets and a fellow who said he was from Brooklyn handed me the *Militant*. I read a little of it and I agreed with everything I read. So I signed up to get a subscription. I went to some forums and meetings.

“Chris Hoepfner called me recently at home and told me about this new project. Because I’m in the construction business, they asked if I had any ideas and pointers,” Kostopoulos said. “I had helped on the previous temporary office and knew the kind of work they could do and the help they would need. It’s been enjoyable. The fact that many volunteers are not skilled could be a problem, but not here.”

Jorge García, a 21-year old Cuban-born worker from Atlanta, joined the crew for the long weekend. “I found out about Pathfinder through a search on the computer,” he said in an interview. “Before that I didn’t know there was a bookstore that sold communist books by Marx, Engels, and Lenin, and on the Cuban revolution. I came to a meeting in this space on December 14. A lot has been

done since. We are all volunteers working together,” said García, who has been assigned to work on the plumbing.

Pete Musser, a Pittsburgh Young Socialist, joined the crew January 8 and will be staying several weeks. “I’ve learned a bunch of new things working on the crew that is installing the cable to be used for computers and telephones,” he said. “I had never done low voltage wiring before. I now know a few things about wiring, taping, being disciplined, and functioning as part of a team.”

Musser said he has especially liked the class series being organized by the New York SWP branch. “The class series in New York on *Problems of Women’s Liberation* have been very good,” he said. “The discussions have been excellent. It’s not just young comrades or older comrades participating, you get the spectrum of views.”

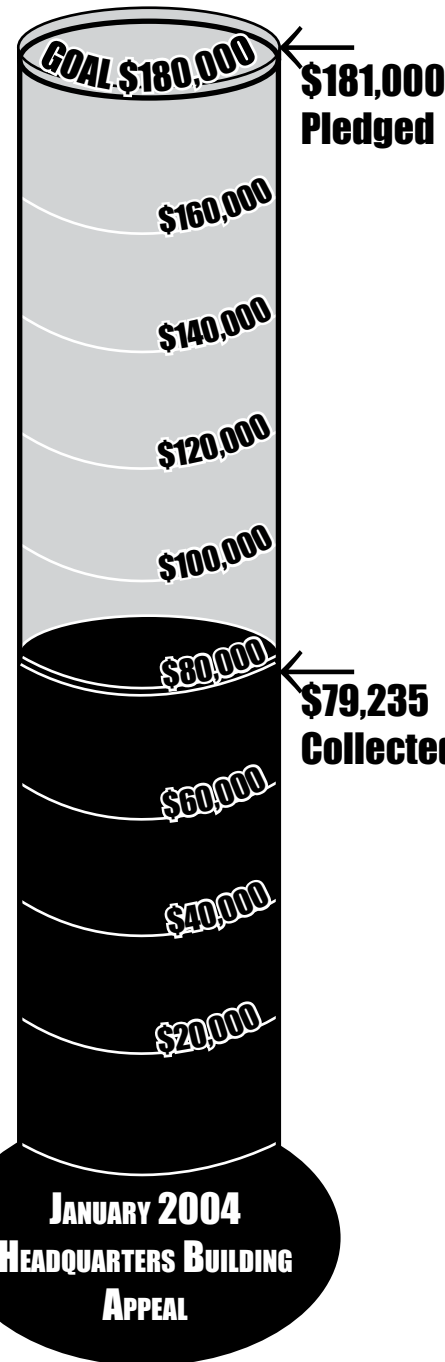
Michael Ortega, 17, a senior at a Newark, New Jersey, high school, has asked to join the Young Socialists. “I decided to commit every Sunday to helping out on the construction,” he said. “Everything I do here, I have to learn here first. I’ve done framing, sheet-rocking, insulation, and other work.”

Another volunteer, Claudio Sánchez, said, “We have made real progress on the bookstore here and now we are moving the wall to put up a coat rack that will extend past the bathrooms. We had to remove the sheetrock and wires to do it, but we are making real progress. After Floyd Fowler left to return to his job in Atlanta, I replaced him in heading this up. When people leave they are confident that their relief will finish the job well.”

Sánchez, a construction worker in New York, decided January 20 to volunteer full time for the rest of the project.

Chessie Molano from San Francisco was working with Willie Cotton from Atlanta on framing a wall that will be soundproofed. “It’s easier to build a whole wall from scratch than to take one that is partially built and work with it,” she said. “I had a week off because of a garment plant shutdown and decided to stay. We could not organize this kind of project without people taking time off work.”

“This is the first time I have done volunteer work,” said Maribel Sánchez, also from New York. “Everything is new to me and very satisfying. Today I worked on securing the tiles in the kitchen. I agreed to come and help because I enjoy working with comrades and agree with socialist principles.”



Correct address for appeal
306 W. 37th St., 10th floor
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Please send your checks to this address

1957: Cop murder of Cuban revolutionary leader Frank País sparked mass explosion

Published below is a selection from *Aldabonazo: Inside the Cuban Revolutionary Underground, 1952–58*, by Armando Hart, a new book by Pathfinder Press that was just published in late January in both English and Spanish editions. This account of the struggle to overthrow the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship led by the July 26 Movement and the Rebel Army, headed by Fidel Castro, is now accessible for the first time ever to English-speaking readers. It recounts the events from the perspective of revolutionary cadres organizing in the cities.

Armando Hart was a central organizer of the urban underground and is one of the historic leaders of the Cuban Revolution.

The *Militant* is publishing a series of selections from the book. In the firsthand report below, Vilma Espín, a leader of the July 26 Movement in Santiago de Cuba in Oriente province, describes the police murder of Frank País on July 30, 1957, and the popular outpouring in Santiago in response to that crime. País was the central leader of the movement in Oriente and the main organizer of the Nov. 30, 1956, uprising in Santiago. The revolt was timed to support the landing on the country's southeastern coast by Castro and 81 other revolutionary combatants who had traveled from Mexico on the yacht *Granma* to launch the revolutionary war against the dictatorship. País also carried responsibility for the clandestine work of the July 26 Movement in cities across Cuba.

In an extensive manifesto issued in November 1957 and published elsewhere in the book, Fidel Castro, writing for the National Directorate of the July 26 Movement, paid tribute to “the formidable mass support demonstrated at the time of the death of our unforgettable Frank País.” Castro observed that throughout the Rebel Army's base of operations in the Sierra Maestra mountain range of eastern Cuba, the revolutionary movement could count on “a people organized and tempered by war,” as well as “a powerful and disciplined organization throughout the country.”

The revolutionary war culminated in a popular insurrection leading to the overthrow of the dictatorship on Jan. 1, 1959. Workers and farmers took political power and opened the door to the first socialist revolution in the Americas. Vilma Espín is today the national president of the Federation of Cuban Women. Copyright © 2004 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission. Material in brackets has been added by the book's editors. The section of the book titled, “Swift Action that Saved Armando Hart's Life,” referred to in a footnote below, was printed in the Jan. 12, 2004, *Militant*. The “action in Cienfuegos” referred to near the end was an uprising in the naval base in Cienfuegos on Sept. 5, 1957 that was brutally repressed by the dictatorship.



BY VILMA ESPÍN

Ten days before his death...Frank asked me to take over coordination of the province so that he could dedicate himself to actions on a nationwide basis and devote some time to writing and studying.

Following that I had contact with Frank



Funeral march of 60,000 for Frank País in Santiago de Cuba, July 31, 1957. The popular response to the cops' cold-blooded murder of País was “spontaneous, very powerful,” wrote Vilma Espín. “From that moment on the city stopped.”

only by phone. After he left the house where I last saw him, he had moved to another; but a pregnant woman lived there, and she became very nervous out of concern he might be caught. He worried about this very much, and he went to a house that he himself had once rejected because there had already been an attempt to capture a *compañero* there. The *compañero* had managed to escape, but the house had no back exit. It belonged to a very trustworthy person—Pujol—but the house itself was a mousetrap. Frank phoned me two days before, asking me to make an important contact for an operation to send a *compañero* abroad to obtain weapons. When I called him later, he was no longer at home and he did not call me. Nor did he call the following day—much to my surprise because he used to call as soon as he changed houses so that we could be in contact with him. On July 30 I was hiding in a house near the zoo. Around four o'clock I got a call; they told me there was a big stir in the area where Pujol lived, but I didn't know that Frank was there. He had just phoned me twice. I had immediately started asking him why he hadn't called, and telling him the result of the tasks he had given me, but I talked very fast. Perhaps he was going to tell me something but I spoke first. He let me tell him everything, and hung up. About ten minutes later he called again, but I can't remember what he said to me—I think it was about the same mission he had given me. At that moment he was about to leave, and he did not tell me anything about what was happening there, either.

After that, contacts we had at the Telephone Company called me; they told me there was shooting—I even heard the shots in the distance—and that someone was being chased on the roofs. I told them to inform everybody so that they would go there and see if they could help. . . .

