

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

U.S. gov't imposes steep fines
for unauthorized trade with Cuba

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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Back on job, Utah miners face war by Co-Op bosses

BY RÓGER CALERO
AND JOEL BRITTON

HUNTINGTON, Utah—After nine and a half months on strike, coal miners returned to work at the Co-Op mine here July 12 to face a war by the mine bosses aimed at preventing them from winning representation by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA).

The all-out management offensive during the first week on the job, miners report, included a 12-and-a-half-hour rotating shift schedule; selective enforcement of safety

As we go to press:

**NLRB holds hearing
on union election**

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rules; a rapidly accumulating series of verbal and written warnings on trumped-up charges against supporters of the UMWA; and blatant violations of the recent settlement the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) brokered between the UMWA and the Co-Op owners, which mandated

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In Oak Ridge, Tennessee, speech, Bush outlines U.S. gov't progress in 'war on terror'

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

In a July 12 speech at the Y-12 National Security Complex in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, U.S. president George Bush said that since Sept. 11, 2001, Washington has made considerable progress in waging a "war against terror and an active campaign against proliferation."

The White House strategy consists, first and foremost, of "taking the fight to the enemy," Bush said. Washington is also "working with friends and allies and international institutions to isolate and confront the terrorists and outlaw regimes,"

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Washington threatens Sudan gov't with sanctions

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

Under the pretext of responding to a humanitarian crisis in the Darfur region of western Sudan, Washington is stepping up its campaign against the government of that country, threatening it with sanctions.

Democratic Party politicians, from presidential candidate John Kerry to Rep. Charles Rangel, have gone further, calling on Washington to organize a "multinational" military force to intervene in Sudan.

The latest U.S. moves against Sudan are part of Washington's broader "war on ter-

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Workers face grinding pressures on wages, jobs

Real wages drop in U.S. over a year, as medical costs rise

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

The real wages of workers have been declining over the past several months in the United States, dropping below where they were at the end of the last recession in November 2001. In addition, the official unemployment rate remains at 5.6 percent, the same level as when the upturn in the current business cycle began almost three years ago.

Although overall real earnings—wages adjusted for inflation—have not registered a big drop, 1.4 percent over the past year, these figures do not tell the full story of the economic grind that most working people face as a result of the systemic erosion of the capitalist economy. The wage gap continues to grow between the lowest-paid workers and better-paid layers of the workforce. To make ends meet, millions have to work two or even three jobs. And many working people are getting deeper into debt just to pay for basic

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Thousands of unemployed New Yorkers line up to attend job fair in February. Systemic erosion of capitalist economy is at root of crisis for working people.

Socialists say: 'Massive public works program! Full cost-of-living protection! Raise minimum wage!'

For a massive public works program! Full cost-of-living protection! Raise the minimum wage to union scale! Support workers' right to organize unions!

EDITORIAL

These are among the demands that Socialist Workers candidates and their supporters are campaigning for to protect the living standards of working people in face of the economic crisis and the antilabor offensive by the bosses and their government.

Despite the fact that the United States is three years into an upturn in the busi-

ness cycle, the level of unemployment remains officially at 5.6 percent—more than 8 million workers. The figure is much higher for workers who are Black, Latino, or young. It is even higher if one includes workers who are working only part-time or have become discouraged

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Socialist Workers ballot drive in New York is 'stunning success': 28,000 sign in 12 days

BY PAUL PEDERSON

NEW YORK—"The stunning success of the New York ballot drive opens the door to putting the party on the ballot in more states than we have gotten on in a dozen years," said Norton Sandler, Socialist Workers national campaign director, at a July 17

rally at the New York campaign center in Manhattan's Garment District. "At the rate we are going, we will have collected nearly double the 15,000 signatures New York state requires to obtain ballot status in less than half the time originally projected."

