

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

More than 2,000 in Mississippi sign to put SWP ticket on ballot

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Socialist Workers Party: Calero, Hawkins in 2004!

The working-class alternative in presidential elections

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

OBERLIN, Ohio—The Socialist Workers Party has named Róger Calero as its candidate for president of the United States and Arrin Hawkins for vice president.

Delegates at the 42nd national convention of the SWP, held June 10–12 at Oberlin College here, ratified the nominations made earlier by the party's National Committee.

Supporters of the socialist ticket rolled out of the convention into campaigning activities around the country, from soapboxing in Miami, Florida, and Newark, New Jersey, to petitioning this month to get the socialist candidates on the ballot in Mississippi, Iowa, Utah, and Vermont.

"The Socialist Workers candidates around the country offer a revolutionary, working-class alternative to the Democrats and Republicans—the twin parties of imperialist war, depression, racism, and exploitation," said Calero, addressing some 400 people at a rally here at the conclusion of the SWP convention.

"We are bringing our campaign to workers, farmers, and young people everywhere who are resisting the assaults by the bosses and the disastrous consequences of their capitalist profit system. We invite those who support our candidates to campaign with us."

The socialist candidate added, "We are joining with fellow workers to defend the labor movement in face of the employers' offensive. Our campaign stands with those

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The SWP launched its presidential slate—Róger Calero for U.S. president (above) and his running mate Arrin Hawkins (left) at its June 10–12 convention. "We offer a revolutionary, working-class alternative to the Democrats and Republicans—twin parties of imperialist war, depression, racism, and exploitation," Calero said.

Imperialists threaten Iran over effort to develop nuclear power

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

The board of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) passed a resolution June 18 warning Tehran to end its alleged slowness in cooperating with United Nations "inspectors," and pressing it to drop plans to build a research reactor for nuclear power.

The document—presented by the governments of France, Germany, and the United Kingdom, with Washington's backing—acknowledged that for the past six months Tehran has provided IAEA snoops with "access to all requested locations." At the same time, it claimed, "Iran's cooperation has not been as full, timely and proactive as it should have been."

Officials of the IAEA and these four governments—all of which have developed nuclear power, and three of which control massive atomic arsenals—especially criticize the Iranian government for allegedly failing to come clean about attempts by its scientists to produce enriched uranium.

The ability to enrich uranium is essential in the development of nuclear power, as

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Pro-independence forces at UN condemn U.S. colonial rule of Puerto Rico

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

UNITED NATIONS—"The presence of ROTC programs on the campuses of the University of Puerto Rico is a reminder of the fact that the U.S. Army invaded our country in 1898. It is a reminder of U.S. colonial rule," said Fernando Moreno, a member of the University Student Front for the Demilitarization and Education (FUDE) of Puerto Rico.

Moreno, a student at the University of Mayagüez, said FUDE has been organizing student protests to demand the expulsion of the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) from university campuses on the island. He condemned as blackmail the Solomon Act, a U.S. law that denies federal funds to colleges that bar military recruitment programs such as ROTC from

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Striking Utah coal miners on labor tour in Pacific Northwest

Longshore union expands support for UMWA strike

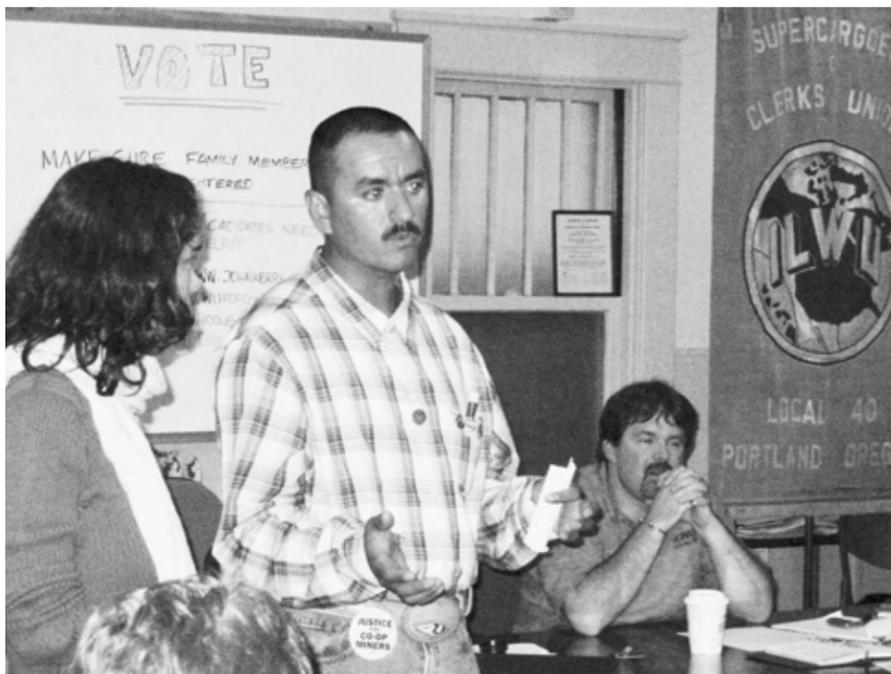
BY CHRIS HOEPPNER AND ANNE CARROLL

SEATTLE—"These miners aren't joining the labor movement. They are leading it." With these remarks, Bob Gorman, Area Director of the AFL-CIO's Field Mobilization Department, concluded a June 10 meeting at the Labor Temple here featuring two striking coal miners from the Co-Op mine in Huntington, Utah. Sponsored by the King County Labor Council (KCLC), the event was a part of a June 8–10 labor tour of the miners in this state and Oregon.

During the tour, International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) members and others contributed some \$15,000 to the United Mine Workers of America struggle for safety on the job and union recognition. Nine ILWU locals in the Pacific Northwest invited the miners to their membership meetings and heard their story. This extended the solidarity up the West Coast that ILWU Local 10 in the San Francisco Bay Area began earlier this year.

When the strikers arrived in Seattle, two members of ILWU Local 19, who helped organize the tour, met them at the airport. The dockworkers took strike leaders Juan Salazar and Alyson Kennedy to meet members of International Union of Operating Engineers Local 612 in Tacoma, Washington.

The UMWA strikers met for several hours with Charles Lascrain, Local 612's recording corresponding secretary, and Ed Taylor, the local's president. The local organizes a surface mine in Centralia, Washington.



Juan Salazar (center) a striking worker from Co-Op coal mine in Huntington, Utah, speaks at June 9 meeting in Portland, Oregon, of International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 40—one of nine ILWU locals that miners addressed. On right is Local 40 secretary treasurer Kevin Clark. On left is translator Alder Phillips.

The Operating Engineers told the Utah miners that the 500 coal miners in Centralia have been working without a contract since February. They also asked the striking miners to keep them informed of developments

in their walkout and said that the local is sending a contribution to the UMWA office in Price, Utah.

The next day, Salazar and Kennedy spoke

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Pressure on Iran

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well as in the production of weapons. After extraction from the ground, the element is milled into yellowcake and then converted to uranium hexafluoride (UF₆), a gas, before being enriched and turned into nuclear fuel for use in reactors. The uranium waste is then stored or reprocessed. This whole process is known as the nuclear fuel cycle.

"Has Iran declared fully to us its enrichment program?" IAEA director general Mohamed ElBaradei asked in a press statement released after the 35-member board unanimously adopted the resolution. "That is really the issue that is still before us.... The ball remains in Iran's court."

The resolution noted Tehran's "voluntary decisions" over the past year "to suspend all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities and to permit the Agency to verify that suspension." It charged, however, that "this verification was delayed in some cases... and the suspension is not yet comprehensive because of the continued production of centrifuge equipment."

High-tech centrifuges are used in uranium enrichment. While Tehran suspended its enrichment of uranium last October, it did not promise to halt development of this technology.

The resolution referred to the discovery by IAEA "inspectors" of traces of enriched uranium on Iranian equipment. Iranian officials explain that the equipment was already contaminated at the time of its purchase on the international market.

"With the passage of time," the resolution said, "it is becoming ever more important that Iran work proactively to enable the Agency to gain a full understanding of Iran's enrichment program by providing all relevant information, as well as by providing prompt access to all relevant places, data, and persons."

In addition, the resolution urged the Iranian government to "reconsider its decision to start construction of a research reactor moderated by heavy water." Such a step, it said, "would make it easier for Iran to restore international confidence undermined by past reports of undeclared nuclear activities." On its web site, the IAEA describes programs to assist the governments of Canada, China, and India with the development of heavy water reactors. Such reactors, it says, "are a significant proportion of world reactor installations. They provide fuel cycle flexibility for the future and can potentially burn

the spent fuel from LWRs (light water reactors), with no major reactor design changes, thus extending resources."

New charges against Iran

As British, French, and German officials hashed out the finishing touches to the resolution, imperialist powers leveled new charges at the Iranian government. "Diplomats speaking on condition of anonymity said the IAEA was looking into accusations that Iran was razing parts of a restricted area next to a military complex in a Tehran suburb," reported the *Guardian*. "Satellite photos showed that several buildings had been destroyed and topsoil had been removed at Lavizan Shiyari, one diplomat said."

"There is nothing there," responded Seyed Hossein Mussavian, the head of Iran's delegation to the IAEA. He told the Associated Press that agency officials were free to visit the site and see for themselves.

The charges and smears in the resolution had appeared earlier in a June 1 report by the IAEA director. On June 17, ElBaradei acknowledged that his report had wrongly charged Iran with failing to reveal its purchase of magnets destined for centrifuges.

"This is not a major mistake," ElBaradei immediately added. "This technical correction doesn't change the fact that we need transparency from Iran."

Conflicts among imperialist powers

While Washington backed the resolution, it made it clear that it is pursuing a still more aggressive approach. The Associated Press noted June 16 that the resolution contained "no deadline or 'trigger mechanisms' as sought by the United States and its allies"—measures that "could set in motion possible sanctions if Iran continued its foot-dragging past a certain date." U.S. officials indicated that they would press for stronger action at the next IAEA board meeting in September.

Kenneth Brill, the U.S. ambassador to the IAEA, told reporters June 2 that Iran's alleged lack of cooperation with the UN agency "fits a long-term pattern of denial and deception that can only be designed to mask Iran's military nuclear program."

"Almost two years after the IAEA became aware of Iran's covert nuclear program," he claimed, "delayed access, inconsistent stories and unanswered questions continue to be the hallmark of Iranian



Above: Iran's Bushehr nuclear power plant. Russian government has come under fire from Washington for its assistance in construction of the plant. Right: International Atomic Energy Agency director general Mohamed ElBaradei, who has fronted campaign to force concessions from Tehran.



cooperation with the agency."

Brill said the "international community" will not tolerate this for too long. "Iran can clear up these serious questions quickly, if it is willing to confess its clandestine nuclear weapons program and activities, like Libya," he said.

After decades of economic, political, and military pressure from Washington and other imperialist powers, the Libyan government of Muammar Qaddafi declared an end to all researches into nuclear and chemical weapons late last year and allowed sweeping inspections of its facilities.

In February of this year U.S. president George Bush included Iran and north Korea as prime targets for the so-called Proliferation Security Initiative. This agreement, crafted by Washington, legitimizes the seizure of ships on the high seas by the U.S. military and its allies allegedly to stop the proliferation of materials, equipment, and technology that could be used in the production of nuclear weapons. A year ago when Washington launched this move to legalize high seas piracy, 14 nations agreed to participate. One year later the list of participating governments has swelled to over 60.

Moscow indicates agreement

After the Group of 8 summit in early June—which includes seven imperialist powers and Moscow as an observer—Sergei Prikhodko, an aide to Russian president Vladimir Putin, told reporters that Moscow "would continue to cooperate with Iran in nuclear power generation." He said his government would also proceed with the construction of the nuclear reactor at Bushehr, Iran—a project that has drawn Washington's ire.

However, Prikhodko added, "This is conditional on Iran fulfilling the International Atomic Energy Agency's conditions."

For their part, the main imperialist powers in Europe—especially Paris and Berlin—have sought, on occasion, to distance themselves from Washington's collision course towards Iran, seeking room to push their own economic, military, and political interests, and increase their influence over Tehran and the broader oil- and resource-rich Mideast region.

In the face of such insinuations about Tehran's alleged covert interest in developing nuclear weapons, top Iranian officials have continued to explain that their nuclear program is geared toward generating electricity. Nuclear power plants would allow Tehran to channel oil and gas reserves for export, they say.

The country's Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi insisted June 13 that his government "won't accept any new obligations. Iran has a high technical capability and has to be recognized by the international community as a member of the nuclear club. This is an irreversible path."

"That somebody demands that we give up the nuclear fuel cycle... is an additional demand," Kharrazi said. "We can't accept such an additional demand, which is contrary to our legal and legitimate rights."

A June 13 AP report said that Kharrazi was referring to demands by "U.S. and European countries that Iran halt operations of a plant it inaugurated in March in Isfahan... that processes uranium into gas," and abort "plans to build a heavy-water reactor in Arak." Both cities are in the country's central region. Meanwhile, Democratic Party presidential candidate John Kerry has emphasized his agreement with the White House's approach. In a statement released June 1, his campaign officials said that Kerry would "support the International Atomic Energy Agency's efforts to discern the full extent of Iran's nuclear program, while pushing Iran to agree to a verifiable and permanent suspension of its enrichment and reprocessing programs."

The statement went on, "Kerry will also strengthen the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty by closing the loophole that allows countries like Iran and North Korea to use civilian nuclear power programs as cover for weapons development."

In another sign of the escalating tensions, three British navy boats reportedly entered Iranian territorial waters June 21 and were captured by Tehran's coast guard on the Iranian side of the Shatt al Arab waterway, which forms part of the Iran/Iraq border to the south of both countries. The Al Aram TV channel reported that the British sailors had admitting to being "inside Iran's waters" at the time of their arrests. According to the report, Iranian authorities collected weapons, cameras, and maps of Iraq and Iran from the boats.

The eight sailors would "be prosecuted for illegally entering Iranian territorial waters," said an Iranian military official. Tehran, however, released the sailors two days later but kept their three boats.

THE MILITANT

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Iraq: U.S. gov't makes gains toward imposing pro-imperialist regime

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The United Nations Security Council unanimously approved a U.S.-British sponsored resolution backing an “interim government in Iraq” to which Washington plans to “transfer sovereignty” on June 30. Paris, Berlin, and Moscow, which criticized the timing of Washington’s assault on Iraq last year, gave the resolution their blessings at the June 8 Security Council meeting.