They called me and asked if I wanted to listen in on Salas Cañizares's call to Tabernilla, if I remember correctly. I listened,

and heard them say: “Hey, chief, I'm going to put on the guy who won——.” I don't remember exactly what he said, some dirty word. “Here's Sariol,” and the latter said: “Are the three thousand mine, chief? We just killed Frank País.” And right then the *compañeros* hung up on me. Amat cut me off from the call when he realized what they were saying, out of fear that I might speak and they could hear.¹

It was terrible. We started to call around and found out the details. René Ramos Latour (*Daniel*) had been there shortly before to coordinate a task. He found Frank very depressed, because it was one month since they had killed Josué [Frank's brother]. He then left. Later came commander Villa—Demetrio Montseny—with a pickup truck. He wanted to take Frank with him, because they were already being surrounded. But Frank had already spoken with Pujol and Pujol was coming with a taxi to pick him up at the corner. So Frank said, “No, I'd better go with Pujol who is already on his way here. You go first.” Pujol was not living in clandestinity. Then, when Pujol arrived he went up to the house to look for Frank. That cost him time, and as they were coming out of the house they were caught.

We have since more or less reconstructed what happened next, from Ñeña—Pujol's wife—and from Raulito, who was thirteen years old at the time. They were there and saw it all. They say that when Frank and Pujol came out, they were beaten and put into a car. Ñeña started running after the car, and the whole neighborhood came out too. The police realized that if they did not kill them quickly, they would not be able to kill them later—the same thing had already happened to them the last time. When they reached the alley, two and a half blocks down, the cops took them out and killed them right there.

That same afternoon we learned that it had been a woman who had fingered them—a mistress of Laureano Ibarra, who had seen Frank enter Pujol's place. They immediately got this woman out of the house and sent her to the home of a girl we knew from the university, the daughter of one of Laureano Ibarra's henchmen known as Black Martínez. It was all very fast. From there she was put on a ship that was in port and sent directly to Santo Domingo.

As part of the operation, [the police] had even brought the guy who had identified Frank once before at the garrison, someone named Randich. They had been classmates at the Teachers College. This Randich was brought to identify Frank after the woman said she had seen him. They brought Randich there and he was the one who identified Frank. So the police immediately surrounded the place. We later brought Randich to justice. But that was a

terrible afternoon for all of us.

We immediately phoned Frank's mother and his fiancée, América Domitro, so they could go right away to claim the body.

Frank was lying in the middle of the street and all the people were gathering there. The area was cordoned off. The popular response was tremendous. Frank was dead and Santiago de Cuba was boiling. That same afternoon, the owners of establishments and people from the Civic Resistance began calling me to say that the people wanted to shut things down and go out on strike—bosses and workers, everybody. And indeed everyone came to agreement and began shutting things down.

At last I got [Frank's mother] Rosario on the phone. I told her: “You have to go down and fight any way you can, with your teeth—anyway you can—so that they hand over Frank's body to you.” So then Rosario, who was a woman of great courage, went down there with enormous forcefulness.

He had already been taken to the coroner's when she arrived, because at first the people wanted to get close to the body and there was pushing and shoving with the cops. The popular response was spontaneous, very powerful, and from that moment on the city stopped—the people just flocked to Frank's body. Then the body was handed over. The police acted intelligently at that moment; what they did was to withdraw all the public forces to their barracks while the people crowded together around América's house, where the body was laid out in state.

There they dressed him in his uniform, because Frank had two well-defined callings, but I would say that the first one was that of a soldier, and the second that of a teacher. I insisted that they dress him in uniform with his beret on his chest—because he liked the beret very much and had used it for some time—and that a white rose be placed on top of the beret and the July 26 armband. In addition, the three-star rank corresponding to the new plan of ranks that he was preparing to send to Fidel.

The funeral procession was a demonstration by the entire people. Workplaces closed. There were no police anywhere; the whole city was taken over by the people. Those who were not going to the burial threw flowers as he passed by. There was the case of the men who belonged to the navy who waited for the funeral procession and stood at attention as it went by. These were the ones who, less than two months later, participated in the action at Cienfuegos (this I learned afterwards). . . .

The next morning [the day after the murder of País] U.S. Ambassador [Earl] Smith arrived, I don't know for what reason. I think the visit by him and his wife was meant to give an appearance of normality on the island, or something like that.

We immediately organized a demonstration of women in mourning who were to march to Céspedes Park facing City Hall, and make a lot of noise. Everybody dressed in black and went there. They clashed with the police. Gloria Cuadras bit Salas Cañizares on his finger—almost tore it off. They were all attacked with water hoses. Nuria García was roughed up. Most of these people could not go to the burial because they were arrested, but they managed to make a huge scandal.

The ambassador's wife, who was “unaccustomed” to watching such things so close up, was upset to see the police beating the women, who were shouting, “Murderers!” Later in the afternoon women went to the funeral. There was a situation of very great emotion and indignation. It was genuine. Frank had enormous prestige. He was head of the underground action movement of the entire island, not just in Oriente.²

¹For information on the July 26 Movement's monitoring of telephone lines in Santiago de Cuba, see page 268, “Swift Action that Saved Armando Hart's Life.”

²From the magazine *Santiago*, June-September 1975.

New from
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Aldabonazo: Inside the Cuban Revolutionary Underground, 1952–58

by Armando Hart



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UK dairy farmers hold off cut to their income

BY PAUL DAVIES

LONDON—Farmers' representatives have said yes to an increase in the price of milk offered by Dairy Crest, the largest milk processor in the United Kingdom. The offer followed a series of protests and blockades at Dairy Crest plants and supermarket distribution centers in autumn of last year, as farmers fought to defend their livelihoods in the face of a ruinous price squeeze. The demonstrations involved thousands of farmers, including many who were not dairy farmers, traveling many miles to throw their weight behind a collective effort to stave off the dairy bosses' attempts to drive down prices.

Dairy Crest's offer includes a price rise of 2 pence per liter for milk supplied for cheese processing, but not for liquid milk (UK penny = U.S. 1.8 cents). The company's owners have made it conditional on other cheese processors upping their prices. To date, Glanbia and McLelland, the UK's third largest cheese company, have also agreed to the price increase.

Dairy Crest's decision was made in late November, following a meeting where for the first time three farmers organizations—the National Farmers Union, its counterpart in Scotland, and Farmers for Action (FFA)—joined forces to meet with major retailers.

The FFA was a prime mover behind the protests. Chairman David Handley described the farmers' efforts in an interview with *Farmers Weekly*. "During recent demonstrations," he said, "members from the Isle of Bute [in Scotland] crossed by ferry to the mainland, protested and then paid to hire a boat to get home in time for morning milking. They then returned on the ferry to collect their cars. That is real commitment to our industry. There was tremendous support from non-milk producers. The camaraderie on the picket line was terrific. People who had been depressed had their spirits lifted because they knew they were doing something to get a better deal."

The response to the deal among farmers and their representatives has been mixed. Scottish National Farmers Union (NFUS) president John Kinnaird said, "I believe the announcement marks an important breakthrough and must now pave the way for further positive price developments in coming weeks."

"We have yet to see anything from this offer," said Youleite Parkes in a phone interview January 3. She and her husband Peter, the FFA coordinator for the county of Surrey in England, are dairy farmers in Reigate, a town in Surrey, and have participated in recent pickets and blockades of Dairy Crest plants in the area. "Many farmers in the southeast produce liquid milk so they will not benefit," Youleite Parkes said. "Consumers are paying more and the dairies and supermarkets are pocketing that rise. We will negotiate in January to see if we can get a rise in the price of liquid milk," she added, "but we are definitely ready for more action if we don't."

This was confirmed by Bruce Horn, a beef farmer and the FFA coordinator for the county of Hampshire in southern England. "Our members are used to taking action now and they have been asking when will we go out again. I'm not very happy with the offer. Many dairy farmers in Hampshire supply dairy co-ops, not Dairy Crest, and will not see anything from this offer." Two co-ops, First Milk and Dairy Farmers of Britain, have implemented price increases substantially below that of Dairy Crest, while the Milk Link co-op has made no increase at all.

Following the farmers' actions, the British Parliament announced in late November that it would hold an inquiry into milk pricing. "There is now a running theme that the supermarkets have farmers in an armlock over farm gate prices and this is none more so than for our dairy farmers," said Liberal Democrat Party spokesperson Andrew George.

The recent protests have been a reaction to the long-term decline in farmers' returns—in particular, the percentage of the retail milk price that they receive. In 1995 farmers were getting 47 percent of the liquid milk price, but by 2000 this had fallen to 35 percent.

Some farmers have cranked up output in an effort to compensate. November milk production was the second highest on record. "Some of the bigger farmers are able to increase production," explained Bruce Horn, "but it is not going to help us. Individuals think that they can get a good deal, but the majority of us cannot. We have to stick together."