As this issue went to press, campaigners

in New York had collected just under 28,000 signatures to put the SWP slate of Róger Calero for president and Arrin Hawkins for vice-president of the United States, and Martín Koppel for U.S. Senate, on the New York state ballot. At this rate, Sandler said, campaigners will have collected about 29,000 signatures when the drive is completed July 22 after 13 days of petitioning.

Socialist Workers campaigners in New York are now building on this success by expanding soap-boxing in the streets and other campaign activities, including book

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Militant/Dan Fein

Socialist Workers campaigners distribute leaflets July 11 and collect signatures in Crown Heights section of Brooklyn to put SWP slate on New York state ballot.

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Paraguay: capitalists export power, while millions go without

The following are remarks made at a July 9 Militant Labor Forum in New York by Millie Sánchez, a member of the Young Socialists and the Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress in the 8th District. Also speaking was Dan Fein for the Socialist Workers Party. The topic of the meeting was the defense of efforts by semicolonial nations, in face of imperialist opposition, to develop the energy sources needed to expand electrification. The translation from Spanish is by the *Militant*.

BY MILLIE SÁNCHEZ

Paraguay is a South American nation of 5 million inhabitants. It is very agricultural and has vast hydroelectric resources. In fact, it is one of the countries with the greatest hydroelectric potential in the world, thanks to its large rivers, the Paraná and its tributaries. Paraguay has two huge hydroelectric dams, the Itaipú and the Yacyretá, built through agreements with Brazil and Argentina, respectively.

Paraguay’s electrical generating capacity is 45 gigawatt-hours per year, one of the highest per-capita rates in the world. But only 12 percent is used for the national market. The rest is exported, mainly to Brazil and Argentina. According to so-called experts, electrical power is exported because of a “surplus” caused by “lack of demand.” The reality is that only 26 percent of rural areas in Paraguay have electricity. About 90 percent of electrical power generated in Paraguay is exported.

In contrast with this abundance of electrical power, firewood continues to be in high demand as fuel, particularly for domestic use in the countryside, and even in certain industries that use charcoal.

In industry, the use of wood-burning boilers is still widespread. It is likewise used in the production of red ceramic tile and virgin lime. A substantial amount of firewood is used in coalyards, which produce charcoal for domestic and industrial use. For example, the Aceros Paraguayos steel mill uses charcoal as fuel.

As for domestic use, firewood and charcoal are very common in the rural areas and even in the neighborhoods surrounding the cities. Government reports attribute this fact to what they call “habits and customs” in the countryside, which they describe as a very conservative section of society. According to these “experts,” there is “inertia,” particularly in rural areas, in beginning to use electricity.

Of the 18 years that I lived in Paraguay, I spent three years in the countryside, including one year without electricity. This was in San Pedro de Paraná, near the border with Argentina. In our home we used kerosene lamps. But there are thousands of peasants who have no access to such lamps and instead rely on candlelight.

At the same time, I could see the mansions of the landlords in the area, who not only have electricity but parabolic TV antennas to spend their weekends comfortably. Obviously the problem is not about where you live but the social class you belong to.

It’s outrageous that this is the reality for the majority of the population in one of the countries producing the greatest amounts of electrical power in the world: that they must resort to candles to study, that they have to cook on the floor, that they have no means to conserve food, that they have little access to information, that there are schools and health centers with no electricity.

At hip-hop meet, socialist responds to anti-Semitism

BY VINCE DRAPER

NEWARK, New Jersey—An exchange between the Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress from New Jersey and a panelist at the National Hip-Hop Political Convention here June 18 highlighted the socialist movement’s stance against Jew-hatred and conspiracy-peddling.

Built as a convention to decide a political agenda for the “Hip Hop generation,” it focused on getting youth who are Black to vote in the elections. The four-day event drew



Itaipú dam, the largest hydroelectric dam in the world, on Paraná river bordering Paraguay and Brazil. Inset, a worker tends the fire at a brick kiln in the countryside in Paraguay. Despite massive hydroelectric power output, three-quarters of rural population in Paraguay has no access to electricity.