Two days later, Washington also got backing for its so-called “Middle East Initiative” aimed at spreading “democracy” in the region at the G-8 summit in Sea Island, Georgia. Washington has accused the governments of Iran and Syria of allowing armed groups to use their borders to enter Iraq to fight the U.S.-led occupation forces in Iraq. The G-8 is composed of the imperialist governments of Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and the United States. Moscow has been attending its meetings since the mid-1990s, initially as an observer.

On June 12, Muqtada al-Sadr, the leader of the Mahdi Army, whose forces have clashed with occupation troops in central and southern Iraq for weeks, reversed his position and announced his support for the U.S.-picked “interim government,” calling shortly afterwards on his fighters to go home.

These developments register further progress by Washington in its drive to establish a pro-imperialist regime in Iraq, extend its domination in the region, and deal further blows to its imperialist competitors—especially Paris and Berlin—in the process.

In a further indication of this trend, the rulers of Saudi Arabia have all but abandoned earlier threats to switch to the euro from the U.S. dollar for pricing oil sales. According to a BBC report, the purchasing power of oil revenues among OPEC members fell by as much as 30 percent due to the declining dollar. The report said there has been some debate about whether the dollar is the best currency to use for the oil trade. Some among the Saudi rulers see pricing oil in euros as a way to gain leverage against the U.S.-dominated oil refining monopolies. But the increasing attacks on residential compounds in the kingdom by opponents of the royal family has further exposed the Saudi rulers’ dependence on the U.S. military for protection, and thus on the U.S. dollar.

G-8 summit

During the G-8 summit, U.S. president George Bush praised the Security Council’s vote and said that a “democratic” Iraq will be a “catalyst for change across the Middle East.” Bush was joined by Britain’s prime minister Anthony Blair, who added, “Iraq can be a force for good, not just for Iraqis but for the whole region and thus the whole world.” At the meeting, Bush introduced Ghazi al-Yawar, president of the “interim government” in Iraq.

While the G-8 governments said they backed Washington’s plans in the Middle East, the sharpening frictions between the Anglo-American bloc, on one hand, and Paris and Berlin, on the other, were evident. The French and German governments strongly opposed forgiving Iraq’s \$120 billion foreign debt despite a personal appeal at the summit meeting by Bush. French president Jacques Chirac said the Paris Club of creditors, which also includes U.S. banks, would consider forgiving only half of the \$42 billion owed to it by Baghdad. In a final statement that amount was changed to a more ambiguous “substantial relief,” said Chirac’s spokeswoman Catherine Colonna.

The German construction industry association is “strictly opposed” to debt relief of Iraq said Michael Knipper, the group’s general manager. He said in a fax from Berlin, according to Bloomberg, that Baghdad owes the association \$2.1 billion.

Washington and Paris also clashed on a proposal by Bush to deploy NATO troops to Iraq. Chirac said it is not the job of the alliance to intervene in Iraq. Officials of the imperialist military alliance will meet

in Istanbul two days before the installation of Iraq’s interim government on June 30.

UN resolution

The UN Security Council resolution gives the interim government the authority to “order the U.S.-dominated occupation forces out of the country at any time.” Washington, however, is confident this will not happen. The interim government is a creature of the U.S. occupiers and fully dependent upon the thousands of foreign troops in the country, mainly from the United States and Britain. On June 3, during debate on the resolution, foreign minister for the interim government Hoshiyar Zebari told the UN Security Council that he had let Iraq’s neighbors know that the occupation forces would remain in Iraq “for some time.” Zebari discouraged the UN body from pressing to establish a deadline for the occupation forces to leave Iraq. “I’ll be very honest,” he said, according to the *New York Times*. “A call for an immediate withdrawal or a fixed timetable for withdrawal would be very, very unhelpful. It would be used by our enemies to complicate problems even further.”

The “interim government,” most of the members of which were the choices of the U.S.-run Iraqi Governing Council, took over the functions of the Governing Council June 1, when the latter body dissolved itself. Ghazi Yawar was appointed to the ceremonial office of president of Iraq. A 45-year-old engineer with a master’s degree from George Washington University in Washington, D.C., Yawar is a Sunni Muslim who lived in exile during the Saddam Hussein regime. Three days earlier the Governing Council had selected one of its members, Iyad Allawi, to be prime minister. Allawi is a wealthy businessman and former member of the Baath party, which ruled Iraq for decades under the Hussein regime.

Washington also won support for the interim government from Iraq’s most prominent Shia Muslim cleric, Ayatollah Ali Sistani. In a June 3 statement, Sistani said the interim government “lacked electoral legitimacy but remained a step in the right direction,” reported Al-Jazeera television. Earlier, Sistani had demanded that elections be held instead to replace the Iraqi Governing Council. He dropped that demand when UN envoy and former Algerian diplomat Lakhdar Brahimi was tapped to oversee the installation of the interim government and gave his stamp of approval.

Muqtada al-Sadr reverses course

In a further indication of the progress Washington is making in Iraq, Muqtada al-Sadr announced his support for Iraq’s interim government, called on his followers to lay down their arms, and promised to convert his Mahdi army into a political movement, reported Al-Jazeera.

Just a week earlier, al-Sadr had rejected the interim regime. Speaking to several thousand worshippers gathered June 4 at the mosque where he normally appears for Friday prayers, al-Sadr said, “I don’t believe



Reuters/Thaier Al-Sudani

U.S. troops arrest Iraqi man June 18 after raiding his house in western Baghdad

any Iraqi would accept this appointment of a government by the occupier. There is no freedom or democracy without independence.”

The U.S.-led forces provoked al-Sadr and his supporters into armed revolt two months ago by ordering the closure of their newspaper, arresting some of the group’s leaders, and killing demonstrators demanding the release of those arrested.

U.S. military officials have said their goal is to capture al-Sadr and put him on trial on charges of killing a rival Shiite cleric who returned to Iraq with the aid of U.S. forces, following the toppling of Hussein by the Anglo-American invasion.

For weeks prominent Shia politicians attempted to negotiate a ceasefire between al-Sadr and occupation forces. The most recent truce collapsed June 2 when heavy fighting between occupation forces and the Mahdi army broke out in Kufa. Seven Iraqis were killed and 37 injured, according to the *Washington Post*.

On June 16 al-Sadr called on his supporters to lay down their arms, reported Al-Jazeera, following a statement by president Bush that Washington would not oppose a role for al-Sadr in the interim government. A spokesman for al-Sadr said that he would “enter political matters, but this does not mean he will enter elections.”

Occupation continues

Under the June 8 resolution, the UN Security Council gave its approval and support to the interim government. That regime is supposed to organize a national conference to select a consultative council. Direct elections are to be held no later than Jan. 31, 2005, for a “transitional national assembly,” which would draft a constitution.

The occupation of Iraq will continue under the guise of a U.S.-led “multinational force” that has the authority to take “all necessary measures” to maintain “peace and security.” UN authorization of this force ends January 2006. The occupation troops are to be expanded in Iraq to include a “special force” for the protection of UN personnel.

Paris and Berlin, who differ with Washington over how best to protect and advance imperialist interests in the Middle East, pressed for amendments to the resolution in hopes of weakening Washington’s dominance and obtaining some concessions for

their imperialist investments in the region, to no avail.

Algeria’s ambassador Abdallah Baali said the resolution must include language that would say the interim government would have the final say over the operations of the “multinational force.” Washington instead agreed to exchange side letters with the interim government stating that they would consult on “sensitive offensive operations.”

In a June 3 interview with the Dubai-based Middle East Broadcasting Center, U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell reiterated that the interim government will not have a veto over the 130,000 U.S. troops that will remain in Iraq after June 30. “There could be a situation where we have to act and there may be a disagreement, and we have to act to protect ourselves or to accomplish a mission,” Powell said. “You can’t use the word ‘veto.’”

Tehran-backed parties into the fold

Two of Iraq’s largest parties based among Shia Muslims, the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (Sciri) and Dawa, have complained of being marginalized and excluded from adequate representation in the interim regime. Occupation forces have been depending on the help of the Sciri, reported the *Financial Times*, in negotiating an end to armed revolts against the occupation troops in the Shia-populated cities of Najaf, Kufa, and Karbala in southern Iraq. Sciri is supported by Tehran. Many of its leaders lived in exile in Iran during the Hussein regime. Both parties have high posts in the interim government, including vice president and finance minister.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran’s leading Muslim cleric, denounced the interim government in Iraq as a “lackey,” according to Associated Press. Speaking to a rally of tens of thousands in Tehran, Khamenei called Bush a “shameless liar” for claiming his goal is to “spread democracy” in the Middle East. The rally commemorated the 15th anniversary of the death of Ayatollah Khomeini, who emerged as the government’s central leader after the 1979 revolution that overthrew the U.S.-backed regime of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi.

Despite the demagoguery, the Iranian government issued an official statement saying the appointments to the interim government were a “step forward.”

Pakistan gov't launches U.S.-backed offensive

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

In mid-June the Pakistani government launched its third major offensive this year in the regions bordering Afghanistan, unleashing 20,000 troops against local groups accused of opposing the regime and collaborating with al-Qaeda forces.

Fighter jets and military helicopters spearheaded the assault on villages around Wana, the main city in South Waziristan, which lies around 18 miles from the Afghan frontier. The area represents a small piece of the mountainous 1,500-mile border between the two countries. U.S. and Pakistani officials claim that 600 opposition forces have gathered there, “including Arabs, Chechens, and Uzbeks,” according to Reuters.

“The Pakistanis...are undertaking the most significant military operation in the tribal areas that they’ve ever done,”

Lt. Gen. David Barno, the commander of U.S. forces in Afghanistan, told reporters June 17. “That includes the use of attack helicopters, jet fighters dropping bombs on a variety of targets there.”

This is “very much a Pakistani-owned and -focused and -directed operation,” the U.S. general said. At the same time, noted the Reuters report, “Barno said U.S. commanders in the field were communicating across the border with their Pakistani counterparts and coordinating with the Pakistanis at their headquarters in Islamabad,” the capital of Pakistan.

On June 16 U.S. president George Bush officially anointed the military government of Pakistan a “major non-NATO ally,” qualifying it for closer military relations. Among the short list of countries so designated are Australia, Egypt, Israel, Japan,

and Morocco. Despite the development of closer ties between Washington and the Indian government, the Pakistani regime’s rival, New Delhi has not been inducted into this club.

Pakistani officers claimed a major success for the offensive June 18 with the killing by a missile strike of Nek Muhammad, a former fighter with the Taliban who had staged armed attacks on government forces. Army leaders had negotiated a cease-fire with Muhammad in April, after losing scores of troops to attacks by forces associated with him.

In an interview shortly before his death, Muhammad told the BBC, “We want to eradicate the U.S.-installed puppet governments in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Once we overthrow them, then there will be peace and no one will be able to harm Muslims.”

Miners in Northwest

Continued from front page

to ILWU Locals 8, 4, 40, and 92 in Portland, Oregon and Vancouver, Washington. On June 10 they addressed ILWU Local 23 in Tacoma and ILWU Locals 19A and 19B and Locals 52, and 98 in Seattle. They also addressed union members at the Seattle Labor Temple at the meeting sponsored by the KCLC.

"You can't win if you don't fight," said Jack Mulcahy, from ILWU Local 8. "Juan and Alyson were well received at the Portland and Vancouver longshore locals because these coal miners are in a real fight. I was on the phone today talking to people in L.A. because I believe we can extend solidarity further down the coast to Los Angeles. And it would be a good idea to make it international and bring the coal miners up to the longshore locals in Vancouver, British Columbia."

"We are at a real critical point," Alyson Kennedy told about 35 people who attended the June 10 King County Labor Council meeting. "The situation we are in means that everything we do every day makes a difference. This is true for the miners on strike and for our supporters. Solidarity now is crucial."

Among those attending the meeting were members of various unions, students, and others. Gorman chaired the event.

"Thanks to your support," said Salazar in his opening remarks, the miners have been on strike now for nine months. "Because of years of horrible conditions myself and others started to organize into the United Mine Workers of America."

Salazar listed the brutal conditions the mainly Mexican workforce labored under. "Workers are forced to work when they are injured," he said. "I broke my left arm and was forced to work for a month and a half

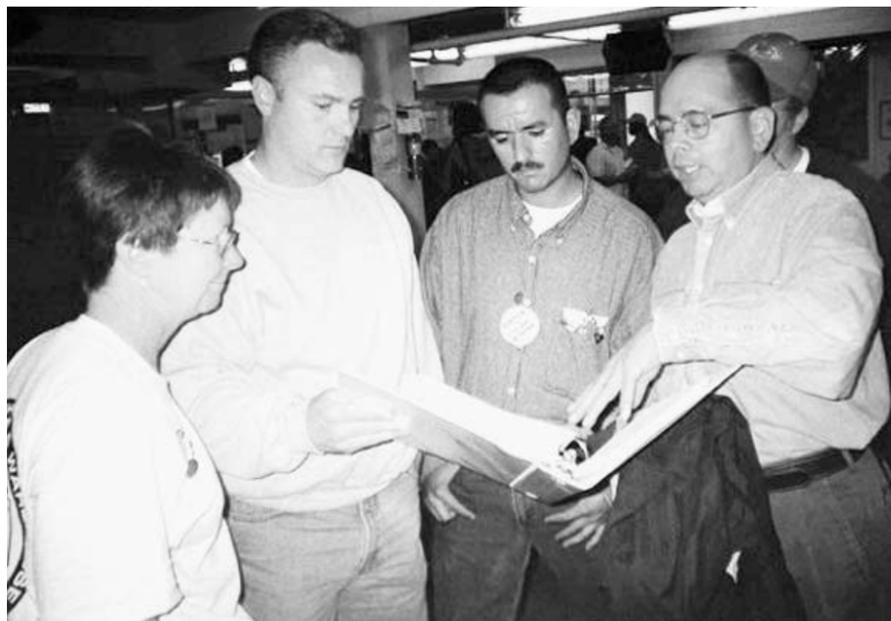
with a broken arm doing jobs that were dangerous. We have no health insurance. Medical expenses for on-the-job injuries are taken from our checks. And our average pay is \$5 to \$7 an hour while the average for the mining industry is \$15 to \$20 an hour."

'Company realized we were solid'

CW Mining, also known as Co-Op, began firing the miners most active in trying to bring in the UMWA. "They tried to fire me," Salazar explained, "but my co-workers protested and I got my job back." But the intimidation continued. "Another co-worker was fired. The company tried to hide behind the charge that the worker wasn't doing his job well but we know it was because of his union activism. When the company realized how solid we were the company said 'fine, you're all fired' and called police to get us off the property."