To expand production, farmers often have to buy a production quota from the govern-



Farmers for Action

Dairy farmers protest October 16 outside Dairy Crest plant in Nuneaton, England, to demand increase in payout for milk. The company has proposed a 2 pence price rise per liter, to apply to milk supplied for cheese production.

ment to overcome state-imposed limits on production that are used to try to control prices, regardless of the human need for milk or other farm products.

"Only the best-off farmers can afford to buy quotas," said Youleite Parkes. "It costs 9–10 pence a liter of milk to lease someone else's quota, or 20–27 pence a liter to buy a quota. We cannot do that and hope to cover the costs of production, so it is not an option for us."

Horn noted that "we also face other challenges—the government is threatening to bring in a new tax on the use of pesticides." Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown

raised the proposal in December. "They claim that this is being done to protect the environment," said Horn, "but all that will happen is that farmers will have to pay more for the use of pesticides and more money will be transferred from the farmer to the government, alongside all the other taxes that they have introduced."

Further negotiations are due to take place over milk prices. "It is now vital that we maintain the momentum that we have built up over the past two months to secure further increases in liquid milk prices," said Terrig Morgan, chairman of the NFU's dairy section.

EU suit highlights 'old,' 'new' Europe division

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

The divisions among the imperialist powers in the European Union (EU) surfaced again January 13, when the EU's executive body announced a lawsuit against the 15 member states for suspending rules that would have required the governments of France and Germany to make deep budget cuts to bring their deficits within EU fiscal strictures. This will be the third consecutive year that the two biggest euro-zone countries have flouted the rules of the 1996 Growth and Stability Pact that they were instrumental in establishing and imposing upon weaker powers.

A majority of the 20 members of the European Commission voted to appeal to the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg to overturn the November decision by EU finance ministers not to impose sanctions on Paris and Berlin for maintaining budget deficits of more than 3 percent of gross domestic product. "This had to be done," said a spokesman for EU monetary affairs commissioner Pedro Sobles. "It is our role as guardian of the treaty to ensure

that treaty provisions are upheld." The European Commission is asking the court to put this case on the "fast track" and make a decision within six months rather than the standard two years.

At the heart of the dispute are deep divisions between competing states allied with the Franco-German bloc that has dominated the EU, on the one hand, or with its main competitor across the Atlantic—Washington, on the other.

At the November 25 finance ministers' meeting the representatives of Austria, Finland, Netherlands, and Spain formed the minority in voting against giving Paris and Berlin more time to bring their deficits into line.

Collapse of constitutional conference

The EU executive's decision to bring the case to court comes just one month after a December summit set for establishing a European constitution collapsed amid divisions over voting powers. The governments of Spain and Poland led the opposition to a French-German proposal that would have

altered the current voting formula that gives countries with smaller populations almost equal voting weight as those with substantially larger populations.

Madrid and Warsaw, a prospective EU member, have been at the head of the opposition bloc in the European Union against the "old Europe" dominated by Paris and Berlin. They, along with other European governments, have aligned themselves more and more with Washington—a bloc which U.S. defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld took delight last year in calling "New Europe."

The commission states that its suit concerns "purely and simply procedural matters" and it is only requesting a legal decision. While the court is mulling over the case in the months ahead, the European Union will expand to 25 members, hold Europe-wide elections, go another round in its debate over a constitution, choose a new commission president to replace Romano Prodi of Italy, and discuss whether to begin membership negotiations with Turkey.

Paris and Berlin are in no mood to accept fines for violating EU rules as their economies skirt with recession—or go over the line. Official statistics show that Germany's gross domestic product shrank by 0.1 percent in 2003, its weakest annual performance in a decade. The sharp rise in the value of the euro against the dollar, which has been reaching record highs almost every day, has been a growing problem for European exporters. The European Central Bank president called the impact of the euro's rise "brutal."

"Scores of Germany's low-margin, export-dependent manufacturers—carmakers, tool manufacturers and electronics groups—are beginning to sweat," noted London's *Financial Times*, "as the euro, already up by more than 20 per cent over the past year, stampedes ahead towards \$1.30."

French prime minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin wrote in the London daily that the stability pact, which Paris had defended before it fell on hard times, "is still too insensitive to economic cycles." He rhapsodized that Europe "is first and foremost a state of mind, a community of souls," and then called on other representatives of finance capital in the EU "to point out the damage wrought by the instability of the dollar and euro exchange rates."

Tokyo sends first combat troops since 1945

Continued from front page

Herald Tribune.

Following Japan's defeat in World War II, Washington imposed a constitution on the country that restricted the capabilities of its armed forces to defense purposes. A provision of that constitution expressly prohibited deployment of the Japanese military abroad.

Such restrictions severely weaken the ability of the Japanese rulers to use their army effectively abroad. To that end, Japan's prime minister Junichiro Koizumi has said that he wants the Self Defense Forces (SDF)—the official name for the Japanese military—to become a full-fledged army and that his party would push to revise Japan's constitution by 2005.

A defense ministry outline in 1995 expanded SDF's priorities. The report came after some bourgeois forces in Japan accused the government of practicing "checkbook diplomacy" during the 1991 U.S.-led war against Iraq. The Japanese government was the biggest contributor to Washington for its 1991 war on Iraq, forking over more than

\$10 billion. Since then, Japanese forces have taken part in UN "peacekeeping" missions in East Timor and Cambodia.

Japanese rulers are also undertaking a radical restructuring of the capabilities and overall structure of the Self Defense Forces in line with similar changes taking place in the U.S. and British military. The Japanese military has introduced two missile-defense systems from the United States. In a shift away from a primarily defensive posture the Japanese rulers are expected to cut the number of tanks the SDF has and increase spending "to address missile and terrorist threats," reported the *Tribune*.

An advance group of 39 Japanese soldiers arrived in Kuwait January 17 and were quartered at Camp Virginia, a U.S. military base near Kuwait City. The remainder of the force—an estimated 600 ground troops and 400 sailors and air force personnel—could start leaving Japan by the end of January. After some training at Camp Virginia they are expected to begin deployment inside Iraq by early February.

The Japanese government has gone to

great pains to portray the deployment in strictly humanitarian terms, insisting that their task will be to help purify local water supplies, rebuild schools, and provide medical care in southern Iraq.

The troops, however, will carry arms and Tokyo has devoted a lot of time training the soldiers in special "rules of engagement," according to the *Tribune*. They have also been studying Arabic, the Koran, and learning about Islamic religious holidays.

The Japanese defense minister told *Japan Today* that under the rules British forces in Iraq should not expect help from Japanese troops even if they are under fire. The *London Times* quoted him as saying Japanese troops headed for Iraq will be prohibited from helping coalition forces under attack because of legal restrictions.

China's *People's Daily*, reported the news of the Japanese military deployment critically, calling it a violation of Japan's constitution. "Short of a sincere apology for its wartime crimes, the country's deployment of troops in Iraq has caused other Asian countries to have misgivings," it said.

‘Evolution applies to social organization, too’

Printed below are excerpts from *The Long View of History*, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for January, by noted Marxist George Novack. The pamphlet contains two talks given by Novack in 1955: “How humanity climbed to civilization” and “The main course of American history and its next stage.”

They offer a popularized sketch of the key line of evolution from fish—the first backboneed species—to humans, from savagery to civilization, and from Indian life to contemporary capitalism in the United States. The talks were designed as an introduction to a study of the march of humankind from the viewpoint of scientific socialism.

Novack aimed to show that the same principles of evolution that were uncovered with each new fossil record of natural life were indispensable tools in understanding

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BY GEORGE NOVACK

I propose first to trace the main line of human development, from our remote animal ancestors to the present, when humanity has become lord of the earth but not yet master of its own creations, not to mention its own social system. After that, I will deal with the central course of evolution in that specific segment of society that occupies the bulk of North America and represents the most developed form of capitalist society.

I will try to show not only how our national history is related to world development but also how we, collectively and individually, fit into the picture. This is a broad and bold undertaking, a sort of jet-propelled journey through the stratosphere of world history. It is forced upon us by the urge to grasp the whole vast spread of events and to understand our specific place within them, as well as by the very dynamic of scientific theory in sociology, which has its highest expression in Marxism. The movement based upon scientific socialism, which prepares most energetically for the future, likewise must probe most deeply into the past....

We can single out four critical turning points in the timetable of evolution. The first was the origin of our planet about three or four billion years ago. The second was the emergence of life in the form of simple one-celled sea organisms about two and a half billion years ago. (These are only approximate but commonly accepted dates at the present time.) Third was the appearance of the first backboneed animals about four to five hundred million years ago. Last was the creation of mankind, within the past million years or so....

It required four to five hundred million years to create the biological conditions necessary for the generation of the first subhumans. This was not brought about through anyone's forethought or foresight, or in accord with any plan, or with the aim of realizing some preconceived goal. It happened, we may say, as the lawful outcome of a series of blind and accidental



Milltown in England during rise of industrial capitalism. The development of capitalism was “the mightiest accelerator of the productive forces,” says George Novack.

developments in the forms of natural life, spurred forward in the struggle for survival, which eventually culminated in the production of a special kind of primate equipped with the capacities for acquiring more than animal powers.