That is why the workers movement must identify with the needs of the peasants and forge an alliance with them. It’s workers together with farmers who have the power to change society, not only in Paraguay but in the United States.

In June there was an upsurge of struggles. Peasant federations organized demonstrations and went to Asunción, the capital, to protest the steep electrical rates charged by ANDE, the state-owned electric company. They demanded that they be charged only the “social rate,” the lowest electrical rates. They brought their bills with them to expose the fraud, and threatened not to pay

their bills.

The president of ANDE arrogantly responded to their demands saying, “These peasants not only take over lands, but now they want free electricity. If this were allowed, it would not set a good example for the rest of the population.”

I would like to end by saying that if there was a true, fighting labor movement with any credibility, and especially a revolutionary party, things would change. Because working people want to fight, and they do fight. They are the only class, in alliance with the peasants, which can change the world.

the rulers’ point of view. Just as their policy toward Cuba is not determined by a handful of right-wing Cubans in Miami, their policy in the Mideast is not determined by Israel.

“Jewish people are not the problem, but rather the system of capitalism,” Dookhun said. “As this system declines, Jew-hatred becomes a deadly trap for working people and should be rejected.”

Several supporters of fascist politician Lyndon LaRouche, who identified themselves as “Youth for LaRouche,” took the floor. They called for a vote for LaRouche and portrayed the U.S. government as run by a “fascist” conspiracy within the Bush administration. One of the presenters, Puerto Rican independence advocate Ben Ramos, responded to the fascists. “You need to learn about who Lyndon LaRouche really is,” he said, stating that LaRouche’s supporters had baited Puerto Rican independence fighters as government agents in the 1970s.

A couple of Jewish students from Rutgers, New Brunswick, who were in the audience at the workshop came up to a socialist campaign table the next day, interested in learning more about the candidates. They said they appreciated the comments Dookhun had made to confront Jew-hatred at the workshop.

THE MILITANT

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U.S. pressure on Sudan

Continued from front page

ror,” through which the U.S. ruling families seek to strengthen their domination of the Mideast, as well as Africa and other parts of the world, at the expense of their imperialist rivals.

The offensive against the Sudanese government, which U.S. officials label “radical Islamist,” began under the Clinton administration. In 1993 the White House put Sudan on its list of “terrorist nations” targeted for hostile actions. On Aug. 20, 1998, the Clinton administration ordered warplanes to bomb an industrial area in Khartoum, Sudan’s capital. U.S. officials said they were targeting “terrorist facilities” belonging to Osama bin Laden, who they claimed was responsible for the bombing two weeks earlier of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. The missiles actually destroyed a factory that produced medicine.

Sudan, nearly the size of Alaska and Texas combined, is the largest country in Africa geographically. A nation of 39 million, it is strategically located across the Red Sea from Saudi Arabia. It borders with Egypt, Libya, Chad, the Central African Republic, Congo, Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Eritrea. The country’s main exports are oil and cotton. Despite a wealth of resources, Sudan is one of the most impoverished nations in the world because of more than a century of imperialist domination.

Conflict in Darfur

The focal point of conflict in Sudan today is Darfur, a region in western Sudan. In early 2003, antigovernment forces in Darfur launched a revolt demanding autonomy. The insurgency is led by two groups, the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM). They are linked to a prominent northern opposition figure, Hassan al-Turabi. These groups accuse the central government of treating the largely Black population in the south, which belongs to various national minorities, as second-class citizens.

Seeking to crush the revolt, Arab-speaking militia groups known as the Janjaweed, which the rebels say are backed by the government, have carried out bloody attacks on the civilian population. The national authorities deny any links to the militias and, in face of U.S. government pressure, have pledged to disarm them.

According to press reports, at least 10,000 people have been killed in Darfur over the past year and a half. An estimated 1 million people have been driven from their homes by the pro-government militias and are living in precarious camps. About 100,000 have fled across the border to Chad.