Kennedy gave supporters an update on where the miners currently stand in their battle for union representation at CW Mining. "Because of the solidarity we have gotten and the pressure put on the Kingstons (the company owners)," she said, "the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) upheld the charge filed Sept. 23, 2003, by the UMWA that the miners were illegally fired for union activity. The labor board told the union they would be issuing this in writing." The UMWA had also charged that the company union was illegally constituted. The labor board, however, told the UMWA that it refused to rule on this because it considered the company union to be legitimate.

Stepped up solidarity is especially crucial now, Kennedy stressed. The NLRB has informed the UMWA that the government labor board will authorize the striking miners to vote in a union representation election at



Militant/Chris Hoepfner

ILWU Local 19 committeeman Rich Austin (second from left) shows resolution backing UMWA strike in Utah to striking miners Alyson Kennedy (left) and Juan Salazar (center), and translator Juan Martinez (right), on June 10 at union hall in Seattle.

CW Mining. When the miners were forced out on strike, they filed a petition, with the assistance of the UMWA, against the so-called International Association of United Workers Union (IAUWU), an outfit led by the bosses at the Co-Op mine and family members of the Kingstons. The miners filed the petition during an "open window" period in the terms of the so-called contract under which they worked that allows the workers to seek representation by a real union. This "contract" expires August 10.

Kennedy said that 74 miners signed the initial petition, almost the entire workforce at the mine at the start of the strike. "Sixty-six miners recently signed a backup petition," Kennedy stated, "including 10 scabs. The scabs are being treated very badly by the company."

Kennedy said the miners are working with the Co-Op Miners Solidarity Committee in Salt Lake City, Utah, to continue picketing businesses owned by the Kingstons. She said the strikers plan to speak to as many union meetings as possible to spread the word about the strike and gain more solidarity.

Unionists and others at the meeting discussed how to expand solidarity. Robby Stern, special assistant to the president of the Washington State Labor Council, invited the strikers to attend a national meeting of state federations of the AFL-CIO—called Workers Voice—that will be held July 18 in Salt Lake City, Utah.

'Unionizing western coalfields'

Members of the United Transportation Union (UTU) reported that UTU Local 845 passed a resolution in support of the Co-Op miners in January. The solidarity resolution was sent to the UMWA, along with donations exceeding \$1,200. "Your victory would spur unionization throughout the western coalfields, promoting decent wages and safe working conditions for all miners," the resolution reads.

"We work for a company—the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railroad—that, like yours, makes enormous profits from coal mining and has extensive operations in the Powder River Basin where your mine is located. We also know how important union representation is, especially on jobs that have genuine safety risks every day, like mining and railroading."

The Union Pacific Railroad transports the coal mined in the Carbon and Emery County area where the Co-Op mine is located. Unionists in the UTU pointed to the opportunity for building solidarity with the coal miners at a June 21-23 western regional UTU conference in Reno, Nevada.

Gorman proposed that in order to advance ongoing support for the UMWA struggle a broadly sponsored public meeting by the labor movement and fund-raiser be organized in Seattle for the striking miners.

At a June 15 meeting of the KCLC, ILWU Local 19 presented a resolution stating, "the King County Labor Council will invite two Co-Op miners to come and speak at a delegates meeting and that the KCLC will host a Fund Raiser prior to the delegates meeting followed by a public forum." The resolution was approved and July 21 was set as the date to invite the striking miners back to Seattle.

"The successful tour of the miners in the longshore locals was inspiring and gives me confidence in the kind of solidarity we can get in the labor movement, when workers put up a real fight and are able to get their story out," commented Mark Downs, a member of ILWU Local 19.

At every local meeting the strikers invited unionists to come to Huntington. At the last union meeting they addressed, ILWU Local 23 in Tacoma, unionists voted to send two of their members to Utah June 18-19 to get a first-hand feel of the situation on the ground, bring solidarity to the miners there, and then report back.

For more information on the Co-Op strike, or to make a donation, write to: UMWA District 22, 525 East 100 South, Price, Utah 84501. Earmark checks to the Co-Op Miners Fund.

Chris Rayson, a member of UTU Local 845 in Seattle, contributed to this article.

Protesters denounce 'migra' raids, roundups of hundreds of immigrants in California

BY SETH DELLINGER

ONTARIO, California—Thousands marched here June 13 to denounce a massive campaign of arrests and deportations by U.S. Border Patrol agents in cities up to 100 miles from the border. Stretching nearly 30 blocks, the protest was accompanied by supporters driving 200 cars, who kept up a non-stop cacophony of honking horns.

A coalition of immigrant rights organizations, church groups, and Latino business people had called the march a few days earlier amid outrage over the arrest of 154 people in Ontario and Corona over June 4-5.

In a typical story, marcher Christina Silva, 27, said the border cops had set up checkpoints near her home in Riverside. Her sister had seen them pulling two workers out of a meat market, she said.

Since the march the total number arrested has climbed to over 400. Arrests have occurred in more than 20 Southern California cities, from Escondido to Ontario, 50 and 100 miles from the border, respectively. Over 90 percent of those caught in the dragnet are from Mexico.

The sweeps have been carried out by the recently formed Mobile Patrol Group, based in Temecula, California.

Officials of the U.S. Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (CBP), a section of the Department of Homeland Security that oversees the Border Patrol, have described the sweeps as "routine business." Such activity "will continue indefinitely," they say. Workers have been stopped in markets, at bus stops, outside apartment buildings, at roadblocks and in other public spaces in several cities in San Bernadino and Riverside counties, as well as elsewhere.

Border Patrol spokesman Angel Santa Ana told the *Sacramento Bee* that his agency "has questioned 9,972 people on trolleys and at bus stops, train stations and other public transportation venues in San Diego County since the middle of April."

"With resources, manpower and Operation Gatekeeper, we changed our mode to a forward deployment," said Sean Isham, another patrol spokesman.

Introduced in 1994 under the Democratic Party administration of U.S. president William Clinton, Operation Gatekeeper more than doubled the number of agents



Militant/Don Hammond

June 13 march in Ontario, California, against raids in largely Latino communities carried out by immigration police's new Mobile Patrol Group.

at the border, and furnished them with more surveillance aircraft, high-intensity lighting, infrared scopes, and underground sensors. Isham said this clampdown "has freed up our resources to act on intelligence that's been gathered."

Last year, the Border Patrol carried out similar sweeps in San Diego County, arresting people waiting in line to enter the Mexican Consulate in the city of San Juan Capistrano to apply for matricula consular identification cards. Following protests, Border Patrol sector chief William Veal announced that agents' activity would be curtailed. However, CBP Commissioner William Bonner overturned this directive last August. The recent raids are the first to be carried out in Southern California since this policy shift.

Press accounts have noted the impact of the raids, describing commercial districts emptied of shoppers, reduced attendance in schools, and workers staying home or even going to work hidden in the trunks of cars.

Griselda Gómez, 57, who works at a fish-processing plant in San Pedro, told the Los Angeles-based *La Opinion* daily that she hadn't worked for two weeks. "The supervisor warned us not to come to work

without our papers, and recommended to many of the workers that it would be better to stay home," she said.

Although police departments have denied taking part in the sweeps, eyewitness accounts strongly suggest collaboration with Border Patrol. One Ontario man told *La Opinion* that a cop stopped him and "asked me for my work permit and I asked if he was immigration or what, because then he didn't ask me for my license instead of my papers. He immediately turned and spoke to a Border Patrol agent who was beside him, and the Border Patrol agent came and asked for my papers."

An article in the *San Diego Union-Tribune* noted that the number of detentions "jumped 25 percent to 535,000 nationally in the six months ending March 31 compared with a year ago. The increase reversed a four-year decline."

On Tuesday, June 15, over 100 people from some 20 immigrant rights organizations met in a library in San Bernadino to discuss further actions. The meeting, called by the National Alliance for Human Rights, projected organizing a march in Los Angeles and set meetings to form coalitions in San Bernadino and Riverside Counties to carry out further protest actions.

Socialist backs Puerto Rican independence

The following statement was presented June 14 by Nicole Sarmiento on behalf of the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialists to the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization. Sarmiento was among 22 individuals and representatives of organizations who testified on the colonial status of Puerto Rico. Sarmiento is a member of the Young Socialists in Miami and the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate in Florida. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

BY NICOLE SARMIENTO

Dear Mr. Chairman and committee members:

I join with others here celebrating one year since the U.S. Navy was forced to withdraw from Vieques. This was a victory in the struggle against U.S. colonial rule over Puerto Rico.

It is testimony to the tenacity and courage of Puerto Rican workers, farmers, fisherman, students, and others who fought for six decades to get the U.S. military out of Vieques. It is an example to all those around the world fighting against exploitation and imperialist domination, including inside the United States.

Today, I join with others here to demand that the U.S. government release all those who remain in U.S. prisons for having exercised their right to fight to get the U.S. Navy out of Vieques, and that Washington, which polluted the island, carry out a thorough decontamination of the territory.

Washington's continued defiance of the will of the Puerto Rican people with respect to these struggles highlights one fact above all: that Puerto Rico is a U.S. colony.

There is no single "United States" as the U.S. rulers would make us believe. This is a class-divided country: "their" America of the ruling billionaire families, on one hand, and "our" America of workers and farmers. These classes have irreconcilable interests.

It is only in the interests of the ruling rich of this country to keep Puerto Rico a colony—it is they who profit from the systematic exploitation and colonial domination of Puerto Rico. It is they who benefit from exploiting the land, labor, and natural resources of Puerto Rico.

Working people in the United States have absolutely no interest in Washington's colonial rule over Puerto Rico. On the contrary, the people of Puerto Rico and working people in the United States face a common enemy: the U.S. billionaire class, its government, and its twin parties, the Democrats and Republicans.

This is why the Socialist Workers Party has championed the struggle for the independence of Puerto Rico since its founding in 1938. The Young Socialists follows in this proud tradition.

Freedom and democracy for whom?

The U.S. rulers claim to stand for "human rights," "peace," "democracy," and "freedom." But we must ask: Human rights for whom? Peace for whom? Democracy for whom? Freedom for whom? Only for their class.

Today we are seeing the revelations about the torture and humiliation of Iraqis carried out by the U.S. occupation forces. These crimes are not a fluke. They show the true face of U.S. imperialism.

In fact, the torture of Iraqi prisoners by the U.S. military is simply an extension of what the U.S. rulers do at home every day: the brutality and humiliation carried out against prisoners inside the United States. With 2 million men and women behind bars today, Washington is the number one jailer in the world.

The U.S. government is carrying out similar degradation and abuse against hundreds of men and boys locked up in the U.S. prison at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba—land occupied against the will of the Cuban people.

The imperialist occupation of Iraq is simply part of the efforts by Washington and its rivals in Paris, London, Berlin, Madrid, and Tokyo to redivide the world—which began well before Sept. 11, 2001. To reverse their economic crisis and the decline of the imperialist order, they are driven to more and more wars of plunder: from the military occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq, to the U.S. military threats against Korea and Iran, to Washington's aggressive policies toward Venezuela and Cuba.

Puerto Rico has been used as a spring-



Militant/Dave Wulp

Nicole Sarmiento, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Senate in Florida.

board by the U.S. rulers to prepare its imperialist wars abroad—from the invasion of Grenada in 1983, to the bombing of Yugoslavia in 1999, and the invasion of Iraq last year. Puerto Rican youth are used as cannon fodder in these wars of exploitation.

Colonial domination of Puerto Rico reinforces the systematic discrimination and racist prejudice that 2.7 million Puerto Ricans face in this country, along with Blacks, Chicanos, and other oppressed nationalities. As long as Puerto Rico remains a colony, Puerto Ricans will face being treated as second-class citizens.

The "war on terror" abroad—the banner under which Washington wages its imperialist assaults around the world—has its domestic counterpart: the war on workers and farmers inside the United States, carried out in the name of "homeland defense."

For example, the so-called "9/11" hearings by the U.S. Congress simply served as a platform to promote the Democratic-Republican campaign to increase the powers of the FBI and other political police agencies to spy on, harass, and frame up workers who fight the employers, or those who oppose U.S. government policies. For decades,

Puerto Rican independence fighters have been smeared as "terrorists" in order to justify U.S. government attacks on them.

I join in celebrating the victory won with the recent release of the Puerto Rican patriot Juan Segarra Palmer. But four Puerto Rican political prisoners remain locked up in U.S. prisons—Oscar López Rivera, Haydée Beltrán, Carlos Alberto Torres, and Antonio Camacho Negrón. Some of them have spent nearly a quarter century in jail—among the longest-held political prisoners in the world. I add my voice to others here to demand: Release them now!

Today the drive by the U.S. employers and their government to cut back the wages, working conditions, and rights of workers and farmers in this country is meeting resistance. Near where I live in Miami, workers at Point Blank Body Armor, a garment factory that manufactures bulletproof vests for the police and the U.S. military, waged a two-year struggle against intolerable conditions and for a union. Recently these workers, a number of whom are Puerto Rican, finally won recognition of their union.

Coal miners at the Co-Op mine in central Utah have remained on strike for nearly nine months to win recognition of the United

UN hearing on Puerto Rico's colonial status

Continued from front page
their campuses.

The student leader was one of 22 speakers against the colonial status of Puerto Rico who testified at hearings held here June 14. He was part of a broad delegation of pro-independence forces, both from Puerto Rico and from the United States, that presented a wealth of facts highlighting the reality that Puerto Rico is one of the world's last remaining direct colonies.

The speakers argued that, 106 years since the U.S. military took over the island, Washington continues to deny the Puerto Rican people their right to self-determination and independence.

The United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization, which holds the annual hearings, adopted a resolution introduced by the government of Cuba that "reaffirms the inalienable right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and independence." For the fifth consecutive year, the 24-member committee approved the resolution by consensus, without a vote.

Introducing the resolution, Cuban ambassador Orlando Requeijo reiterated his government's unconditional support to the fight for Puerto Rico's independence, a stance that Cuban revolutionaries have championed for decades.

Requeijo demanded that the U.S. government release all Puerto Rican political prisoners and that Washington, which ended its bombing practice on the island of Vieques last year, carry out its responsibility to turn over to Puerto Rico all the land previously used for war training and to clean up the land contaminated by the U.S. military.