At this juncture, about a million or so years ago, the most radical of all the transmutations of life on this planet took place. The emergence of mankind embodied something totally different which became the root of a unique line of development. What was this? It was the passage from animal separatism to human collectivism, from purely biological modes of behavior to the use of acquired social powers.

Where did these added artificial powers come from that have marked off emerging mankind from all other animal species, elevated our species above the other primates, and made mankind into the dominant order of life? Our dominance is indisputable because we command the power to destroy ourselves and all other forms of life, not to speak of changing them.

The fundamentally new powers mankind acquired were the powers of production, of securing the means of sustenance through the use of tools and joint labor, and sharing the results with one another....

In its evolution to our own century, civilized society can be divided into three main epochs: slavery, feudalism, and capitalism. Each of these is marked off by

the special way in which the ruling propertied class at the head of the social setup manages to extract the surplus wealth upon which it lives from the laboring mass who directly create it. This entire period covers little more than the past five to six thousand years....

As a result of a long list of technological and other social advances, merging with a sequence of exceptional historical circumstances, feudalized Europe became the nursery for the next great stage of class society, capitalism. How and why did capitalism originate?

The epoch-making innovation upon which capitalism rested was the institution of working for wages as the

dominant relation of production. Most of you have gone into the labor market, to an employment agency or personnel office, to get a buyer for your labor power. The employer buys this power at prevailing wage rates by the hour, day, or week and then applies it under his supervision to produce commodities that his company subsequently sells at a profit. That profit is derived from the fact that wage workers produce more value than the capitalist pays for their labor.

Up to the twentieth century, this mechanism for pumping surplus labor out of the working masses and transferring the surpluses of wealth they create to the personal credit of the capitalist was the mightiest accelerator of the productive forces and the expansion of civilization. As a distinct economic system, capitalism is only about 450 years old; it has conquered the world and journeyed from dawn to twilight in that time. This is a short life-span compared to savagery, which stretched over a million years or more, or to barbarism, which prevailed for four thousand to five thousand years. Obviously, the processes of social transformation have been considerably speeded up in modern times....

Capitalism has produced many things, good and bad, in the course of its evolution. But the most vital and valuable of all the social forces it has created is the industrial working class.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

social development and human history as well. “Contradictory as it is,” Novack explained, “many scholars and scientists who take the order of evolution of organic species for granted, stubbornly resist the extension of the same lawfulness to the changing species of social organization. They will not admit that there has been, or can be, any definite and discernible sequence in the social development of mankind analogous to the steps in the progress from the invertebrates to the fish, through the reptile and mammalian creatures, up to the advent of mankind.”

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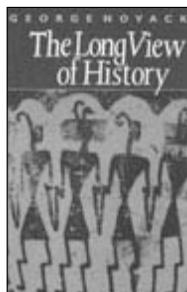
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The fight against repression in Latin America

Ten-year record of the U.S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners

Printed below is an article from the spring 1976 issue of the *USLA Reporter*, the newsletter of the U.S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners, known as USLA. Mirta Vidal, who died January 10 (see article in last week's issue), served on the staff of USLA in 1973–75 and for a time was a national director of the organization. USLA was founded in 1966 in response to intensified repression by U.S.-backed regimes in Latin America against militant trade unionists and revolutionaries. USLA's work, chronicled in the article below, centered on the defense of Latin American political prisoners regardless of their political affiliation and views.

At its founding meeting in 1966, speakers on the platform who agreed to be executive board members included Paul Sweezy, editor of *Monthly Review*; John Gerassi, author of *The Great Fear in Latin America*; Father Felix McGowan; Catarino Garza, Socialist Workers Party candidate for governor of New York; and Joseph Hansen, editor of the *Militant*. The author of this article, Mike Kelly, was the executive secretary of USLA.



BY MIKE KELLY

1976 marks USLA's tenth year defending victims of political persecution in Latin America. Our quiet anniversary stands in sharp contrast to the hypocritical hoopla of President Ford and other government figures over the Bicentennial. While they invoke the democratic heritage of the American Revolution of 1776, we defend the victims of undemocratic regimes they have helped into power in Latin America.

Guatemala, Brazil, Uruguay; La Banda, AAA, White Hand; Tres Alamos, the Dark Fortress, La Victoria, Pinochet, Banzer, Somoza—the countries, the death squads, the prisons, the dictators all bear a “Made in USA” stamp. That's why we have always felt that people in the United States have a special obligation to defend political prisoners in Latin America.

The Dominican labor leaders that USLA helped free were victimized by a regime placed in power through an invasion by the U.S. Marines in 1965. And U.S. encouragement of the [1973] coup in Chile and the continuing aid to the Junta make it especially incumbent on us to aid the victims of that regime.

It was this feeling of responsibility for the victims of political persecution in Latin America that led a very diverse group of people to form USLA in 1966.

Since that time USLA has utilized a variety of activities to call attention to those it is defending and to the repressive conditions in various countries. USLA-sponsored speaking tours by Latin Americanists John Gerassi, Richard Fagen, Ralph Della Cava, Richard Falk, James Petras, and others have reached tens of thousands of people face-to-face and many more through the media.

Our first tour, in early 1967, saw John Gerassi addressing meetings of up to 1200 on the West Coast. That tour focused on the cases of Victor Rico Galan, a writer for the Mexican magazine *Siempre*, and Adolfo Gilly, an Argentine journalist, both of whom were imprisoned in Mexico, and Hugo Blanco, the Peruvian peasant leader who was then facing the threat of a death sentence in his country.

Some speakers have themselves been victims of torture and imprisonment. Amy Conger, an art history teacher who was arrested in Chile at the time of the coup, and Mary Elizabeth Harding, who was a victim of the Banzer regime in Bolivia, both shared their experiences with audiences at meetings we sponsored. Marjorie and Tom Melville, who experienced the repression in Guatemala firsthand, spoke for USLA and served as its executive secretaries in 1973.

Other speakers have been outstanding defenders of democratic rights in their own countries. Argentine Socialist Juan Carlos Coral, for instance, was under a death threat from the Alianza Anticomunista Argentina when he toured this country for USLA in 1975.

We have also sponsored tours by people such as former CIA operative Victor Marchetti, and Harald Edelstam, the Swedish Ambassador to Chile at the time of the



Militant/Charles Ostrofsky
Juan Carlos Coral, leader of Argentine Socialist Workers Party (PST), speaking in defense of Latin American political prisoners March 9, 1975, in Chicago during U.S. tour sponsored by USLA. The meeting was attacked by 50 right-wing Cubans.

coup. Some tours have had to be cancelled, however, when the United States government refused to grant visas to our projected speakers, as happened with Argentine Daniel Zadunaisky and more recently with Hugo Blanco.

USLA has also sponsored hundreds of picket-lines and demonstrations in its ten years of activity. Worldwide demonstrations, including those USLA helped organize, have saved thousands of prisoners from torture in Chile, to cite one example.

Countless people, including members of Congress, film stars, labor, church, Black, Chicano, and student leaders have signed USLA-circulated telegrams, letters, mass petitions, and newspaper ads.

This fall, for example, members of Congress such as Hubert Humphrey, Bella Abzug, Michael Harrington, Ron Dellums, and labor leaders Leonard Woodcock, Cesar Chavez, Arnold Miller, and Patrick Gorman have supported USLA campaigns.

One of the most important jobs USLA sets for itself is the dissemination of printed materials on Latin America in this country.

To that end we have published a wide variety of educational materials. Our first pamphlet, published in 1967, was entitled *Hugo Blanco Must Not Die*, based on a speech by Andre Gunder Frank. In 1974 we published our first book, *Chile's Days of Terror*. Containing eyewitness accounts of the carnage accompanying the right-wing coup, the book has since been translated and published in Japanese and French.

Our most important publication, of course, is the REPORTER, now beginning its ninth year. The REPORTER often provides information not available from other sources, such as the documents smuggled out of Chilean women's prisons in 1974.

In the recent past the REPORTER, which has been scheduled to come out bi-monthly, has been somewhat irregular in its frequency of appearance due to recurring financial and staff shortages. Since it has been coming out approximately four times a year, we are recognizing our limitations and are changing the publication schedule to quarterly, starting with this issue.

This year also marks the tenth anniversary of USLA's on-going financial crisis. What we have been able to accomplish, and what we have been able to take on, has always been determined to a large extent by the available funds.

Our staff takes great pride in being very tight with money. We don't waste it, and we work it to death. But our permanent financial crisis affects us in more ways than might be readily apparent. In addition to limiting what USLA can contemplate doing, the constant need to do fundraising means that precious staff time is diverted from organizing the defense of political prisoners to raising funds.

Our biggest single fundraising event did not benefit USLA itself. It was a Chile Emergency Art Exhibition in New York, at

which more than \$30,000 was raised for refugee aid.

But the bulk of the funds for USLA's functioning comes, year in and year out, from small contributions from our members and supporters. It is the five and ten dollar contributions that have kept USLA going for the last ten years.