At the end of June, U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell traveled to Sudan, where he visited Darfur and met with government leaders, demanding they disarm the Janjaweed and allow African Union troops and “human rights monitors” into the region. The same day, United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan arrived in the country with the same message. In face of the threat of UN Security Council sanctions, the government of Gen. Omar el-Bashir agreed to their demands.

The French government has opposed Washington’s proposal for UN sanctions against Sudan. “It would be better to help the Sudanese get over the crisis so their country is pacified rather than sanctions that would push them back to their misdeeds of old,” Deputy Foreign Minister Renaud Muselier told French radio. Paris is concerned about Washington’s rising influence in Africa, particularly in a region that includes Chad and the Central African Republic—former French colonies that Paris continues to dominate.

Democrats call for troops to Sudan

Democratic Party politicians have seized on the Sudan crisis to go even further than the White House. Speaking at the NAACP convention in Philadelphia July 15, Democratic contender John Kerry said the Bush administration was ignoring genocide in Sudan and was overextending U.S. troops in Iraq in a way that hindered Washington’s ability to intervene in other countries such as Sudan. He declared, “This administration must stop equivocating” and push for a UN Security Council resolution approving military intervention in Sudan, including with U.S. troops, as

a “humanitarian” operation. The NAACP leadership applauded Kerry’s call.

On July 13 Democratic congressman Charles Rangel of New York got himself arrested in front of the Sudanese embassy in Washington, D.C., to condemn that country’s government. He argued U.S.-backed sanctions were not enough. “We need to get an international peacekeeping force on the ground to save lives immediately,” he said.

Communist Parties around the world, as well as youth groups and other organizations affiliated to them, oppose what they call the “Islamist” government in Khartoum. They have echoed the call for imperialist military intervention under the banner of backing an “international” force to stop the killings of civilians. A statement by the World Federation of Democratic Youth issued in early July, for example, called for “action by the whole world” in face of the critical situation in Darfur. “For a long time, the international community has turned a blind eye on the atrocities in Darfur,” it said. “However, nowadays the drums of the international intervention are so loud to the degree that one can say it is no longer avoidable.”

For more than a century the dominant imperialist powers—first the British colonial rulers, and today Washington—have fostered divisions in Sudan by language, religion, national origin, and geography. The inhabitants of the north are predominantly Arab-speaking and Muslim. In the south most speak languages other than Arabic, and are Christian or belong to tribal religions. The south has historically been more backward economically than the north, where the government has its base.

These imperialist-promoted divisions and regional differences have led to decades of civil war. Fighting began in 1983 between government forces and an insurgent group in the south, the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM), led by John Garang, which demanded self-determination for the south. The U.S. government pressed Khartoum to negotiate with the SPLM, and the two sides have been engaged in talks for several years. In May of this year they signed a U.S.-backed peace agreement. The deal reportedly includes power-sharing terms and an arrangement on the sharing of oil wealth.

The Sudanese government has accused Washington of backing the SPLM insurgency in the south. The U.S. government has given funds to the opposition National Democratic Alliance, which includes the SPLM, various bourgeois parties in the north, and the Communist Party of Sudan.

U.S. ‘war on terror’ targets Sudan

In 1969 a coup in Sudan by radical nationalist forces, politically inspired by Egyptian leader Gamal Abdel Nasser, brought to power a government headed by Gaafar al-Nimeiry. At first the U.S. rulers were hostile to the new government and backed the Anyana rebels in the south against Khartoum, but as Nimeiry clamped

One-day general strike in Peru protests Toledo government’s antilabor measures



Reuters/Pilar Olivares

Workers from 150 different unions demonstrated across Peru in the country’s first general strike since 1999. The CGTP national trade union federation and the opposition APRA party organized the strike against the administration of President Alejandro Toledo. Toledo’s public approval rating has dropped to about 8 percent, the lowest in all of Latin America.

down on trade unions and working-class parties in the 1970s, instituting imperialist-ordered austerity measures, his regime won Washington’s confidence.