Most of the speakers spoke on behalf of Puerto Rico's independence. They included representatives from the main pro-independence currents on the island: the Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP), the Hostos National Independence Movement (MINH), the Socialist Front, and the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party. The MINH

is the result of a recent fusion of two groups that largely originated in the former Puerto Rican Socialist Party.

Washington must clean up Vieques

Ismael Guadalupe, a retired Vieques schoolteacher and leader of the Committee for the Rescue and Development of Vieques, was one of the many speakers who celebrated the victory won in May of last year when, in face of sustained mass mobilizations, the U.S. Navy finally ceased its bombing and other military training exercises on the island of Vieques.

For more than 60 years, fishermen, farmers, workers, and other Vieques residents have demanded that the U.S. Navy, which occupied two-thirds of the island, stop its bombing and return their stolen land. In 1999 the protests surged anew when a U.S. Navy plane dropped a 500-pound bomb that killed a civilian guard in Vieques, David Sanes.

"On May 1, 2003, the Navy withdrew its troops, but one year later, they still haven't even begun to carry out plans for the decontamination and reparation of the damage caused by tons of explosives and radioactive material that they left throughout our ecosystem," Guadalupe said. The U.S. government, he pointed out, has turned over control over a third of the island to the Fish and Wildlife Division of the Department of the Interior, instead of returning it to Puerto Rico.

He denounced the plans by U.S. real estate developers who, now that the Navy is gone, are licking their chops over the prospects of taking over the prime land in Vieques for profitable tourist projects with no regard to the views and the needs of the residents. He reiterated the "Four D's" campaign promoted by his committee: demilitarization, decontamination, devolution, and development.

Félix Colón, from the Hostos National Independence Movement, pointed out

Mine Workers of America (UMWA) at their mine. Their fight has won increasing respect and support from the labor movement around the country.

And there is also resistance to the day-to-day reality of police brutality, including the factory raids and roundups by the immigration police. Recently, in another victory, Farouk Abdel-Muhti, an advocate of the right of Palestinian self-determination, was released after spending two years in U.S. jails without charges.

I join with my brothers and sisters here who demand the release of the five Cuban revolutionaries who have been framed up by the U.S. government on charges of "conspiring to commit espionage." Their "crime" was gathering information about ultrarightist Cuban-American groups that have a long record of launching violent attacks against Cuba from U.S. territory, with the knowledge and complicity of Washington.

Mr. Chairman, in face of living and job conditions that are deteriorating for the majority, the U.S. rulers, who live off the labor and resources of millions around the world, have the arrogance to tell the Puerto Rican people that they cannot survive on their own, that independence would only bring them ruin.

Example of revolutionary Cuba

But the living example given by the workers and farmers of Cuba, and their revolutionary leadership, proves this to be a lie. Revolutionary Cuba, first free territory of the Americas, shows that by making a socialist revolution it is possible to fight and win genuine independence from U.S. imperialism.

Cuba has consistently championed Puerto Rico's fight for independence. A free Puerto Rico would be able to count on the unconditional, selfless solidarity of revolutionary Cuba.

The condemnation by this committee of Washington's colonial rule of Puerto Rico will serve the interests of the overwhelming majority of the people of the United States and those fighting everywhere for the right to self-determination and against oppression.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of this committee, for the opportunity to present these views before you today.

that as a result of the victory in Vieques, Washington has also closed down its huge Roosevelt Roads naval base near the eastern city of Fajardo. The U.S. government, however, has not yet turned over the land to Puerto Rico.

Today, said Frank Velgara of the New York-based Vieques Support Campaign, the island remains plagued by "cancer, respiratory illness of all types, mercury poisoning, and contaminated waters, water supply, air, flora and fauna." He cited a recent report by the health secretary of the Puerto Rican government that describes "an emergency medical situation" in Vieques, which has a cancer rate 27 percent higher than the main island of Puerto Rico. This in turn is much higher than the rate in the United States. Because of the lack of adequate medical facilities, cancer patients have to travel to the main island for treatment.

Nine political prisoners in U.S. jails

Ben Ramos, speaking for the ProLibertad Freedom Campaign, a group based in New York, noted that five Puerto Ricans remain in prison today because of their participation in civil disobedience protests in Vieques against the U.S. Navy. Starting in 1999, thousands took part in such actions and dozens were prosecuted. In recent months, fishermen and other Vieques residents have again carried out actions on former military territory to demand the clean-up and return of those lands.

In addition to the four Vieques prisoners, Jorge Farinacci of the Socialist Front called for the release of four political prisoners who were framed up on "seditious conspiracy" charges and remain in U.S. prisons because of their pro-independence activities. These are Oscar López Rivera, Carlos Alberto Torres, Haydée Beltrán Torres, and Antonio Camacho Negrón. Beltrán and Torres have already been locked up for

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SWP 2004 campaign

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who are fighting today to organize a union or to defend their union from the bosses and their government.”

The socialist candidates are also campaigning to support the efforts by working people around the globe, especially in the semicolonial world, to expand the electrification of their countries. Calero explained that the SWP campaign will oppose the war that Washington and other imperialist powers have been waging to prevent oppressed nations—such as Iran—from developing nuclear power, which is necessary to bring much of humanity out of darkness.

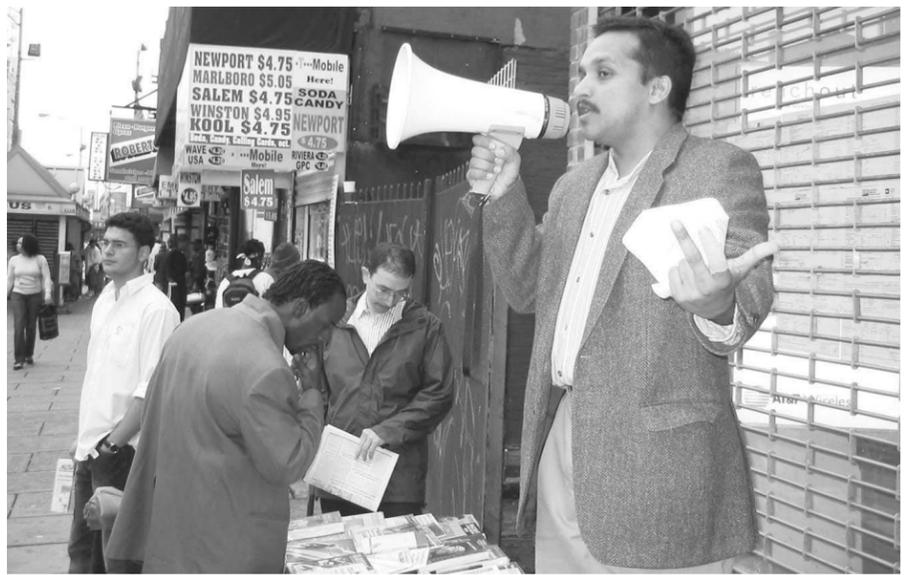
Calero, 35, is the associate editor of the Spanish-language magazine *Perspectiva Mundial* and a *Militant* staff writer. While working as a meat packer in the Midwest, he participated in a successful struggle by workers at the Dakota Premium Foods plant in South St. Paul, Minnesota, who won recognition of the United Food and Commercial Workers as their union in 2002. Calero has joined current efforts to win solidarity for the United Mine Workers

of America strike in Huntington, Utah.

In December 2002 Calero was arrested by immigration cops on his return from a *Militant* reporting trip in Cuba and Mexico. He waged a campaign that won broad public support and prevented the U.S. government from deporting him to Nicaragua, his country of birth. He has since used this victory to back other workers fighting deportation efforts and government frame-ups.

Arrin Hawkins, 28, is a garment worker in New York. She was the Socialist Workers nominee for lieutenant governor of New York in 2002. Hawkins has also worked as an airline baggage handler and a meatpacker. A defender of the Cuban Revolution, she took part in youth delegations to Cuba in 2001 and 2003. Hawkins joined with other partisans of the struggle for women's liberation to build the April 25 march on Washington, where nearly a million turned out to support a woman's right to choose abortion (see biographies of Calero and Hawkins on page 7).

Speaking at the June 12 rally, Hawkins



Ved Dookhun, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress in New Jersey's 10th Congressional District, soapboxes June 6 in downtown Newark.

explained that as part of building the April 25 march, socialist workers and Young Socialists “went out campaigning throughout March and April on street corners in working-class districts, at university campuses, and at plant gates. We got into the hands

of as many workers and youth as possible a range of books and pamphlets that give a scientific, Marxist explanation of the roots of women's oppression and that explain the kind of revolutionary, working-class movement needed to end it.”

This was coupled with a successful spring drive that doubled the number of new subscribers to the *Militant* and substantially increased readers to its Spanish-language sister publication, *Perspectiva Mundial*, she noted.

Hawkins said the elections offer broader opportunities for socialist workers and Young Socialists to use these books and campaign newspapers to introduce working people and youth to a revolutionary working-class perspective.

Supporters of the socialist campaign are organizing efforts to put their presidential ticket on the ballot in 12 states and the District of Columbia. They are currently engaged in petitioning drives in Iowa, Mississippi, Utah, and Vermont that will be completed by the end of June (see news on Mississippi petitioning on this page). Petitioning to put Calero and Hawkins on the ballot in Minnesota and Washington, D.C., will take place in July.

Petitions submitted in New Jersey

On June 8 campaigners in New Jersey completed a two-week petitioning effort. They filed nearly double the 800 signatures required to place the Socialist Workers presidential slate on the ballot and almost twice the 100 signatures needed for the two Congressional candidates in New Jersey, Ved Dookhun for the 10th District and Angela Lariscy for the 13th District.

With the signature-gathering effort wrapped up, supporters of the New Jersey socialist campaign are now gearing into a broader campaign effort. They are soapboxing, canvassing with the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, and looking for speaking engagements for their candidates—Dookhun, a meat packer, and Lariscy, a sewing-machine operator in Newark.

Other local Socialist Workers Party slates are being fielded in cities across the country. These include Iowa, where petitioning is underway to put Edwin Fruit, the party's candidate for U.S. Congress, on the ballot. In New York the socialist candidates are Martin Koppel for U.S. Senate, Willie Cotton for U.S. Congress in the 15th District, and Dorothy Kolis in the 16th District.

Hawkins and Calero will be touring in areas where local campaigns are already underway, such as Iowa and Florida.

Young Socialists around the country are taking the SWP campaign as their own. Some are running on Socialist Workers slates. One of these candidates, Nicole Sarmiento, a Young Socialist in Miami who is running for U.S. Senate in Florida, spoke at the June 12 Oberlin College rally. She described some of the recent campaigning in Miami and Tampa.

In addition to Sarmiento, the socialist candidates in Florida include Lawrence Mikesch for mayor of Miami-Dade, and three Congressional nominees: Karl Butts in the 11th District in Tampa, Omari Musa in the 17th District, and Seth Galinsky in the 21st District, both in Miami.

Sarmiento explained that in campaigning during the previous week at a forum

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Mississippi: 2,200 sign to put SWP slate on ballot

BY SUSAN LAMONT
AND ARLENE RUBENSTEIN

JACKSON, Mississippi—Supporters of the Socialist Workers 2004 national ticket of Róger Calero for U.S. president and Arrin Hawkins for vice president made a big push June 17-20 to get enough signatures to place the socialist candidates on the Mississippi ballot for the November elections. As of June 20, they had collected more than 2,000 signatures, double the state requirement.

Campaigners from throughout the South are petitioning in Jackson, the state capital and Mississippi's largest city. A second team of campaign supporters is gathering signatures in Pascagoula and Biloxi, two cities on the Gulf of Mexico. A third team is doing the same in Natchez.

“The response of students at Jackson State University (JSU) has been fantastic,” reported Nicole Sarmiento, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Senate in Florida, who came to support the petitioning effort here along with other SWP candidates from Florida, as well as Alabama, Georgia, and Texas.

One JSU student, John Handy, told Sarmiento that he agreed with the demand “U.S. Troops Out of Iraq!” on the socialists' campaign flyer. “This reminds me of the students who were killed here over 30 years ago, for protesting the Vietnam war,” he said. “The history of this university is a fighting history, and we're still struggling for civil rights.” He also noted that the 40th anniversary of Freedom Summer is approaching. That's when thousands of students from northern universities came to the South to join the civil rights fight. “You've come to the right place,” Handy told the socialist petitioners.

Brian Williams, another SWP campaign supporter, said many students at Jackson State said they strongly agreed with the demands by the Socialist Workers campaign to “prosecute those responsible for the murder of Emmett Till to the fullest extent of the law.”

Till, 14, an African-American from Chicago, was kidnapped and tortured to death by racist thugs in 1955 in Money, Mississippi. Till's lynching became one of the most well-known cases of racist brutality and helped spark the struggle for Black freedom in the 1950s and '60s. His case was reopened in May after a New York film maker produced and widely circulated a documentary that provides new evidence in the case.

“I feel very compelled about this issue,” Jonathan Walker, a sophomore at Jackson State, told Williams, “because for all these years the criminals have not been brought to justice.”

The state requires 1,000 signatures of registered voters to place independent candidates on the ballot in Mississippi. As we go to press, 2,175 people had signed. Petitioning in shopping centers, campaigners got a friendly response from



Campaign volunteer Brian Williams (right) petitions June 18 in parking lot of shopping center in Jackson, Mississippi, to place SWP presidential ticket on ballot.

workers, farmers, and young people interested to learn that they can put on the ballot a working-class alternative to the Democrats and Republicans. The six electors for Calero and Hawkins include a farmer from Tchula, a town in the Mississippi Delta, and a Steelworkers union member and former striker at Titan Tire in Natchez.

Petitioning in Jackson coincided with events marking the 40th anniversary of the racist murder by the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) in 1964 of three young civil rights workers—James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner.

Recently, a group of citizens—including NAACP leaders, and businessmen and elected officials—in Philadelphia, Mississippi, where the murders took place, has called for a new investigation into the case, one of the most important unsolved murders of the civil rights era. On June 4, Mississippi attorney general Jim Hood told reporters that he has asked the U.S. Justice Department for help in the investigation. Philadelphia mayor Rayburn Waddell also called for justice in the case on behalf of the city administration. A commemoration of the three slain civil rights workers took place Sunday, June 20, at the Neshoba County Coliseum in Philadelphia. The renewed pressure to reopen investigations into the murders follows the announcement that the Till case was being reopened.

Petitioners took part in a conference titled “Unsettling Memories: Culture and Trauma in the Deep South” held at Jackson State University June 15-21. The conference dealt in part with the experiences of slavery and the civil rights movement.