It has been these modest contributions that have enabled the committee to follow cases over the course of years. To cite a few examples, for ten years we have been around to defend Hugo Blanco when the need arose. We helped save him from the executioner in Peru, saw him through exiles in Mexico, Argentina, and Chile, through his rescue from the junta by Swedish Ambassador Edelstam and into another exile in Sweden and a European speaking tour for Amnesty International, to his recent return to his native Peru as a beneficiary of an amnesty from that country's new rulers.

Similarly, we have covered the case of five Puerto Rican nationalist prisoners for

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—



February 2, 1979

An international campaign of protest has won the release of American human-rights activist Mike Kelly from the jails of the Peruvian military dictatorship.

Kelly, executive director of the U.S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners (USLA), was released from the State Security prison in Lima on January 19. He was then handed an “invitation to leave Peru,” which he had little choice but to accept. But he was not formally expelled from the country, and there will be no charges pending against him in Peru.

Kelly was arrested January 9 while taking photographs in downtown Lima. He was held at the State Security prison along with some 700 Peruvian trade unionists, political activists, and journalists arrested between January 6 and 11. In all, more than 1,000 persons were detained as the military sought to head off a three-day general strike.

Upon learning of the mass arrests in Peru and the detention of its executive secretary, USLA launched an emergency campaign. A picket line was held January 17 at Peru's UN mission in New York.

As of January 19 twenty-seven persons were still being held at State Security in Lima. At least fifteen of these were expected to be transferred to the jails of the Callao Military Zone—a branch of the armed forces notorious for the torture of prisoners.

Among those still being held were Alfonso Barrantes Lingan, president of Democratic People's Unity (UDP) and Herrera Montalvo, general secretary of the seaman's union.

nearly a decade. And in this issue we report the most recent release of Manuel de Conceição from prison. But we have organized campaigns to defend this Brazilian peasant leader in 1972, in 1973 and 1974, and again in 1975. While we hope that with his release he will no longer need our efforts, we stand ready to defend him again should the need arise.

Tenth anniversaries are a natural time to look back on what has been accomplished. No one can say how many prisoners we have saved. All too often we learn of a prisoner's fate months or even years later. Sometimes we never know. These governments repress information as well as people.

But just recently we got another glimpse of the impact of USLA's campaigns. A source in the American Embassy in the Dominican Republic told an USLA staff member that the embassy had been receiving urgent inquiries from the Balaguer regime about the protest letters it had received around the recent campaign to free the CGT leaders.

We have also seen, over the past ten years, a major change in the outlook of the average person in this country. In 1966 it wasn't easy to convince Americans that their government was guilty of “destabilizing” governments or assassinating foreign leaders. This naivete, so to speak, was a barrier to accepting the responsibility we must bear towards the fate of Latin American political prisoners. But times have changed!

While we have cause to celebrate our successes, we temper this with the sobering realization that a huge task remains. Tens of thousands still face the torturer, jailer, and executioner for their political beliefs in Chile, Uruguay, Brazil, Guatemala, and other countries.

But today there are thousands more Americans who will sign a petition, send a telegram, walk a picket line, attend a meeting, or send a contribution than there were in 1966.

So while we cannot contemplate closing up shop after ten years, we are confident that you, our supporters and members, will continue to support USLA in the future as you have in the past ten years.



February 1, 1954

BOSTON—Violence and the threat of violence were the outstanding features of Senator [Joseph] McCarthy's latest “hearing” in the New England area. It set the atmosphere and struck the keynote of what the *Boston Globe* today called “the most tumultuous Congressional sessions ever held in Boston.” A flying squad of seven deputy marshals was present to manhandle witnesses and spectators who were not already intimidated and terrorized by the presence of the fascist Senator from Wisconsin.

One spectator was, in the words of a TV announcer on the spot, “jet-propelled” by five burly guards from the 12th floor hearing into the snowbanks of Devonshire St. A witness and his attorney were “escorted to the door in rough fashion,” according to the *Globe*. Another attorney was threatened with similar treatment. All a witness had to do was answer sharply and the marshals' hands were already seizing his arms, waiting only for McCarthy's command to throw the man out.

It is correct to demand that the Bar Association protest the illegal and forcible methods employed by McCarthy to cow witnesses and lawyers alike. But it would be foolish to place reliance on such protests as a means of stopping McCarthyism. Their creation of a lynch atmosphere around McCarthy's victims and their attempts to popularize “rough stuff” as the only proper treatment of anybody who defies the witch hunt are calculated and deliberate.

No to U.S. immigration proposal

The immigration bill recently proposed by the White House is designed to serve the profit needs of the U.S. employers and allow them and the government to gain tighter control over immigrant workers. The labor movement should unequivocally oppose it.

In offering three-year work visas to undocumented workers—and many people will take the risk of applying in the hopes of normalizing their situation for the time being—the proposed legislation would set them up for victimization. It would give the government a ready-made list of immigrants they could keep track of and crack down on. To apply for a temporary visa, a worker would have to be sponsored by a boss, who could then threaten to turn workers over to the hated *migra* police to be deported if they stood up for their rights.

If approved, the legislation could be used to scapegoat immigrant workers during a time of depression by blaming them for unemployment and carrying out mass deportations. This threat is reinforced by the statement in the proposed law that employers could sponsor an immigrant only after “proving” that no “American” wanted the job.

The proposed bill is a response to the world the capitalists themselves have created. The massive wave of immigration from Latin America and Asia over the past three decades has changed the face of the United States. About 14 percent of the U.S. workforce was born abroad, and up to 12 million workers in this country are undocumented. Large-scale agriculture, hotels and restaurants, construction, garment and textile, meatpacking, and other industries are heavily dependent on immigrant labor as a source of superprofits.

The unprecedented number of undocumented workers today, and the underground economy generated by the existence of a large section of the population deprived of basic legal protections, makes it more difficult for the U.S. rulers to keep tabs on these workers and have a stable

workforce. The purpose of the proposed bill is to regularize the legal status of a layer of the working class as well as give the government and its police tighter control over these people. Even their right to travel would be limited to visiting their country of origin, unlike those with permanent resident status, which allows people to travel freely to other countries.

The aim of the U.S. employer class is not to drive immigrant workers *out* but to drive them *down*—to maintain a permanent layer of the workforce stripped of most rights and subject to superexploitation.

The new immigration proposal is of a piece with the “homeland security” offensive the U.S. rulers are waging to try to restrict workers rights under the banner of the “war on terrorism”—such as the latest practice of photographing and fingerprinting most travelers from abroad coming into the United States. This offensive is part of the bosses’ preparations for the working-class resistance they anticipate in the coming years in face of their escalating assault on the wages, social benefits, working conditions, and dignity of workers and farmers.

The bosses, however, always underestimate the capacities of working people. Their attacks on workers, including those born abroad, generate a response. This can be seen in the protests in California demanding the right to a driver’s license and labor struggles such as the battle by largely Mexican-born coal miners in central Utah, the strike by 70,000 grocery workers in California, and union-organizing efforts by meat packers in the Midwest.

The labor movement, which has backed the demand for an amnesty for all undocumented workers living in the United States, should oppose the latest immigration proposal. Labor should demand:

Stop the factory raids and deportations! No to “registration” programs and fingerprinting of travelers! For the right to a driver’s license! Legal status for all immigrants now!

Miners’ labor tour of Bay Area

Continued from front page

conditions, attempting to organize into the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), and standing up to disciplinary actions by the company against union supporters. CW Mining, also known as Co-Op, was paying the miners \$5.25 to \$7 an hour, compared to \$15 to \$20 hourly wages at most other coal companies. The miners, mostly immigrants from the state of Sinaloa in Mexico, have refused to return to work without the company recognizing the UMWA.

Some 250 members of ILWU Local 10 heard a presentation on the strike by Juan Salazar at their January 15 meeting, and another 80 at the executive board meeting two days earlier. The dockworkers voted for the ILWU to contribute \$1,000 to the miners’ strike fund, and donated another \$1,375 when the hat was passed around the meetings.

“This is a new experience for us,” Salazar told the *Militant* in an interview. “We’ve never seen struggles of workers to unionize here in the United States.” Salazar, 28, has worked at Co-Op as a machine operator for three years. “This is the first time we have fought for a union,” he said. “It’s interesting to see people already in unions now and learn of the struggles they waged to get their union.”

Meza, 23, has run all of the underground mine equipment in his four years at Co-Op. He said it was impressive to see paintings and pictures of the struggles of longshore workers inside their union hall. “We’ve received a lot of support from people,” he said, after noting he didn’t know what to expect when he decided to join the miners’ tour in the Bay Area.

“What impressed me about the longshore workers,” said Kennedy, “was not the number that came up to say it’s really terrible what happened to you, but instead those who had concrete ideas on how to make the strike better. People want to actually be a part of this.” Kennedy, 53, has worked at the Co-Op mine for eight months, and in other mines for a dozen years.