Nimeiry was ousted in a 1985 coup in the wake of popular protests over increases in food prices. In another coup in 1989, a group of military officers headed by Gen. Omar el-Bashir took over the government. The new regime earned Washington’s hostility for not following U.S. dictates. It sided with Baghdad during the 1991 Gulf war, pursued closer ties with Libya, and joined in voting at the United Nations to condemn Israeli repression against the Palestinian people.

In 1993 the Clinton administration branded Sudan a “terrorist state,” claiming that the government had allowed Palestinian and Lebanese guerrillas to train on Sudanese soil. Washington imposed a trade embargo on Sudan in 1997, accusing the government of “support for international terrorism” and “human rights violations, including slavery.”

In 1998, after the car bombings of U.S. embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, Washington ordered unannounced military attacks on both Sudan and Afghanistan. U.S. warplanes launched

79 cruise missiles on Khartoum. The White House claimed these bombings were in “self-defense” against a Bin Laden “terrorist network.” The target, which Washington claimed was a chemical weapons factory, was later proved to be a plant used to produce medicines. The architect of the bombing was Clinton’s counterterrorism chief, Richard Clarke, today the darling of liberal critics of the Bush administration’s conduct of the Iraq war.

The Bush administration has continued this hostile policy. In October 2001 the White House named Sen. John Danforth as a special envoy to Sudan to pursue its campaign against that government under the guise of seeking resolution of the civil war. The following month it extended the sanctions against Sudan.

In face of this pressure, the Sudanese government has made concessions to Washington, such as inviting the FBI and CIA to open “antiterrorism” offices. In June 2003, Sudanese authorities arrested 17 Saudis on charges of “unauthorized arms training” and extradited them to Saudi Arabia.

The U.S. government has now seized on the conflict in Darfur to step up the pressure on Khartoum.

Washington steps up intervention in Gulf of Guinea

BY ARRIN HAWKINS

U.S. Gen. Charles Wald, deputy commander of the U.S. military’s European Command (EUCOM), met with Nigeria’s deputy defense minister and other officials July 12 to discuss increasing the role of U.S. forces in the patrol of waters off the Gulf of Guinea.

The Gulf of Guinea, an arm of the Atlantic Ocean off west central Africa, reportedly holds as much as 10 percent of the world’s oil reserves. Washington imports 15 percent of its crude oil from the region and is expected to increase this figure to 25 percent in the next 15 years.

Washington’s military buildup in the region positions it to better compete with other imperialist powers, especially Paris, for Africa’s mineral wealth. At the same time, the penetration of U.S. capital in West Africa is bringing workers and farmers into sharper conflicts with the imperialist oil monopolies.

The UK-based *Jane’s Defense Weekly* reports that the U.S. government is moving ahead on a proposal for a revived African Coastal Security Program in the Gulf of

Guinea and around Africa. The journal indicated that U.S. involvement could include naval vessels, communications equipment and training, as well as a counterterrorism base in the Gulf of Guinea.

Charles Snyder, the U.S. deputy secretary of state for African affairs, said in a speech in April that “the United States has real interests in Africa. We ignore the continent at our own peril. Africa will provide up to 30 percent of U.S. oil in the next 10 years.”

Much of the recent foreign investments in the region are in offshore oil drilling installations along the Gulf. A key objective of the militarization program is to safeguard offshore drilling rigs or other oil operations along the coast run to an increasing degree by the “seven sisters”—the dominant oil companies around the world.

At an earlier meeting at EUCOM headquarters in Stuttgart, Germany, Wald said that U.S. military forces deployed in the region would be similar in mobility as those currently occupying Afghanistan and Iraq. “The areas (in Africa) are large,” he said. “You have to be able to respond fast as

intelligence becomes actionable...and that forces us to think of more mobile, smaller, lighter, nimble forces.”