The exhibit *Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America* is also on display at the Jackson State University campus. It shows graphically many examples of the thousands of lynchings that

took place in the Jim Crow South.

What has changed since that time in the South through the civil rights revolution, and the challenges that remain part of today's reality, were part of the experiences of SWP campaign supporters here.

During petitioning June 5 outside a store in Meridian, a small town in eastern Mississippi, for example, an older man in overalls approached campaign supporters asking them what they were doing. After hearing an explanation of the SWP ticket, the man, who is white, and who said he grew cotton, soybeans, and vegetables near Meridian, took the board and signed the petition to put Calero and Hawkins on the ballot.

As he was wrapping up, a lumpen-looking guy, who was also white, came over and told the farmer, “Do you know what you just did? You signed for communists!” The man had confronted socialist petitioners a few minutes earlier outside another store, telling them he wanted to “put a bullet in every one of your heads,” and then going inside the shop and convincing management to ask SWP campaign supporters to leave.

After a few minutes of taking in the anti-communist rhetoric spewed by this guy, the farmer looked at him and said, “Well, if you give me two capitalists and two communists, I'll take the communists every time.” The right-winger realized he wasn't getting much mileage and finally walked away.

Meanwhile, a worker who is Black was leaning against the store wall, watching the scene. One of the petitioners went over to explain to him what was going on. “I know what's going on,” he said. “That guy is in the KKK,” he added, referring to the rightist. Asked if he knew the right-winger, the man responded, “No, but I've known people like that all my life.” He then took the pen and signed the petition to put the SWP slate on the ballot.

Calero and Hawkins, socialist candidates

Below are the campaign biographies of Róger Calero and Arrin Hawkins, the 2004 Socialist Workers Party candidates for U.S. president and vice-president, respectively.

Róger Calero, 35, is an associate editor of the Spanish-language magazine *Perspectiva Mundial* and a staff writer for the *Militant*. He lives in Newark, New Jersey. Calero has lived in the United States since 1985, when his family moved from Nicaragua to Los Angeles. He joined the socialist movement there in 1993 and is a member of the Socialist Workers Party's



Militant/Glova Scott

Róger Calero, right, talks to workers at meat processing plant in Washington, D.C. in July 2003 about lessons of his victory against government attempts to deport him.

National Committee, serving on the SWP's national trade union work leadership committee.

In Los Angeles Calero helped mobilize support in October 1994 against Proposition 187, a California ballot measure intended to deny undocumented workers and their children access to public education, health care, and other social services.

Working as a meat packer in the Midwest a few years later, Calero participated in a groundbreaking union-organizing drive at Dakota Premium Foods in South St. Paul, Minnesota. Immigrant and native-born workers came together to bring United Food and Commercial Workers Local 789 into that plant. More recently Calero has joined the efforts to expand labor solidarity with the United Mine Workers of America strike by 75 coal miners fighting for union recognition and safe working conditions at the Co-Op mine in Huntington, Utah.

In December 2002, immigration cops arrested Calero upon his return to the United States from reporting assignments at a conference held in Havana, Cuba, protesting the Free Trade Area of the Americas—a pact Washington is trying to impose on the region to extend its imperialist domination—and a congress in Guadala-

jara, Mexico, of the Continental Organization of Latin American and Caribbean Students.

Winning broad support from defenders of immigrant and workers rights and freedom of the press, and with the backing of the Socialist Workers Party, Calero waged a public campaign that prevented his deportation to Nicaragua and successfully defended his right to live and work in this country. The victorious struggle set an example of how to fight to win and inspired others in similar situations to resist and beat back government attempts to exclude them from the United States.

Arrin Hawkins, 28, is a garment worker in New York. She was the Socialist Workers Party candidate for Lt. Governor of New York in 2002.

Hawkins joined the Young Socialists in 2000 in the Twin Cities. She has also worked as an airline baggage handler and as a meat packer. In 2000 and 2001 she worked on the cut floor at the American Meat Packing Corporation plant in Chicago where she was involved in a union fight to win severance pay for hundreds of workers after the plant was shut down and the workers laid off without having received prior notice of the shutdown. The workers there mobilized to win broad labor and community support for their fight for back pay, health care coverage and severance pay.

Hawkins has been a part of international delegations to Cuba for the Cuba-US Youth Exchange in 2001 and 2003.



Militant/Cappy Kidd

Arrin Hawkins, front, and other United Food and Commercial Workers members picket American Meat Packing Corp. in Chicago December 2001.

She participated in the conference of the Organization of Latin American and Caribbean Students held in Havana in 2000. She represented the Young Socialists at the World Festival of Youth and Students held in Algiers, Algeria in 2001, and afterwards visited the camps of the Polisario independence fighters in Tindouf, Algeria.

Hawkins helped build the April 25, 2004, March for Women's Lives in Washington, DC, where hundreds of thousands marched in defense of a woman's right to choose abortion.

Nader courts liberals, radicals, rightists in presidential bid

BY PAUL PEDERSON

In his "independent" bid for the presidency in the 2004 elections, Ralph Nader has been courting both left-liberal as well as rightist forces.

Nader, a liberal politician who made his name as a so-called consumer advocate exposing "excesses" by big corporations, ran as the Green Party's presidential nominee in the 1996 and 2000 elections. Running candidates against Democrats and Republicans, the Greens have acted as the left wing of the Democratic Party.

In 2000 Nader's Green Party campaign ran in 43 states and garnered 3 percent of the vote. According to a recent poll by *Investors Business Daily*, Nader today would take 5 percent of the vote in a three-way race with the two main capitalist parties.

In this year's presidential race, Nader has decided not to run on the ticket of any one party. He is seeking the endorsement of the Green Party, which has ballot lines in 23 states.

On June 21, two days before the opening of the Green Party convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Nader announced that his running mate would be Peter Camejo, the Greens' candidate for California governor last year.

Nader has also been endorsed by the rightist Reform Party and has welcomed support from fascist-minded politician Patrick Buchanan.

The Reform Party was founded by billionaire Ross Perot, who in 1992 won 19 percent of the presidential vote by making a radical rightist appeal to the insecure middle classes. He demagogically promised to "clean out the stables" in Washington and bring economic stability with an iron hand. The Reform Party has waned in subsequent national elections. This year it has ballot status in seven states.

Buchanan, like the group founded by Perot, denounces the two main capitalist parties for betraying the needs of "the little guy." But unlike Perot's followers, who promote an electoral movement, Buchanan is an incipient fascist politician whose longer-term goal is to recruit cadres to build a popular, ultrarightist street movement. In 2000 his supporters took over the Reform Party as a temporary vehicle, abandoning it

after the elections. Buchanan writes regular columns in his biweekly magazine, *The American Conservative*.

Nader presents his campaign as an "anti-monopoly" and "peace" alternative to the two main big-business parties and argues that these "progressive" positions can be shared by voters across the bourgeois political spectrum.

While coming from different directions, what Nader shares with both the Reform Party and the Buchananites is an American nationalist standpoint—from their opposition to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) to their calls for controlling immigration in the name of protecting "American workers."

Support from Buchanan

"Ralph Nader Makes a Play for the Right," reads the cover of the June 21 issue of *The American Conservative*. In a feature interview, Nader makes the case for why supporters of Buchanan should consider backing his presidential campaign. Spoonfed questions by the rightist politician, Nader outlines their points of agreement.

Nader rails against NAFTA and the World Trade Organization (WTO). Like Buchanan, he claims that the U.S. government is held hostage by the WTO, which he presents as a body that supposedly imposes unfavorable trade policies on U.S. business and violates "American sovereignty." In reality, the WTO, made up of government representatives from different countries, is dominated by Washington and other imperialist powers and is used by the U.S. rulers as one more tool to advance their economic interests around the world. Similarly, NAFTA, a trade pact between the U.S., Canadian, and Mexican governments, is used by U.S. capitalists to bolster their competitive edge against imperialist rivals in Europe and Japan.

"Conservatives are upset about the sovereignty-shredding WTO and NAFTA," Nader said. "I wish they had helped us more when we tried to stop them in Congress because, with a modest conservative push, we would have defeated NAFTA because it was narrowly passed. If there was no NAFTA, there wouldn't have been a WTO."

"The decisions," Nader said, "are now in

Geneva, bypassing our courts, our regulatory agencies, our legislatures."

"I find it amazing that Congress sits there and they get an order from the WTO, and they capitulate," Buchanan concurred. "What happened to bristling conservative defiance, 'don't tread on me' patriotism?"

Nader declared that "giant multinational corporations have no allegiance to any country or community." Spelling out the economic nationalist character of this argument, he stated that President George Bush "is encouraging the shipment of whole industries and jobs to a despotic Communist regime in China." The anti-China campaign is a major element of protectionist opposition to the WTO.

He said the interests of "American workers" must come before those in other parts of the world. Arguing that immigrants cause unemployment and depress wages, Nader stated, "14 million Americans are unemployed or part-time employed who want full employment or have given up looking for jobs." If the minimum wage were increased, then U.S.-born workers instead of immigrants "will do so-called work that Americans won't do."

"We have to control our immigration," Nader said. "We have to limit the number of people who come into this country illegally." To do this he insisted that Washington "enforce the law against employers" to prevent them from hiring immigrant workers without documents.

He spoke against an amnesty for undocumented immigrants. "I don't like the idea of legalization because then the question is how do you prevent the next wave and the next."

Buchanan asked, "Would that have an adverse impact on the environment?" Nader's response was, "We don't have the absorptive capacity for that many people."

On foreign policy, Nader called for reducing U.S. troop deployments abroad as a way to cut the U.S. budget deficit. "You bring the troops home from Europe and Korea and the Balkans?" Buchanan asked. "We are presently defending prosperous nations like Japan, Germany, and England, who are perfectly capable of defending themselves against nonexistent enemies," Nader replied.

Criticizing the U.S.-led war on Iraq, Nader said Washington's policies in the Middle East are dictated by the Israeli government. "Both parties concede their independent judgment to the pro-Israel lobbies in this country," he said. The "Congressional and White House puppets" do the bidding of Tel Aviv, he alleged, and "when the chief puppeteer comes to Washington, the puppets prance."

Nader's argument converges with that of Buchanan and other Jew-haters who claim that the Israeli government and its "amen corner" in Washington control the foreign policy decisions of the U.S. rulers.

On China, Iraq, and other questions, Nader said, he would find agreement among "conservative Republicans" like Buchanan's supporters as opposed to the "corporate Republicans" that back Bush.

"Did you see how Nader differentiated between the corporate Republicans and the traditional conservatives?" Kevin Zeese said in a June 18 phone interview with the *Militant*. Zeese, who considers himself a "left progressive," is a Nader spokesperson and Green Party member. "The traditional conservatives agree with us on a number of things like trade agreements and the war on Iraq. On these points we agree with the Reform Party. Conservatives are also upset with the Patriot Act and the budget deficit."

Nader said the concentration of wealth and the growth of monopolies must be checked so that the true principles of capitalism can be restored. "Concentrated corporate power violates many principles of capitalism," he said. "Capitalism is premised on a level playing field; the most meritorious is supposed to win. Tell that to a small inventor or a small businessman up against McDonald's or a software programmer up against Microsoft."

Socialist groups back Nader

Nader's campaign has also received support from some middle-class socialist organizations. One is Socialist Alternative, a group that has campus chapters in several U.S. cities. Nader's "insurgent campaign against the Democrats and Republicans...will be the best way in the

Continued on Page 10

Trade unions are primary target of fascists

Below is an excerpt from *Fascism and Big Business*, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for June. It is a comprehensive study of fascism as it evolved in Italy and Germany in the 1920s and 1930s. First published in French in 1936, *Fascism and Big Business* shows how fascism, far from being an aberration in mass psychology, arose from the specific conditions of the capitalist system in crisis.

The excerpt printed here is from chapter eight of the book, entitled, "Fascism in power: Taming the proletariat." It reviews how the trade unions and other working-class organizations were the central targets of the fascist movements in Italy and Germany, and that their attacks on the workers movement began long before the political victory of the fascists. Copyright © 1973 by



Nazi swastika flies over trade union headquarters occupied by fascist storm-troopers in Munich, Germany, in 1933.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BY DANIEL GUERIN

The industrialists have attained their ends: at last they have at their command the "strong state" they wanted. Through a series of economic and social measures, the fascist state will try to check the decline of their profits and make their businesses pay once more.

This action is directed *first and essentially against the working class*. The fascist state begins by creating conditions that will

permit the slashing of wages. This means the destruction of labor unions, the end of their representation inside the factories, the abolition of the right to strike, the nullification of union contracts, and the reestablishment of the absolute rule of the employers in their businesses.

But this is only the first part of the program. In addition, it must prevent any future independent groupings in the working masses. Hence the fascist state puts all its authority at the service of the employers. It herds the workers into organizations where they can be policed, with leaders appointed from above—organizations which the members have no way of controlling, and which only by the sheerest imposture style themselves the workers' "representatives." The state severely punishes every attempt to strike; henceforth to fight the boss is to rebel against the state. To forestall all labor conflicts, it exercises compulsory "arbitration"—that is to say, it disguises the employers' wishes as arbitrate decisions,

and anyone contesting these decisions is considered an enemy of the state. Finally, it sanctions with its authority whatever wages the industrialists are pleased to pay those they exploit. Not to accept these wages is to disobey the state.

In Italy

The destruction of the labor unions in Italy began considerably before the taking of power, which makes it necessary to retrace some of our steps. Fascism first attacked the agricultural unions, as the most vulnerable. It wrecked the offices of the "Red Leagues" and cooperatives of the agricultural workers and assassinated the labor leaders responsible for these organizations. At the same time, fascist "unions" were founded under the patronage of the big landowners. "How were these fascist unions born?" Mussolini asked later, and replied: "Birth date: 1921. Place: the Po valley. Circumstances: the conquest and destruction of the revolutionary fortresses." Every means

of pressure was brought to force workers to enroll in the fascist "unions." The landowners gave work only to laborers who belonged to the fascist unions and made contracts only with tenant farmers who belonged to them; the banks gave credit only to farmers who were members of the fascist organizations. "Fascist" unemployed were brought from great distances, escorted by "squadra." As soon as they arrived in the district, "the local landowners ignored the union employment offices and tore up the union contracts with no fear of strikes, for the immigrant unemployed... were there to replace local labor. In this way the 'Red' unions were smashed." In certain centers, where the socialist and cooperative ideas were firmly rooted, the resistance was stubborn and lasted for years. But gradually the farm workers, condemned to die of hunger if they did not yield to the demands of their employers, resigned themselves to entering the fascist "unions," either individually or in groups. "They bundled up cards, membership lists, and flags," Gorgolini has related, "and went in a troop to deposit them at the headquarters of the nearest *Fascio*."