The ILWU voted to send a representative to the upcoming UMWA solidarity rally scheduled for February 7 in Huntington. The union members, many of whom are Black, also voted to send the Local 10 drill team to Utah for the rally. “We have to get people there,” one union member told the miners.

The miners were stunned by the generous decision of the 9,000-member HERE Local 2 in San Francisco to donate \$5,000 on the spot to the strikers after a lively discussion in the executive board. HERE members asked about the company union at the mine where the union officers are the mine bosses. Salazar explained that the company created this “union” just to get in the way of the workers organizing themselves into a real union, the UMWA. “They did the same thing at the Marriott,” said Mike Casey, HERE Local 2 president. “They tried to create a company union there.” After a six-year fight with scores of boisterous picket lines involving hundreds of people in front of the downtown San Francisco hotel, the union won a contract in 2002.

At the same time as the miners were in the Bay Area getting support for their strike, about 60 grocery store workers from Southern California were in San Jose and San Francisco with daily picket lines at selected Safeway

stores. About 70,000 United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) members have been on strike about the same length of time as the miners, in their fight against company attempts to gut health-care coverage and wages. (See article on front page.) The miners and grocery store workers spent hours together exchanging experiences. They jointly addressed some union bodies, walked the picket line together, and arranged to stay in the same hotel for a couple of days as their tours crossed paths. Ed Tillerson, who has worked at Ralphs grocery chain for 38 years and is an organizer of the San Jose picketing, helped make the miners feel welcome. “It’s been a real pleasure meeting the miners and learning about their fight,” he said. “We’re all in this together and we can’t allow ourselves to continue being taken advantage of. We have to stick together.”

The San Francisco Day Laborers Program invited the miners to speak at their meeting. A number of day laborers expressed interest in going to the February 7 solidarity rally in Huntington.

The miners also spoke to the San Francisco Labor Council and South Bay AFL-CIO Labor Council executive board. Generous collections were taken at each of the meetings.

“The support we got from the labor movement here,” said Chávez, “filled us with a lot of energy to keep going with our struggle. People have been so warm and open.” Chávez, who is 66 years old, has worked at Co-Op for one year. He had also been a part of numerous struggles for land in Mexico.

The miners described their struggle at a meeting in San Jose organized by the Voluntarios de la Comunidad (Community Volunteers). The group has helped mobilize thousands of people in the fight for driver’s licenses for immigrants. The 40 people attending the meeting raised \$222 in contributions for the miners.

Pacifica radio station KPFA interviewed the miners for two programs. Spanish-language television and newspapers interviewed them as well.

A public meeting for the miners was also held January 18 at Centro del Pueblo, a community center in San Francisco’s Mission District. “I hope we can work together with the coal miners, to be in solidarity with them to get back their rights,” Fei Yi told the gathering of 90 people. Yi and Lisa Chen are both former garment workers who waged fights against unfair layoffs and for back pay. They addressed the meeting on behalf of the Chinese Progressive Association. Trent Willis, an ILWU Local 10 business agent, chaired the meeting. The panel included Tracey Richardson, who spoke for the striking UFCW grocery workers, a dozen of whom attended; Lamoin Werlein-Jaén, vice-president of HERE Local 2; Walter Johnson, secretary-treasurer of the San Francisco Labor Council; and Rick Trujillo of the San Jose Labor Council for Latin American Advancement, which sponsored the tour. A dozen striking UFCW grocery workers attended the meeting.

“I have met people I would never have met before,” Chávez stated. “This tour has been a big surprise for me, especially the support by the unions. The reception was better than expected.”

Americas Summit

Continued from Page 3

aides then hustled reporters out of the room saying “Thank you. Let’s go. Back out the same door.”

During the summit, Bush told Ottawa that Canadian companies would now be eligible to bid for a second round of U.S.-financed contracts for the reconstruction of Iraq. The Canadian government was earlier excluded from the first round of such contracts, along with many other governments that are not part of the U.S.-created “coalition of the willing,” because it did not send troops to back the Anglo-American war on Iraq last year.

Immigration from Mexico

Mexican president Vicente Fox used the summit to publicly announce his support for a proposed bill by Bush to give temporary work permits to an estimated 8 million mostly Mexican undocumented immigrant workers in the United States, provided they are currently employed. The legislation would force those workers to return to their countries of origin once their work visa expires and would provide Washington with a list of the undocumented, enabling it to tighten control on immigration. In the press conference with Fox, the U.S. president stressed that the intent of the plan is that most of these “temporary workers” would return home after their permits expired.

Fox spoke cautiously about the plan, according to the *Washington Post*, and did not explicitly endorse it until he took questions. The day before he told NBC News the plan was “part of the enchilada.” He added that he would “work for more of it—more enchilada.”

Agreement on concrete provisions for the FTAA has been locked up over U.S. agricultural subsidies to large capitalist farmers and rules on investment and “intellectual property rights.” A meeting of the World Trade Organization in Cancún, Mexico, last September ended at a similar impasse when Washington, Ottawa, France, and other imperialist powers refused to even discuss reductions in agricultural subsidies that they use as an economic club against semicolonial nations.

The imperialist powers subsidize agricultural products at an estimated \$300 billion annually, resulting in about \$24 billion in lost income among the semicolonial nations. A report issued in August by Oxfam, an international aid organization, stated that the \$10 billion subsidy to U.S. corn growers has resulted in “cheap American corn flooding the Mexican market and pushing the poorest Mexican farmers out of business.

“Mexico, the birthplace of corn,” said the report, “opened its borders to U.S. corn exports after signing the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1994. Within a year, corn imported from the United States doubled. Today one-third of all corn used in Mexico is imported from the United States.” In order to compete with the U.S. subsidized imports, the Oxfam report said, the price of Mexican corn has fallen more than 70 percent, with a catastrophic reduction in the incomes of 15 million Mexicans who depend on corn production for their livelihood.

Corrections

The lead article “U.S. steps up offensive against Cuba, Venezuela” in the January 26 *Militant* stated incorrectly that Argentine president Néstor Kirchner had been criticized by U.S. assistant secretary of state Roger Noriega for not meeting with “dissidents” during a recent trip to Cuba. It was Argentina’s foreign minister Rafael Bielsa who traveled to Cuba and was criticized by Noriega, not Kirchner.

The front-page article “Utah miners plan tour in California to win support” in the January 19 *Militant* incorrectly identified Joan Emslie as the President of Local 250 of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU). She is the president of the South Bay Central Labor Council’s Executive Board and the Secretary Treasurer of SEIU Local 250.

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Abortion: the issue is women's rights

Thirty-one years since 'Roe v. Wade'—a victory in fight for women's liberation

The following is an excerpt from the pamphlet *Abortion is a Woman's Right!* by Pat Grogan and Evelyn Reed, published by Pathfinder Press. We print it on the occasion of the 31st anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court decision that codified abortion as a constitutional right for women. It is also timely because of recent attempts by Washington to further undermine this right. The most recent was the bipartisan decision by Congress to ban a late-term abortion procedure, which President George Bush signed into law November 5. The portions below are taken from the article "The Issue is Women's Rights" by Pat Grogan, the pamphlet's first chapter. This article first appeared in a two-part series in the Nov. 30 and Dec. 7, 1984, issues of the *Militant*. Copyright © 1985 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

BY PAT GROGAN

On January 22, 1973, women won their most important victory in decades.

The U.S. Supreme Court, in *Roe v. Wade*, ruled that women had the constitutional right to have abortions. The ruling legalized abortion through the first twenty-four weeks of pregnancy and struck down all laws that restricted that right.

For the first time the right of *women* to decide whether or not to bear children—not the state, church, husband, father, or priest—was recognized.

The women's liberation movement saw reproductive freedom as the most fundamental right of women, a precondition for full equality and liberation. Without the right to control her own body, a woman could not exercise effective control over her life.

Beginning in the 1960s, contraception was becoming more available and accepted, but it was not foolproof—and still isn't. Advances in medical science had made abortion a safe, simple, medical procedure. But in most states, abortion was against the law. Women were forced to bear children against their will, or risk dangerous—and often deadly—illegal or self-induced abortions. In 1969, the year before New York State adopted liberalized abortion laws—a step that laid the basis for the later Supreme Court victory—approximately 210,000 women entered city hospitals due to abortion complications.

The restrictions on abortion were powerful and barbaric chains on women. Black women and Latinas suffered the most from the illegal status of abortion. *Eighty percent* of the hundreds of women who died each year were Black and Spanish-speaking women. And many Black women and Latinas were forced to submit to sterilization in order to obtain an abortion.

Prior to the emergence of the feminist movement in the late 1960s, many supporters of legal abortion presented their arguments in terms of population control—arguments that are used to bolster the racist practice of forced sterilization.

The feminist movement put the axis for the fight to legalize abortion where it belonged—on the right of women to control their own bodies. It was on this basis that

majority support for legal abortion was won.

Because of the stakes involved in the fight for abortion rights, this right was never secure.