This growing U.S. intervention in Africa includes the “show of force” by a U.S. Navy battle group off the waters of Nigeria, São Tomé, Equatorial Guinea, and other African oil producing countries that began in June. U.S. officials in Lagos, Nigeria, said the military foray is part of “Operation Summer Pulse ’04,” whose aim is to show the world that “even with all of its current responsibilities, [Washington] can still position half-a-dozen aircraft carriers with all the necessary support ships in the four corners of the world, at the same time.”

The U.S. military’s European Command, which covers 93 countries from Russia to Syria, and all of Africa except the continent’s northeast horn, is shifting focus to pay closer attention to Africa and the Gulf of Guinea. Speaking in March on the tasks of the EUCOM in Africa, Wald told Associated Press that “some people compare it to draining a swamp. We need to drain the swamp.” The three nations listed

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War by Co-Op bosses

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the company to make the strikers an unconditional offer to return to work.

Miners report some crews had their first day off July 19, after working seven days straight.

In response, the miners report, they have begun a counter-offensive. They are using their collective strength inside the mine to demand safe working conditions and treatment with dignity, and to push back the bosses' drive against the miners' right to be represented by the UMWA. Miners say they are encouraging fellow workers to work by the rules, and to put safety before the company's pressure for coal production. They are also documenting every violation of the NLRB settlement by management.

'Safety rule violations'

The bosses have been writing up miners for doing what the supervisors had told them to do, and are now chalking up as "safety rule violations," workers said.

On his first day back underground, Héctor Flores said he was written up for "not having his safety glasses on" while he was cleaning them during lunch break, and that the section supervisor, Chris Petersen, then went on to give the same warning to another miner for this "offense." Flores has gone on to get a job at a nearby mine.

When Alyson Kennedy returned to work July 18 from two days off, Cyril Jackson, a maintenance foreman and Kennedy's supervisor, asked her to follow him to the back office because he needed to talk to her, she reported. After he denied Kennedy's request to have a co-worker present, he told her that mine manager Charles Reynolds had called him earlier that day, and instructed him to write her up for "low work performance."

Three days earlier Reynolds had brought a tour group into the mine to show them a piece of equipment, Kennedy said. During the tour, Reynolds arranged for the group to take a picture with Matthew Kingston—a nephew of John Daniel Kingston, one of the mine owners—who was shoveling coal along with Kennedy. It was while Kennedy was left to work alone that Reynolds claims she was not performing adequately. The trumped-up charges came a day after Kennedy had spoken at a rally in Salt Lake City in front of A-1 Disposal, another business owned by the Kingston family, where she exposed the low wages, lack of benefits, and brutal conditions the Co-Op bosses impose on the miners (see article on this page). John Daniel Kingston had been there, photographing the rally.

After Kennedy refused to sign the warning on the fabricated charges, Jackson told her that if she went to the "proper structure" of the company "union" he believed the charges would be removed from her file.

Bill Estrada, an underground maintenance worker, told the *Militant* that he was singled out first for a verbal and then a written warning on false charges of working unsafely.

A day before, the same boss crammed 10 miners and their equipment onto the bed of the pickup truck used to transport the miners in and out of the mine, with no seats or seatbelts, reported Estrada.

The two-mile trip from the miners' bath house to the entrance of the mine and back again at the end of the shift is particularly unsafe because of the steep, unpaved, and bumpy mountain road.

Three other miners refused to get into the truck because they thought it was unsafe.

The fight for on-the-job safety is one of the main issues in the Co-Op miners' struggle for a union.

Estrada said that according to the maintenance logs kept of the mining operation, no preventive maintenance has been done in the mine since the company locked out 75 miners who stopped work on September 22 of last year to protest his suspension. During the strike that ensued the Co-Op bosses were able to run limited production using immediate family members and close relatives of the Kingston family, and miners who had crossed the picket line.