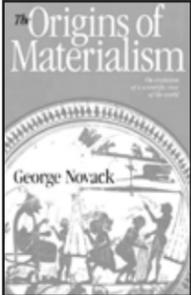
It was chiefly after the conquest of power, however, that fascism dared attack the unions of industrial workers. After the March on Rome, the local Fasci almost everywhere succeeded in getting hold of the lists of union members, whom they gathered together and advised, under threats of violence, to join the fascist "unions." Those who were found to carry "Red" union cards were beaten up, persecuted and boycotted. Bosses hired, and employment offices accepted, only the workers who had fascist "union" cards. Frequently the industrialists themselves enrolled their employees in the fascist "unions" and deducted the membership dues from their wages. Rossi, in his book on the *Birth of Fascism*, tells how the management of the great Terni steel plants helped fascism destroy the "Red" union. After July, 1922, the mills were closed down for lack of orders. The "Red" union had received assurances that they would re-open September 1. But on that date they were still shut down. Then the fascists invaded the city, called the Socialists "liars" and "cowards" and set fire to the two labor exchanges. This operation completed, the management reopened the steel mills. Thereafter it would deal only with the fascist "unions."

June BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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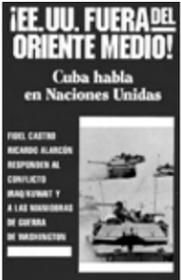
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Some rare truth—“We routinely treat prisoners in the United States like animals. We brutalize them and degrade them, both men



Harry Ring

and women.”—Columnist Bob Herbert in the May 31 *New York Times*.

The Clinton record—Columnist Herbert cites some of the gruesome inmate cases document-

ed in court suits. He points to the curbs on such suits by the Prison Litigation Reform Act, which bars “frivolous” inmate damage suits. And, also, denial of compensation for emotional injury without a showing of prior physical injury. The measure was signed into law in 1996 by then-president William Clinton.

Fact of the week—“The treatment of detainees in Iraq was far from an aberration. They too were treated like animals, which was simply a logical extension of the way we treat prisoners here at home.”—Bob Herbert.

Like he said—“More than a

third of the prisoners who died in U.S. custody in Iraq and Afghanistan were shot, strangled or beaten by U.S. personnel before they died, according to death certificates and a high-ranking U.S. military official.”—News item.

Prison housing—“The Arkansas board of corrections said it plans to seek permission from the legislature to build a 200-bed women’s unit. It reported that state prisons held 760 women, 98 over capacity. An additional 163 women are being held in county jails while awaiting beds in state prisons.”—New item.

Hit them early—In Tucson,

Arizona, a cop fired a Taser stun gun at a handcuffed child aged nine. Police said she was a runaway from a children’s home.

Temperature rising?—“Indiana: Bedford—Two cars were flipped over and one set on fire as strikers at a Visteon auto parts plant tried to stop four buses bringing in replacement workers into the factory. It was the latest in several confrontations at the plant since the strike began Sunday after union members rejected a contract offer. State police said three people were arrested.”—June 3, *USA Today*.

See, there was a stash—“Bush shows off Saddam’s pistol to se-

lect White House guests.”—News headline.

Exxon shares your pain—“When people talk about feeling a pinch because the price of crude oil is going up, we understand that.” That’s from the top dog at Exxon Mobil. They understand, he explained, because they’re paying \$40 a barrel for crude oil that cost a mere \$10 six years ago.

This is interesting since in this past year Exxon Mobil racked up a record profit of \$21.5 billion—despite the higher cost of crude. Maybe Exxon recalls the old capitalist wheeze, “We lose money on every barrel, but we sell so many....”

Pennsylvania nursing home workers walk out

BY BOB TUCKER AND MARTY RESSLER

WASHINGTON, Pennsylvania—“Blow your horns!” shouted workers picketing Washington Presbyterian Senior Care here June 5. Many passersby and families visiting residents did. “Thank you!” responded the strikers. The 154 nursing home workers who are members of Service Employees International Union Local (SEIU) 1199P are demanding more hiring to raise the paltry staffing levels, an across-the-board pay increase, and improved medical benefits.

Workers on strike at the facility include certified nursing assistants (CNA), licensed practical nurses (LPN), maintenance, laundry and dietary workers, personal care attendants, housekeepers, pharmacy technicians, and bus drivers.

“About 117 of us turned out for the first day of picketing” June 1, said striker Linda Nakutis. The previous week workers had rejected the company’s contract offer 85-6. “They offered us a 10-cent raise the first year and 15 cents for the next two years,” Nakutis said.

Company goons who guard the facility have attacked protesters, union members said.

“We were marching in a circle and a truck was trying to leave, we were taking our time marching, when all of a sudden the guards charged at us and roughed some of us up pretty bad,” said SEIU vice president Gladys Sampson. She described how one of these company goons elbowed her in the chest. “One woman was dragged on the street and scratched her knees all up. An official from 1199 had several ribs broken.”

Following the spirited rally, the company filed for and won an injunction against strikers and their supporters. Washington County judge Paul Pozonsky sided with the company in his ruling, limiting pickets to a total of 20, with no more than five permitted at each entrance. The ruling also reduces the parking area for strikers to 10 cars and strips them of their bullhorn.

Despite the restrictions, the 24-hour picket line remains strong and upbeat. Picket duty is four hours, but some workers stay all day, strikers said. SEIU members have set up a picket tarp with a grill, and each picket spot has coolers packed with drinks and snacks. Strikers report they get

six free pizzas a day from Joe’s, a nearby restaurant.

Many workers at the medical center make under \$8 an hour. Kathleen Plymire, a 22-year old dietary worker with four months on the job, has a starting wage of \$7.37. As a part-time worker she gets no medical benefits, though she often works 30 hours a week. “I think the company should consider everybody full time, with full-time benefits,” Plymire said.

Nancy Swaggard, who works part-time as an activity aide is paid \$7.94 per hour, and pays \$186 every two weeks for healthcare.

Judy Briggs, who wore a bright, hand-printed, pro-strike T-shirt, explained that a number of workers pick up two or three days of overtime every two weeks to cover healthcare costs. “It costs \$198 every two weeks for a spouse,” she said.

Nursing home workers are often pressured to work overtime, due to poor staffing levels. “Three CNA’s work with 54 patients,” Briggs said. “We are for a ratio more like eight patients per person. Not 12, 13, and 15.” Federal law requires each patient to get a minimum of 2.7 hours of care daily. Strikers point out that this minimum time is way too low. “Patients only get the minimum requirements: one bath a week!” exclaimed housekeeper Maureen Harris, pointing to the effects of a shorthanded workforce. “The number of people working together on a shift makes a big difference in the level of care we can give.”

“The ratio is definitely the main issue,” commented SEIU local 1199P president Joyce Nichols. “And they would like to institute forced overtime. People pay \$6,000 a month for a semi-private room to send their relatives here. They should get the best care we can provide.”

The union is pushing for a \$10 across-the-board minimum wage for all workers at Presbyterian Senior Care with a 75-cent increase each year of a three-year contract. Workers also demand an end to forced overtime.

Union members noted that the company claims to have had a \$400,000 shortfall last year. But this hasn’t stopped the bosses from redecorating all floors and carrying out other renovations, workers added. The company has a number of subsidiary profit-

making businesses, such as condo and retirement home rentals, catering, laundry, and a bus service. The company uses medical center personnel to provide these services.

The company has maintained some level of operation through a combination of scabs brought in from their nonunion Oakmont facility and the doctors and unorganized nurses on staff.

“We’ve kept things going and plan to continue to do so,” boasted Senior Care spokesperson Earl Bugaile.

Families of residents tell a different story. “The newspapers say everything is going



Militant/Marty Ressler

Doris Fisher and Judy Briggs, members of SEIU 1199P in Washington, Pennsylvania, on strike June 6 against Washington Presbyterian Senior Care center.

well,” said Rebecca Simpson, who says she has been visiting the facility daily for nearly nine years. “It’s not. The place was a disaster on Monday and Tuesday. I called the health department on them. Some people aren’t getting baths and some are not being gotten out of bed.” This could prove fatal for some patients, she added. “I support the strike 100 percent.”

Commenting about staffing levels and the 2.7-hour minimum time of care per patient, Simpson said, “You can’t lift a 230-pound person in and out of bed several times a day and give them all the care they need in 2.7 hours. The company is looking to cut costs and save money and you can’t do that when caring for the sick and elderly.”

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —



July 6, 1979

Blacks, women, and the entire labor movement scored a major civil rights victory June 27 when the U.S. Supreme Court rejected Brian Weber’s challenge to affirmative action.

The five-to-two ruling is one of the most significant civil rights decisions since the one on school desegregation twenty-five years ago.

Weber, a white lab technician at the Kaiser Aluminum plant in Gramercy, Louisiana, had charged that the affirmative-action training plan at his plant constituted “reverse discrimination” against white male workers.

Under the plan, which had been negotiated by the United Steelworkers as part of its 1974 contract with Kaiser, half of the openings in a craft training program were to be filled by Black and women workers.

Last year the same court ruled in favor of Allan Bakke, throwing out affirmative-action admission programs in higher education. The decisive difference this time around was the broad opposition to Weber by the labor movement. The AFL-CIO and most major unions backed the United Steelworkers’ defense of the affirmative-action plan.

That is the real significance of this ruling. It can spur the labor movement to fight on a new scale for goals, quotas, and meaningful affirmative-action plans to help counter centuries of discrimination and to strengthen the unions.



July 5, 1954

The State Department’s use of force and violence to overthrow the legally elected government of Guatemala found few defenders anywhere. Throughout Latin America, masses of students and workers staged bitter protest demonstrations. As a result, the general opinion among press correspondents was that “No matter what happens in Guatemala, the United States is the loser.”

The only voices to speak out in support of U.S. policies were landlords, peanut dictators and upper-class grafters who feed directly at the Washington trough. The oppressive regimes of Honduras, El Salvador, Colombia, Brazil, etc, in answer to the bidding of the State Department played their roles in the United Nations and elsewhere but they did not represent their peoples’ sentiments.

Students of Havana staged a public mass meeting which was broken up by the police. After many of the demonstrators were arrested, workers and students of Havana stoned the offices of the United Press and the North American Electric Company.

The Chilean Central Labor Union of Santiago called a nation-wide one-hour work stoppage to protest United States intervention in Guatemala. Chilean newspapers supporting U.S. policy were stoned by demonstrators and the Chilean Chamber of Deputies voted 34 to 15 to condemn the invasion as “aggression.”

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Farrell Dobbs

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The war over electricity

Under the self-serving banner of “opposing nuclear proliferation,” Washington, London, and other imperialist powers are on an offensive to prevent Third World nations from using nuclear power as a source of electricity and other vital energy needs. Today, Iran and North Korea are among their main targets.

This represents a war by the wealthiest powers against the world’s oppressed nations to keep them from using every means at their disposal to make progress in bringing much of humanity out of darkness.

The labor movement in the United States and other industrialized countries should oppose this imperialist offensive. As an elementary act of solidarity, we should champion the efforts by workers and farmers in the Third World to expand electrification in their countries.

First of all, Washington and its cohorts have no right to insist that *they* should have nuclear weapons but no one else can be allowed to develop them. This arrogant stance has nothing to do with preventing nuclear war. On the contrary, the biggest threat to humanity is the drive by the U.S. rulers and their imperialist competitors to rely on military might—including the threat of using nuclear weapons, and a “missile shield” to give them first-strike capability—to continue to dominate and exploit the oppressed nations of the world.

Secondly, the imperialist governments dismiss efforts by governments in the Third World to develop nuclear power for meeting energy needs. Washington even has the gall to “advise” Iran that it doesn’t need to develop nuclear energy and instead should rely on its oil and natural gas reserves!

Iran faces rapidly increasing energy needs. Since the 1979 popular revolution that overthrew the U.S.-backed shah, the country’s population has more than doubled from 32 million to 70 million, while its oil production is only 70 percent of the pre-1979 level. Iran’s electrical power generation has not kept up with growing energy needs, especially in the countryside. Iranian officials explain that they are developing their nuclear program to meet these expanding energy needs. Relying only on fossil fuels—instead of diversifying its energy sources—would condemn Iran to become an importer of crude oil in coming decades, and to suffer the environmental consequences of pollution from burning such fuels. The imperialist powers seek to prevent Iran from developing

nuclear reactors that produce enriched uranium—but that element is essential for the development of nuclear energy, not just for weapons.

Iran is just one example of the reality facing the overwhelming majority of humanity. Today, 2 billion people—one-third of the world’s population—have no access to modern energy. They must rely on candles or kerosene lamps for lighting, and on wood, dung, thatch, and straw for fuel. In semicolonial countries there is a big disparity in conditions between city and countryside. In Ghana, for example, barely 4 percent of the rural population has access to electricity. In Pakistan the figure is 40 percent. Even in Brazil, one of the most industrialized semicolonial nations, nearly 40 percent of rural areas are not electrified. The only parts of the world that come close to universal electrification are the imperialist countries, as well as the workers states in Russia and Eastern Europe. In Cuba, because workers and farmers have taken political power and carried out a socialist revolution, 95 percent of the country is electrified.

Coal and oil are the most widely used energy sources in the world. But these fuels take a huge toll on public health and the environment, and are not the solution to meeting humanity’s longer-term energy needs. Nor are solar power or wind power.

In contrast to the industrialized powers of the imperialist world, the more than 75 percent of humanity who live in the semicolonial countries have little or no access to nuclear power, which produces the greatest amount of energy with the least use of resources and the smallest output of atmospheric pollution. In the semicolonial world in particular, harnessing nuclear power could make all the difference in the ability to extend electrification to the entire population.

Electrification is an elementary precondition for modern industry and cultural life. It is part of narrowing the gap between the conditions of working people in city and countryside. It is necessary to raise the level of culture in the rural areas, especially, and to overcome, even in the most remote areas of any land, backwardness, ignorance, poverty, and disease. Championing the fight for electrification poses the need to forge an alliance of workers and farmers in a common struggle to take political power out of the hands of the capitalist exploiters and begin transforming society in the interests of the vast majority.

Nader courts liberals, radicals, rightists

Continued from Page 7

2004 elections to forward the interests of workers, young people, women, people of color, LGBT [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender] people, the environment, and the anti-war movement,” states a pamphlet put out by the group.