Several years ago, Democrats and Republicans alike began to step up their attacks on the right to abortion.

The Hyde Amendment, passed by Congress in 1976, was the most serious blow. It cut off Medicaid funding for abortions, except in cases of rape, incest, or when a woman's life is in danger. In May 1981, Congress cut off funds even in cases of rape and incest.

In October 1984, Congress once again denied abortion funding for victims of rape and incest....

The 1984 elections

The 1984 presidential elections were used as a staging ground for a major escalation in the ideological offensive against women's rights. The main theme sounded was, "Abortion is murder!"

The Catholic archbishops pressed to make abortion the "key issue" in the elections. Fundamentalist Protestant preachers like "Moral Majority" leader Jerry Falwell stepped up their antiabortion propaganda.

Reagan and the Republican Party convention openly endorsed legislation that would "make clear that the 14th Amendment protections apply to unborn children."

Prominent liberal Democrats like Geraldine Ferraro responded by agreeing that abortion is murder, but that as long as a majority supports abortion rights, it shouldn't be made illegal.

"I do not believe in abortion," Ferraro emphatically told the press. "I am opposed to abortion as a Catholic . . . but I will not impose my religious views on others."

The question, however, is not separation of church and state. The question is a woman's right to abortion.

Throughout the campaign, Ferraro stressed her abhorrence of abortion, helping to strengthen the reactionary "abortion is murder" campaign against women.

Week after week, abortion is discussed in the big-business media as a moral, religious, ethical, and scientific question; a private, public, personal, and medical question. But the real issue is the right of women to decide if and when to have children.

The torrent of antiabortion propaganda does not come out of a big victory by the capitalist rulers against women's rights. Rather it is aimed at launching a fight to reverse the gains women have won in the last 15 years. The steps taken toward equality by both the women's rights movement and the civil rights movement have strengthened the entire working class in its ability to struggle against the employers....

The ruling class ideological offensive is aimed at undermining the powerful idea that *women should have equal rights*. It is aimed at convincing both men and women that a woman's place is in the home, and



June 8, 1985, march in New York for right to abortion called by National Organization for Women.

that the family, not the government, should bear the cost of caring for children, the sick, and the elderly.

It is aimed at justifying lower pay for women who work and making unemployment of women more acceptable.

The fire is aimed particularly at abortion rights because the right of women to choose whether or not to bear children is an elementary precondition for women's liberation.

Leading the pack of the opponents of abortion rights has been New York's Cardinal John O'Connor.

Whose human rights?

In a major speech delivered on October 15, 1984, entitled "Human Lives, Human Rights," O'Connor laid out many of the arguments in the antiabortion, anti-women's rights arsenal. These arguments need to be rebutted—forcefully and publicly—by supporters of women's rights.

The theme of O'Connor's speech was the argument that abortion is a social evil and that fighting against abortion rights is progressive—like fighting against racism or for the rights of the elderly....

By linking abortion to genuine social wrongs and injustices, O'Connor tries to make his reactionary campaign against women's rights more acceptable to the millions of working people who, in their majority, support legal abortion. He tries to paint it up as a new "civil rights" movement.

But abortion is not an injustice—it is a basic human right. The right of women to control their own bodies—which is what is at stake in the fight over legal abortion—is an elementary precondition for the liberation of women from the oppression they suffer as a sex.

It is the women's liberation movement, which championed the fight for abortion rights, that is kindred to the fight for civil rights and against Washington's war.

Women's liberation and civil rights fighters stand together against inequality, discrimination, and exploitation. Both immeasurably strengthen the capacity of the labor movement to resist the current employer-class offensive.

O'Connor bases his arguments on the charge that abortion is murder and that women who have abortions are, therefore, guilty of murdering children.

Abortion is not murder. It is a simple medical procedure that terminates a pregnancy. Abortion is key to allowing women to decide whether and when to bear children.

One of the hierarchy's favorite arguments is to liken what O'Connor calls the "murder" of "one and a half million unborn human lives . . . every year" to Hitler's Holocaust—the Nazi policy of mass murder of Jews and others. He does not mention that as part of the Nazis' degradation of human life, they outlawed abortion and contraception, reducing women to the status of breeders whose role was bearing children,

and whose only place was in the kitchen and in church.

By saying the issue is the "rights" of the unborn, O'Connor and Company try to sucker people into a pointless, hairsplitting argument about the exact moment when human life begins. This is a total diversion from the real issue: the right of women to control their own bodies.

O'Connor's pose as a champion of "human lives, human rights" does not include a concern for the lives and rights of women.

With a wave of the hand, he dismisses as untrue the "impression" that "masses" of women would die if abortion were to be made illegal again.

"We are informed," he blithely asserts, "that this is not supported by figures issued by the United States government."

This is a lie. Official statistics show that during the 1960s, when abortion was illegal, *thousands* of women were maimed and *hundreds* died each year as a result of botched abortions. We have no way of knowing how many other abortion mortalities were reported as deaths due to "severe hemorrhaging" or "miscarriage."

In fact, it was outrage at the killings and maimings resulting from illegal abortion that helped spur women to demand an end to antiabortion laws. Legal abortions save lives—women's lives.

Denigration of value of women's lives

O'Connor's denigration of the value of women's lives comes through clearly when he discusses why a woman should be forced to bear a child, no matter what the circumstances under which she becomes pregnant. "Certainly rape," he concedes, "is always a frightening possibility." But, he asks, "Is it at least *possible* that bearing a child, however conceived . . . might bring, even out of the tragedy of rape, a rich fulfillment?"

Forcing a woman to bear a child against her will is a brutal denial of a woman's humanity and dignity. Bearing a child affects all the other aspects and decisions of a woman's life—her ability to get an education, get a better job—or any job. As long as women are vulnerable to unwanted pregnancies, breaking down economic and social barriers on the job, in education, and in the home becomes a much more difficult task.

Of course, legalized abortion cannot solve all the problems facing women. But the right to choose is the most fundamental step toward women being able to achieve full equality.

That's why after women began pouring into the work force in the last three decades, the question of legalizing abortion became a burning issue for millions. When women can control their childbearing functions, it allows them to begin to participate more fully in all aspects of social life. The right to choose means qualitatively more freedom and mobility for women.

Abortion is a Woman's Right!

By Pat Grogan and Evelyn Reed
Why abortion rights are central to the fight for the full emancipation of women. \$4.50



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LETTERS

Salute to 'Militant's' 75th

As a longtime supporter of the *Militant*, I was honored and moved by Luis Miranda's tribute to the paper on its 75th anniversary (Dec. 22, 2003, issue). I don't know Luis Miranda personally. I know him as so many defenders of the Cuban revolution and fighters for Our América know him, in New York and internationally: as a stalwart, unapologetic and unbending defender of Cuba and the Latin American revolution, and an ally of those struggling for these goals. He is much like the unbroken revolutionary fighters he recognized in his salute to the *Militant*—from Rafael Cancel Miranda over two decades ago, to the five Cuban patriots imprisoned today. What testimony

to the historic achievement of the *Militant* and its supporters to have produced, for three-quarters of a century, the fruit that sustains such fighters in the prisons of the empire—a true badge of honor. Please accept this contribution towards publication.

Joshua Carroll
Los Angeles, California

Pleased to find you online

I'm so pleased to find you (the *Militant*) online! I was deeply involved during my undergraduate years (1987–1992) at West Virginia University in Morgantown. I learned things from your organization that have made me the person I am. I went to the White House orchards to unionize the apple

pickers, and saw living conditions I thought only existed in "other, poorer countries."

I hate G.W. Bush, and the direction he is taking our country in. I don't want to see Bush re-elected. What are you doing toward this end? Who does the *Militant* suggest we vote for?
Leslie McQuade-Reynolds
by e-mail

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

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

Morocco frees 12 Saharawi patriots

BY PAUL PEDERSON

Hundreds waited at the gates of Ait Meloul prison in the southern Moroccan city of Agadir January 7 to greet Ali Salem Tamek, one of 12 Saharawi independence fighters freed by royal decree from Morocco's dungeons that day along with 21 other political prisoners. Upon leaving the prison he was hoisted on the shoulders of the cheering crowd and then headed to the University of Agadir, where he addressed a meeting on the campus.

"I will not give up my struggle for the defense of human rights," Tamek said in an interview with the Algerian media after his release. By freeing the Western Saharan political prisoners, said Tamek, "the Moroccan regime thinks that it will be able to hide the aggressions and violations it has committed against the Saharawi population." He noted that "more than eight Saharawi political detainees are still in prisons, and there are more than 500 Saharawi disappeared" who remain unaccounted for from the decades-long struggle for independence.

Western Sahara is a nation in northwest Africa that has been engaged in a struggle for independence for over a century. The fight was aimed first against Spain, which ruled the country as its colony until 1975, and now Morocco, which has occupied the majority of the country—with the support of Washington, Paris, and Madrid—since Spain withdrew.