A vote for Nader is “a vote for radical change,” reads a statement by Socialist Alternative. He “is challenging the war in Iraq and corporate domination over our society.” His campaign can help defeat Bush, who the group says “is the most right-wing administration in decades.” The problem with the Democratic Party and its candidate, John Kerry, the statement says, is that they “offer no alternative to Bush.”

They complain that a Kerry White House would continue the U.S.-led occupation of Iraq and other reactionary policies. They criticize him for backing NAFTA, the WTO, and “PNTR with China”—that is, permanent normal trade relations.

Another group, the International Socialist Organization (ISO), actively backed Nader in the 2000 campaign. In the current election campaign it has so far withheld its support, citing Nader’s acceptance of the Reform Party’s endorsement and his refusal to sharply criticize the Kerry campaign. In a May 28 editorial published in its paper, *Socialist Worker*, the ISO urged Nader to change course and held open the door to backing Nader as the campaign progresses. “The urgency of building a left-wing alternative to the two parties is profound,” the editorial read. “Nader could be that alternative in Election 2004—but not if he continues to celebrate his support from the right, and not if he pulls his punches when it comes to Kerry.”

In a recent “open letter to Ralph Nader and Nader campaign activists,” several leaders of Socialist Alternative criticized Nader for accepting the Reform Party ballot lines but did not withdraw their support for his campaign.

Green Party activist Zeese said he was confident the ISO would again back the Nader campaign. “I think we’ll see a lot of the campus support come back,” he said. “I was part of a conference call last week with some ISO leaders and it was very positive.” He said the ISO was one of the more politically active groups on university campuses that support Nader, providing the campaign “with an army of activists.”

Democrats’ greener pastures

While Nader refused to stand for nomination as the Green Party’s candidate in this election, he has said he would welcome its endorsement. A substantial number of Green Party figures, including Camejo, have called on the Green Party to endorse Nader.

Camejo has received the second-highest number of delegates to the Greens’ June 23–28 convention, and said he will urge his supporters to endorse Nader.

The leading contender for nomination at the Green Party convention is David Cobb, a leader of the party from Texas, who represents Greens who are uncomfortable with challenging the Democratic Party directly in the elections.

Nancy Allen, a spokesperson for the Green Party, said, “David Cobb will run a ‘safe states’ strategy” that will not challenge Democrat John Kerry in any of the states where the race will be close.” On his web site, Cobb calls on voters “to go all out for Green Party victories at all levels in the likely 40 states where the electoral college vote for the President is not in doubt.”

“A John Kerry administration represents a lesser evil than another catastrophic George Bush administration,” Cobb’s campaign states.

Allen said that if no one wins the 50 percent of the vote that is required to be nominated by the Green Party convention, the delegates would then vote whether to endorse a candidate. “Many Greens were disappointed when Nader didn’t stand for nomination,” she said.

Corrections

The article “California students protest cuts in education” in the June 14 issue contained two errors. It said in the fourth paragraph that San Francisco State University students “will face higher tuition costs and will not be eligible for financial aid.” The students will be eligible for such aid. In the eighth paragraph the article said that high school students in West Contra Costa County “walked out in April and are currently conducting a hunger strike and march to Sacramento.” The students did walk out, but it was the parents and teachers who conducted the hunger strike.

On page 8 of the June 28 issue, the picture caption and introduction incorrectly describe the Greek philosopher Thales and the Milesian School he founded as existing in the fifth and sixth centuries. The correct date is the fifth and sixth century B.C.

On page 7 of the same issue, the photographer of the 1987 photo of the border between Haiti and the Dominican Republic was inadvertently omitted. The credit should have read: National Geographic Image Collection/James P. Blair.

On Jew-hatred

BY ROBERT SIMMS

In a letter to the editor, reader Steve Gabosch says that the “neo-con” conspiracy claims come from the right wing and that liberals and radicals who “buy into” or disseminate these claims are not actually proponents of anti-Semitism, or Jew-hatred. This is incorrect.

Conspiracy theories can have their origin and be used equally by ultra-rightists, fascists, liberals, and Stalinists or other radicals. Such “theories” are an attempt to provide an answer to a “mystery,” that is the capitalist system, by those who refuse to use the methods of scientific socialism or Marxism. How to explain the sudden breakdowns in the economy, or sudden shifts in government policy, or failures in foreign policy and war? Who and what is responsible?

In the case of the “neo-con conspiracy,” this “theory” attempts to explain the ascendancy of the war party in the United States. Its proponents claim that a small group of Department of Defense officials, mostly Jewish, have captured the foreign policy-making function of Washington, especially on Middle East questions. Most variants of these claims state that those in this group are admirers of the rightist Likud party in Israel and believe that U.S. government policy should be closely aligned with it. A red-baiting variant claims to trace one strand

REPLY TO A READER

in the intellectual genealogy of this small group’s views back to a “Jewish-Trotskyist” party led by Max Shachtman from the early 1940s on.

U.S. president George Bush and defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld employ officials like Paul Wolfowitz and Douglas Feith because they are effective servants of the U.S. government. Bush and Rumsfeld, however, who are not Jewish, are the top architects of Washington’s current foreign policy course, not their subordinates.

The war party is in the ascendancy because it corresponds to the deepest needs of U.S. imperialism in the present conditions. As the early stages of a world economic depression take hold, and inter-imperialist competition ramps up, control over the most vital resources in the world, oil for example, becomes an imperative for the world’s imperialist powers.

A majority of the billionaire families who rule the United States have become convinced that using U.S. imperialism’s overwhelming military superiority, and transforming their army into a more mobile and agile instrument capable of waging a number of wars at once, is necessary to defend their interests. Not only U.S. president George Bush but Democratic Party presidential candidate John Kerry is part of the war party. Having voted for the war, Kerry boasts he will lead Washington’s “war on terror” more forcefully than Bush and proposes to send more U.S. troops to Iraq to do the job.

Similarly, nearly all the imperialist powers have supported the Israeli state for the past 50 years as a bulwark of imperialism in the Middle East. Israel is a junior imperialist power, and often acts as a “cop” in the region. Washington supports Tel Aviv not because of a “Jewish lobby” in Congress or a “Jewish cabal” in the White House but because it serves the interests of the U.S. ruling class.

In addition, Israel’s existence is not a factor in the use and spread of anti-Semitism, which is governed by the laws of motion of capitalism and has existed in many virulent forms for decades and centuries before the founding of Israel.

The “neo-con” conspiracy theory is laced through and through with Jew-hatred, no matter what the political orientation of the writer or group that spreads it. To a large degree it has originated among ultrarightists such as Lyndon LaRouche’s fascist outfit and among Patrick Buchanan’s incipient fascist following.

The “neo-con” conspiracy claims, however, have also been picked up and adopted by prominent liberals. They have helped lend these claims credibility so that they have been repeated in major bourgeois publications.

The opening line to the article by Seymour Hersh published in the May 12, 2003, issue of the *New Yorker* is “They call themselves self-mockingly The Cabal,” referring to the “neocons” in the Defense of Department. A conservative supporter of the war party who worked in the Pentagon’s Office of Special Plans on Iraq says they do no such thing. David Rubin, writing in the May 18 *National Review*, a conservative magazine, asserts that the term (a Jew-hating one at that) originated among liberal opponents of Rumsfeld and Bush in the Pentagon and the CIA.

The article “Jew-hatred, red-baiting: heart of claims of ‘neo-con’ conspiracy” in the June 28 *Militant* quoted U.S. liberal writer Michael Lind alleging the existence of a “Jewish-American Trotskyist movement of the 1930s and 1940s which morphed into an anti-communist liberalism between the 1950s and 1970s and finally into a kind of militaristic and imperial right with no precedents in American culture or political history” (emphasis added). This argument echoed the standard Jew-hating frame-up of Jews as being “rootless” and “un-American.”

Jew-hatred is not in any way foreign to liberals and middle-class radicals. “Jewish control of Hollywood” or “a Jewish lobby dictates U.S. Mideast policy” are ideas promulgated frequently by insecure middle-class layers and various liberals and radicals.

Whether these people are fools who unwittingly help peddle Jew-hating poison or are conscious Jew-haters is beside the point. The content is Jew-hatred. Anti-Semitism, no matter who spews it, is deadly for the working class and its allies. Taking this on is one of the central tasks of anyone who wants to build a revolutionary leadership of the working class.

Socialist campaign

Continued from Page 6

on Haiti held at Florida International University's North Campus near Miami, a conference in St. Petersburg on the history of the civil rights movement, and at a rally by hospital workers fighting for a union, and other events in Florida, the socialist candidates in that state called for the immediate withdrawal of all U.S. and other imperialist troops from Iraq, Afghanistan, Korea, the Balkans, Haiti, Colombia, and Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. They also called on working people to defend Venezuela against Washington's threats and increased military intervention in South America.

In face of the economic crisis, Sarmiento said the Socialist Workers candidates advocate "jobs for all by cutting the work-week to 30 hours with 40 hours' pay to spread the available work around." The labor movement, she added, should also champion the demand to cancel the Third World debt to banks and other financial institutions in imperialist countries.

A fight around these and other demands, Sarmiento noted, can help unify working people who are resisting the employers' onslaught, while pointing to the need for workers and farmers to overturn capitalist

rule and take political power. "We point to the living example of the Cuban Revolution," she said, which shows it is possible for working people to successfully take that road.

The June 12 rally launched a special fund appeal for the Socialist Workers Party campaign. Those present contributed or pledged more than \$51,000. The appeal runs through August 1. Checks can be made out to the Socialist Workers National Campaign Committee and sent to P.O. Box 42651, Philadelphia, PA 19101.

For more information, write the 2004 SWP campaign at 306 W. 37th St., 10th floor, New York, NY 10018; by e-mail to themilitant@verizon.net; or contact Socialist Workers campaign supporters listed in the directory on page 8.



Militant/Margaret Trowe
Arrin Hawkins, center, SWP candidate for U.S. vice president, helps petitioning effort June 20, in Burlington, Vermont, to put the socialist slate on the ballot.

UN hearing on Puerto Rico's colonial status

Continued from Page 5

24 years, López for 23 years, and Camacho for 18 years. Another prisoner, Juan Segarra Palmer, was released earlier this year. In 1999, the Clinton administration released

11 pro-independence prisoners in face of an international defense campaign on their behalf.

Farinacci explained that the jailing of Puerto Rican independence fighters is one graphic example of what Washington's so-called war on terror is about—using the political police to frame up and deny basic rights to those who oppose the U.S. government's reactionary policies abroad and at home.

Carlos Mondríguez Torres explained that another expression of the colonial status of Puerto Rico is Washington's imposition of the death penalty. The Puerto Rican constitution bans the death penalty, but residents of the island are still subject to capital punishment under U.S. law. Today, 14 Puerto Ricans face the death penalty, said Farinacci. In 2001, a U.S. appeals court revoked a decision by a federal judge in Puerto Rico who had ruled that U.S. death penalty laws did not apply on the island because of the Puerto Rican constitutional ban.

Speaking on behalf of the Young Socialists and Socialist Workers Party, Nicole Sarmiento said that Washington uses Puerto Rico as a springboard to carry out its unceasing imperialist assaults around the world, from the 1999 bombing of Yugoslavia to the invasion and occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan. Sarmiento, a member of the Young Socialists, is the SWP candidate for U.S. Senate in Florida. (See full text of her speech on Page 5.)

Diego Iniquez of the U.S.-based Venceremos Brigade, which organizes solidarity trips to Cuba, said that while Puerto Rico remains a U.S. colony, "Cuba was eventually able to win its political and economic independence." He said Puerto Rico's "commonwealth" status, which allows limited autonomy for the colonial government while keeping all fundamental decisions in the hands of Washington, was simply a "euphemism"

for continued colonial rule.

Different viewpoints were expressed during the hearings on a proposal promoted by the ruling Popular Democratic Party (PPD), which supports the current commonwealth setup, to organize a "Constituent Assembly on Status" that would hold a referendum on Puerto Rico's political status.

A representative of the pro-commonwealth group PROELA spoke in favor of the proposal. Fernando Martín, a leader of the Puerto Rican Independence Party, and Colón of the Hostos National Independence Movement both expressed support for such a measure as a road toward decolonization.

Rosa Meneses of the Nationalist Party, along with the Socialist Front speaker, spoke in opposition to the "assembly on status" initiative. She said any such referendum would not be an expression of the Puerto Rican people's free choice as long as the oppressor power had a gun to their heads.

As a precondition for any truly free constituent assembly, Meneses said, Washington "must withdraw all its armed forces from the Puerto Rican territory, as well as its repressive agencies and courts," and "free all political prisoners remaining in its jails."

At the hearings, one speaker spoke on behalf of the pro-autonomy PPD. Two others defended the position of the New Progressive Party (PNP), which calls on the U.S. government to make Puerto Rico its 51st state.

After the conclusion of the UN hearings, the discussion continued that evening at a public forum at Hunter College, sponsored by ProLibertad. Many of the pro-independence speakers took part in the panel discussion, including Velgara, Ramos, Farinacci, Meneses, Guadalupe, Sarmiento, and Iniquez.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

ALABAMA

Birmingham

What's Behind the Soaring Price of Fuel?

Speaker: William Arth, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Senate from Georgia. Fri., July 2, 7:30 p.m. 3029-A Bessemer Road. Donation: \$5. Tel: (205) 780-0021.

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Oppose Police Brutality! Speakers: Mary Johnson, anti-death penalty activist; David Bates, Justice Coalition of Greater Chicago; Maurice Williams, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Senate; others. Fri., July 2, 7:30 p.m. 2901 W 59th St. Tel: (773) 737-1190.

OHIO

Cleveland

A Working-Class Alternative for Ohio Voters in the 2004 Elections Speakers: Romina Green, Socialist Workers candidate for US Senate; Carole Lesnick, Socialist Workers candidate for State Board of Education. Fri., July 2. Reception, 7:00 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 11018 Lorain Ave. Tel (216) 688-1190.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Jew-Hatred and Conspiracy Theories Today: A Working-Class Response Fri., July 2. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 168 Bloomfield Ave., 2nd floor. Tel (973) 481-0077.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Jew-Hatred and Red-baiting: Heart of "Neo-con" Conspiracy Claims

Speaker: Dave Prince. Fri., July 2. Dinner, 7:00 p.m.; program, 8:00 p.m. 306 W 37th St., 10th floor (north-side elevator). Donation: \$5 dinner, \$5 program. Tel (212) 629-6649.