Tamek is a founder of the Forum for Truth and Justice, Western Sahara section. The group was founded in 2000 to shine a spotlight on the repression facing Saharawis who resist the boot of the Moroccan regime.

The Forum played a key role in the international campaign to win freedom for Sidi Mohamed Daddach, the longest-held Saharawi political prisoner, who was released in November 2001 after 23 years behind bars. The Moroccan regime in Rabat declared the organization illegal in 2002 and has imprisoned its central leaders. Members of this group facing 10-year sentences for their political activities were among the 12 Saharawis who recently won an amnesty.

Tamek, who was arrested in August 2002, was charged with "threatening the interior security of the state and affiliating to the Polisario Front." The latter is the organization that has led the Saharawi independence struggle since it was founded in 1973.

'Release is not a gift'

"I salute the women, the men, the youth, the students, the workers, the unemployed, and other defenders of human rights in the occupied territories of Western Sahara and south Morocco, for their firm support to our imprisoned sons, through demonstrations of protest, communiqués, strikes, sit-ins, and other actions," declared Polisario General Secretary Mohamed Abdelaziz in a letter to the liberated freedom fighters.

The release is not "a charity or a gift," said Abdelaziz, but the "fruit of the struggle and the sacrifices you have made."

"This victory is the result of pressure from international groups, from inside the occupied territories, and from within the prisons themselves," said Kamal Fadel, the Polisario representative in Australia, in a January 14 telephone interview with the *Militant*. "They continued to be active inside the prison. Ali Salem Tamek spoke to the Polisario congress even from prison, showing that Morocco is not able to crush the resistance or silence their voices." Fadel was referring to greetings from prison Tamek gave by telephone to the Polisario Front's 11th Congress last October.

In addition to the 12 Saharawi freedom fighters, eight journalists imprisoned for opposition to the Moroccan government were released. One of the eight, Ali Lmrabet, was jailed for publishing an interview supporting independence for Western Sahara as well as cartoons and articles that were critical of the monarch. He was charged and convicted of "threatening the integrity of national territory" and insulting the king.

The announcement of the amnesty was timed to coincide with the visit of Driss Jettou, Morocco's prime minister, to Washington.

"When Morocco is under pressure," commented Fadel, "they try to make some gestures to sell themselves to the West. This happened on the eve of Morocco's visit to the U.S."

The monarchy in Rabat has been coming under pressure from Washington to carry out reforms to put a democratic face on Morocco's autocracy. These moves are in line with U.S. imperialism's offensive in the region that has been carried out in part under the banner of bringing democracy to the Middle East. Last year the king announced a reform to the family code that promises more rights for women. Since his ascension to the throne in 1999, he has also appointed several women to prominent government posts. The recent amnesty came after the king established a commission to investigate "past" human rights abuses.

Imperialism's hand in the region

U.S. president George Bush reserved special praise for these reforms by the Moroccan monarch in a November 6 address to the National Endowment for Democracy. "Many Middle Eastern governments now understand that military dictatorship and theocratic rule are a straight, smooth highway to nowhere," he said. "Governments across the Middle East and North Africa are beginning to see the need for change. Morocco has a diverse new parliament. King Mohammed has urged it to extend the rights to women.... The king of Morocco is correct; the future of Muslim nations will be better for all with the full participation of women."

The White House is also using the current negotiations to increase the penetration of U.S. capital into Morocco and the entire region.

According to the January 9 *Financial Times*, Rabat's amnesty of political prisoners "is part of a broader package of reforms that will help it benefit from the U.S. Millennium Challenge Account.... Morocco was likely to become the only Middle Eastern Country to benefit from the Bush Administration's... multi-billion dollar fund intended to channel aid to countries successfully pursuing internal reforms."

Puerto Rican political prisoner wins release

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

Puerto Rican political prisoner Juan Segarra Palmer will walk free from a central Florida prison January 23 and be welcomed back in Puerto Rico the following day. He is the latest of a number of Puerto Rican political prisoners Washington has released after a broad campaign on their behalf both on the island and in the United States.

Segarra had been convicted on seditious conspiracy charges during the frame-up trials of the Hartford 15. The case began on Aug. 30, 1985, when 200 FBI agents invaded the homes of independence fighters in Puerto Rico—highlighting the island's status as a colony of Washington. The agents arrested the 15 on charges of conspiracy to commit a 1983 robbery of a Wells Fargo depot in Hartford, Connecticut, and to use the money to buy Christmas toys for Puerto Rican children. The prosecution also accused them of being members of Los Machateros, a pro-independence group that Washington labels "terrorist."

In its campaign against the *independentistas*, the FBI conducted an electronic surveillance operation that produced 1,500 hours of taped conversations, in spite of the fact that wiretapping is forbidden by the Puerto Rican constitution. Fifty hours of these tapes were thrown out as evidence because of demonstrated FBI tampering. The 15 were flown from Puerto Rico to Hartford and forced to stand trial before an English-speaking jury, even though most of

the "evidence" was in Spanish.

Four years after his arrest, Segarra and three others were sentenced. Convicted of conspiracy to plan and carry out the 1983 robbery, he received a 65-year sentence.

In the late 1990s, there was a resurgence of working-class and pro-independence struggles in Puerto Rico. These included a July 1998 two-day general strike of 500,000 workers opposing the sell-off of the state-owned Puerto Rican Telephone Company. In addition, tens of thousands rallied on July 25 of that year in Puerto Rican and U.S. cities demanding Puerto Rico's independence and the release of political prisoners. During the same period a mass movement developed calling for the U.S. Navy to leave the island of Vieques. These struggles set the stage for winning the release of many U.S.-held Puerto Rican political prisoners. An international campaign to release the prisoners begun in 1993 gained broad support in the United States and in Puerto Rico.

In September 1999, 11 of the prisoners won their freedom after accepting an offer of parole from President William Clinton a month earlier, which included conditions stating they were prohibited from associating with each other. Segarra signed a separate agreement that made him eligible for release five years later.

Segarra will be welcomed back to Puerto Rico upon his arrival at the Luis Muñoz Marín International Airport in San Juan on January 24. The welcoming committee in-

cludes the Federation of Pro-Independence University Students (FUPI), the Socialist Front, the Committee for Human Rights of Puerto Rico, the National Hostosiano Congress, and the Puerto Rican Independence Party.

This victory follows the successful campaign to win medical treatment for Oscar López Rivera in December, another of the Hartford 15. For more than eight months López had been denied an operation on bilateral hernias by prison authorities, even after doctors had recommended the operation in March. Supporters continue to follow his case to ensure he receives a second prescribed hernia operation. The 60-year-old independence fighter has served more than 22 years of his 70-year sentence.

Other Puerto Rican political prisoners held by Washington today are Haydée Beltrán, Carlos Alberto Torres, and Antonio Camacho Negrón. Six other fighters against U.S. colonial domination—José Pérez González, José Vélez Acosta, José Montañez Sanes, Jorge Cruz Hernández, Néstor de Jesús Guishard, and Heriberto Hernández—face prison terms ranging from four months, in the case of Heriberto Hernández, to 5 years, in the case of José Pérez González, as a result of May 1 actions in Vieques to celebrate the U.S. government's decision to withdraw the Navy from that island and end its use of Vieques for target practice and military maneuvers.



Inset: Ali Salem Tamek. Imprisoned in August 2002 for his activities in support of independence for Western Sahara, Tamek was one of 12 prisoners freed by the Moroccan regime January 7. In October 2003, Tamek addressed congress of the Polisario Front in Tifariti, Western Sahara, by telephone. Among participants were former Polisario prisoners of war, above, freed by Morocco in 1996.

The London daily added that "Morocco was also in the final stages of negotiating a free trade agreement with the U.S. and hoped to sign the pact this month or next."

A July 2003 report by the right-wing Heritage Foundation said that this trade pact would provide "greater access for American exporters" pushing Morocco to reduce its tariffs, which, it complained, currently average "over 20 percent." The report also noted that by lowering barriers to U.S. agriculture, "U.S. farmers would have more market access than European farmers do. Such competition would put pressure on countries that engage most in agricultural protectionism, like France, to move toward more open markets."

Washington is promoting this pact as part of an aggressive drive to challenge Paris as the dominant imperialist power in the region. Paris, Morocco's former colonial master, is the country's number one trade partner and holds half of its foreign debt.

Since 1995, the Moroccan government

has carried out an intensive sell-off of state-owned businesses and property to ameliorate this debt, which totaled \$23 billion that year. By selling the country's national patrimony to foreign investors in exchange for debt relief, Morocco had brought that figure down to \$14 billion by 2002.

Washington is also pressing to increase its military role in the region under the banner of fighting the "war on terrorism." U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell announced during a December 3 visit to the region that Washington will double its military aid to Rabat. During the war against the Saharawi independence movement, Washington supplied hundreds of millions of dollars worth of military hardware and training to the Moroccan regime. The king has reciprocated by acting as one of the firm pillars of support for U.S. imperialist interests in Africa and the Middle East.

Annalucia Vermunt in New Zealand contributed to this article.