PENNSYLVANIA

Pittsburgh

Jew-Hatred: Poison to the Working Class Speaker: Jay Ressler, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., June 2, 7:30 p.m.

Celebrate the Cuban Revolution: A Living Example of How Workers and Farmers Can End Capitalist Exploitation Fri., July 9, 7:30 p.m.

Both events to be held at 5907 Penn Ave., room 225 (East Liberty). Tel (412) 365-1090.

—CALENDAR—

OHIO

Cleveland

Campaign Picnic Speakers: Romina Green, Socialist Workers candidate for US Senate; Carole Lesnick, Socialist Workers candidate for State Board of Education. Sun., July 4, 1:00 p.m. Edgewater Park (near pavilion) For information call Socialist Workers Campaign: (216) 688-1190

—LETTERS

Jew-hatred

I just have a couple friendly suggestions regarding the article "Jew-hatred, red-baiting: heart of claims of 'neocon' conspiracy." One, the date was left out of the reference to the Hersh article it quoted—it was May 12, 2003.

Two, the headline could be misconstrued to mean all people that subscribe to the 'neocon' conspiracy, including leftists and liberals, are falling into some kind of Jew-hatred, which is not at all the message in the article. A simple fix to such a headline could be "Jew-hatred, red-baiting: heart of right-wing claims of 'neocon' conspiracy."

For me, this modified headline changes none of the content of the article, and correctly criticizes liberals and leftists that buy into the neo-con conspiracy theory for the real mistake they are making—not being "Jew-haters," which the great majority certainly are not, but for buying into a right-wing conspiracy theory in the first place. Just

a thought.

Steve Gabosch
by e-mail

Mikey Powell case

Thank you for featuring Mikey's case on your website. (See "Protesters in England demand prosecution of killer cops" in Dec. 8, 2003 issue.)

Please note that our temporary website address is http://mysite.wanadoo-members.co.uk/mikeypowell_friends

Over the next few months our permanent website address will be changing to www.mikeypowell-campaign.org

We will keep you informed of changes as they arise. Many thanks for your support on behalf of the Powell Family

For more information contact: Friends Of Mikey Powell Campaign for Justice, P.O. Box 11721, Botany Walk, Ladywood, Birmingham, UK B16 8ZQ.

Tippa Naphtali
Birmingham, England

Keep it real

It warms my heart to see your latest headline story is about a union fight and not the latest tit for tat between the two boss parties, to use a phrase of yours I like. I have always been so impressed with your resolve to keep it real. Thanks for not pandering to the liberal claptrap and doing your best to prepare those of us who pay attention for the bigger fights to come.

Edward Owens
Davis, California

Ludlow massacre

The *Militant's* excellent article on the Utah coal strike in the June 28 issue deserves an historical footnote on the Ludlow Massacre, mentioned at the end of the article. The *Militant* uses 20 as the number of miners and their family members killed by the Colorado National Guard on April 20, 1914. This is the figure used by several authorities, including the United Mineworkers website. But others put the number higher. For example, Philip Foner

states that 32 were killed that day. It may not be clear how many were killed but the brutality was clear.

Eleven children and two women were burned to death in the miners' tent colony when guardsmen intentionally set fire to their tent.

Strike organizer Louis Tikas was murdered in cold blood by guardsmen as he attempted to negotiate a truce.

During the course of the strike 66 miners and their supporters were killed by the Guard, which operated as a death squad for the Rockefeller mines in the area. (This number would have been higher had not the miners made some use of union defense guards to push back the uniformed killers.)

The timing of the massacre is also of note. On April 21, 1914, one day after Rockefeller's murderous assault, Democratic president Woodrow Wilson ordered the U.S. Marine invasion of the Mexican port of Veracruz. At least 300 Mexicans were killed by

this intervention, which occurred during a high point in the Mexican Revolution.

Within months, the Democrat Wilson had also intervened in Colorado, making sure that the Rockefeller mines stayed non-union. But the fighting example of the Ludlow miners and their supporters has inspired many successful UMWA struggles, including to this day!

For many generations, the *Militant* has been a part of the fight to get out the truth on the miners' struggles. Keep up your great work!

David Salner
Frederick, Maryland

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.

9-11 hearings boost U.S. gov't spying Bipartisan commission legitimizes domestic use of military in the U.S.

BY DOUG NELSON

The bipartisan 9-11 commission concluded its 12th and final public hearing June 16-17 in Washington, D.C. The hearings, which began in March 2003, have been used by the U.S. rulers—especially Democrats—to rationalize the steady encroachment on basic rights under the banner of “homeland defense.” The most recent hearing reviewed some of the progress made in strengthening the powers of the U.S. government’s various police and spy agencies since Sept. 11, 2001, and laid out plans to further restructure these agencies to expand domestic spying by the federal police and legitimize the use of the military inside the United States.

A portion of the hearing focused on the

supposed failure of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to notify the North American Aerospace Command (NORAD), which is responsible for deploying fighter aircraft within the United States and Canada, in a timely way of the September 11 hijackings. NORAD commander Ralph Eberhart told the commission that if the FAA had given NORAD adequate notice, it could have shot down the planes that attacked the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. Among other measures, the hearing detailed moves taken since then to set up closer collaboration between the FAA, which regulates civil aviation, and the U.S. military.

Direct communications links have been

set up between FAA facilities, police agencies, and NORAD. The FAA has assigned air traffic controllers to NORAD facilities and set up a 24-hour network, called the Domestic Events Net, to link FAA security and air traffic personnel to all air traffic centers, all NORAD Air Defense Sectors, the Secret Service, U.S. Customs, and other federal agencies. The FAA has also integrated its long-range radar into the NORAD system.

NORAD has dramatically increased its activity as well. “Since September 2001, NORAD has flown over 1,500 active air defense missions,” said Eberhart. “By contrast, only 147 sorties were flown in 2000.”

A 9-11 commission statement in April at

the 10th hearing focused on the restructuring of the FBI and its closer collaboration with other government and cop agencies. According to the statement, appropriations for the FBI’s National Security Program have nearly doubled since September 11.

The statement applauded the USA Patriot Act, passed by Congress at the end of 2001, for having “removed legal hurdles that were widely believed to have hindered the FBI’s intelligence investigations.” The commission complained, however, that the Patriot Act did not go far enough. “Although there is now less hesitancy in seeking approval for electronic surveillance under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act [FISA],” it said, “the application process nonetheless continues to be long and slow.”

FISA established a secret court in the Justice Department in 1978 to enable the FBI to get approval for spying without having to apply at a regular court. This secret court has approved more than 10,000 wiretaps and has never turned down a single police request.

The day after the April hearing, the *New York Times* reported that White House officials are discussing the creation of “a powerful new post of director of national intelligence, which would be given the management of the government’s 15 intelligence agencies, and control of their budgets.” The proposal for such an “intelligence czar” has been a feature of the campaign for president of Democratic candidate John Kerry, who has boasted, “I can fight a far more effective war on terror.”

Pressing along this course has been a recurring theme of the hearings. “We must dramatically accelerate our progress in the area of intelligence collection, analysis, and sharing,” said Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in a June 17 statement. “Consumers of intelligence must be able to ‘pull’ the information they need to plan, decide, and act.... The ‘need to share’ needs to replace the concept of ‘need to know.’”

Polisario envoy tours New Zealand

BY FELICITY COGGAN

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—“We haven’t lost hope, our people are really determined to continue the struggle and prepare themselves for the eventual outcome— independence,” Kamal Fadel, a representative of the Polisario Front, said at a June 1 public meeting here. Polisario is leading the struggle for liberation of Western Sahara from Moroccan occupation and rule. Fadel, who is based in Sydney, Australia, spoke here at the end of a weeklong tour of New Zealand aimed at building support for the Saharawi national liberation struggle.

Western Sahara is a nation of 300,000 people on the northwest coast of Africa. A Spanish colony since 1884, it was occupied by the armies of Morocco and Mauritania after Madrid’s withdrawal in 1975 in the face of a rising independence struggle led by Polisario. When the Polisario fighters forced out Mauritania’s military in 1979, Morocco’s troops extended their occupation across the entire territory.

Tens of thousands of Saharawis, the bulk of the population, fled to refugee camps in the adjacent Algerian desert, where they have lived for three decades. “We live under tents, dependent completely on humanitarian aid, but we’re very organized,” Fadel said. “We’ve avoided hunger and epidemics. We’ve survived and improved conditions.” Fadel explained how Saharawis have set up schools, hospitals, and even gardens in the harsh environment.

During his visit, Fadel spoke at public meetings in four cities and at three university campuses. He also sought the support of the New Zealand government for the Saharawi struggle in meetings with members of parliament and government officials and met with trade unionists, representatives of non-governmental organizations, and the foreign affairs spokesperson for the Green Party.

Fadel was also able to learn about the struggle of the Maori people against national oppression in a meeting with Maori students at the University of Canterbury, and during a tour of the Kura Hoani Waititi. The latter is an educational facility in Auckland where a junior school and high school have been established for students taught entirely in the Maori language.

Western Sahara was listed by the United Nations as a “non-self governing territory” in 1963. “We’re still on that list,” said Fadel.

The Saharawi people fought a war against Moroccan occupation until 1991, when both parties agreed to a UN-brokered ceasefire and a plan for a referendum on independence. “The only stage that was implemented was the ceasefire, which favored Morocco because the war was costing them a lot,” Fadel told students at a meeting at Auckland University. “We don’t have a referendum 12 years later and we don’t have our country. The UN has been there, monitoring the ceasefire, and spent \$600 million, but it has not achieved what it was there to do.”



Polisario soldiers during celebrations of 25th anniversary of independence movement, February 2001.

Last October the Moroccan government rejected another plan to get the referendum underway. The plan would allow for a four-to five-year period in which the territory would remain under Moroccan rule, but would be granted limited autonomy. The Saharawi people would be resettled in Western Sahara, and a referendum on independence would be held at the end, in which the Moroccan settlers now living in the territory would also be eligible to vote.

“Polisario didn’t like this plan,” Fadel noted. “We rejected it at first, but decided to accept it as a compromise. It’s a gamble but also a challenge to Morocco. We think Morocco can’t trust its own settlers—in five years they may prefer an independent Western Sahara to Morocco, because we’ll show we are a democratic state, we respect human rights and we are not against them, but against the Moroccan state.”

Morocco is ruled by a monarchy, a loyal pillar of imperialist rule in the region. Its occupation of Western Sahara has been backed by the governments of France, Spain, and the United States.

In his meetings, Fadel described the massive 1,500-mile-long sand and rock wall that Morocco has built to keep Polisario out of occupied Western Sahara. The separation wall is fortified with trenches, barbed wire, land mines, and radar, and is guarded by 100,000 troops. There are tremendous efforts of resistance by the Saharawis living in occupied Western Sahara, despite severe repression by the Moroccan authorities, Fadel said, answering a question at the Auckland University meeting. Hundreds of people have disappeared, or have been imprisoned and tortured. Those who have relatives belonging to Polisario, or who are suspected of sympathy with the underground struggle, are a particular target. Saharawi culture and language are suppressed and it is dangerous to even listen to the radio broadcast from the refugee camps. Meanwhile the settlers encouraged to move there pay no taxes, have preference in jobs, and often live in homes vacated by Saharawis who fled the invasion. Despite this situation, Saharawis organize demonstrations, put up posters and the Saharawi flag, and resist in various other

ways, Fadel said.

Families separated by the wall have had little contact for 28 years, the Polisario envoy added. But the Internet and mobile phones have made communications easier. A telephone link has recently been established with one of the camps. The United Nations is now also organizing regular planes to carry small groups between the camps and the occupied areas for family visits.

“From our side we’ve been very patient, we’ve compromised many times,” Fadel said, “but patience has its limits. We have to be careful in what we do now and not take a decision that we might regret. Some want to relaunch the war, and there’s a dialogue inside our movement now about this. But we have a government, regular elections, a parliament—a state-in-waiting—what we really need is to return to our country and exercise our right to self-determination.”

Fadel asked those he addressed to consider becoming involved in setting up a group in New Zealand in solidarity with the struggle for independence for Western Sahara.

Washington rebuffs overtures by Polisario leader Abdelaziz

BY PAUL PEDERSON

In March 26 remarks before the Defense Forum Foundation, Polisario Front general secretary Mohamed Abdelaziz praised “the recent initiative by the United States to democratize the Middle East,” adding, “for this initiative, the Saharawis and the Polisario extend our full support.” The Washington, D.C., foundation advises congressional staffs on foreign policy and military matters.

Abdelaziz, a central leader of the Western Saharan independence movement, pointed to the examples of East Timor and Kuwait as models to be emulated by Washington in the Western Sahara. Imperialist powers sent their military forces into both of these countries and assumed the mantle of “liberator” to advance their broader strategic interests. “The international community assumed its duties and responsibilities and they forced Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait,” Abdelaziz said.

“Unfortunately, this did not happen in the case of Western Sahara, and the reason of course is the lack of pressure on Morocco despite the clear issue,” the Polisario leader stated.

Abdelaziz went on to praise the Libyan government’s capitulation to U.S. imperialist pressure to disarm. “By changing its position regarding the arms for massive destruction,” he said, “the Libyans have decided to put an end to the career towards nuclear weapons. And that’s something that we appreciate.”

Morocco “is not only exporting wars like the war on Western Sahara, but also export-

ing terrorism and, like we saw recently, drugs,” he said. Referring to the March 11 train bombing in Madrid, he said, “The perpetrators, all of them were Moroccans.”

Despite this conciliatory stance by the Polisario leadership towards Washington and other major centers of world finance capital, the Bush administration announced June 3 that Morocco’s absolute monarchy will be awarded the status of a major non-NATO ally. The designation brings with it priority delivery of U.S. arms, more advanced weapons technology, additional rights to stockpile U.S. military hardware and participate in defense research and development programs, and loan guarantees to finance arms purchases.

“The president took this step in recognition of the close U.S.-Moroccan relationship and our appreciation for Morocco’s steadfast support on the war on terror,” said a senior administration official, according to Reuters.

“We urge you to ensure that Morocco, with its new status, not use American weapons against the people of Western Sahara,” wrote Abdelaziz in a June 6 letter to the U.S. president.

On June 15 Washington signed a “free trade” pact with the Moroccan government. The accord eliminates tariffs on 95 percent of trade between the two countries, the balance to be phased out over the next nine years. The Office of the U.S. Trade Representative gloated that under the terms of the agreement U.S. business “will gain new tools to compete with Canada, the EU and others in Morocco’s market.”