"This lack of preventive maintenance shows the bosses' total disregard for the life and limb of the workers," said Estrada.

Response by the miners

Miners are now organizing to respond to this offensive by the bosses.

"The workers are the only ones that can make things safe," said Celso Panduro, a roof bolter, with six years in the mine. "If they say they want to do things by the rules, we will work by the rules," he added. "We are not going to use defective machinery."

The fight to build a union at the Co-Op mine is being led by the more than two dozen miners who returned to work after the National Labor Relations Board ruled that they had been fired illegally and ordered C.W. Mining to reinstate them. The NLRB ruled against Co-Op on unfair labor practice charges filed by the UMWA last September. The government agency scheduled a public hearing July 20–22 in Price on who among the mine employees will be eligible to vote in the union election (see report below).

Of the 75 miners who were locked out last September, 50 had signed letters of intent to return to work at Co-Op, which miners and their supporters turned in to the company after a march to the mine on July 6. Among those who signed letters of intent to return, nearly half were working in other better paying nonunion mines in the area, and most decided not to go back to Co-Op.

The returning miners are discussing the challenges facing supporters of the UMWA in constructing a union, as they prepare for a representation election.

Returning miners described the required eight-hour refresher safety class the company is responsible for providing. They reported that the class was given by the company's trainer, José Ortega, who is under investigation by the Mine Safety



Militant/Pat Miller

Co-Op miners rally at A-1 Disposal, owned by Kingstons, who also own Co-Op mine. On platform from left: Utah AFL-CIO president Ed Mayne; Co-Op miners Jesús Galaviz, Alyson Kennedy, and Ricardo Chávez; and UMWA official Mike Dalpiaz.

and Health Administration (MSHA) of the U.S. Department of Labor. The class was videotaped and monitored by Kent Norton, an MSHA representative.

During the training class, and to their surprise, miners say Norton told them that Co-Op was a "safe mine," and that they should be thankful for the \$5.25 an hour some of them are paid there. "These are good wages," he told us," said Panduro, who was present at the class, "and that if we did not like it 'we should go work at Wal-Mart.'"

"First, I was shocked," said Panduro, "because this was the same guy who did the mine safety classes at the local college, and he had warned us then about the low wages and unsafe conditions at Co-Op."

The comments by the MSHA official provoked an angry response by miners, one of whom reportedly asked Norton how much the Co-Op bosses were paying him to say these things.

After confirming to UMWA international representative Larry Huestis that he had made the comments, Norton offered an apology, union supporters report.

"He should be replaced with somebody who is really going to do the job," Panduro said of Norton, "someone who can be objective about safety."

Violations of NLRB settlement

The NLRB-brokered agreement between the Co-Op bosses and the UMWA has been posted in large-format versions in English and Spanish in the bath house and in several spots at the mine, miners said.

Despite explicit provisions in this settlement prohibiting threats or harassment of union backers by the company, several miners report the bosses have asked them whether they are being paid by the UMWA to be there.

"What the supervisors are doing is illegal,

they are violating the agreement, and we are documenting every incident," said Juan Salazar, a leader of the fight.

In another flagrant violation, miners said, the company posted a notice July 19 informing those who had just recently returned to work that they would not be entitled to back pay for the time they were locked out by the company if they had received assistance from the UMWA or any other supporters to pay their bills, or any donations.

The NLRB agreement signed by the company states that they "will make the employees named whole, with interest, for any loss of wages or other benefits to which they may be entitled under Board law as a result of their work stoppage."

The company notice also threatened workers whose papers are not "100% legal," asking them to have their names removed from the list submitted by the UMWA for the representation election. "If the question of back pay is raised, then you will be investigated to determine if you are legal," said the notice.

A "Co-Op Miners Benefit Dance and Dinner" took place in nearby Price. The Mission San Rafael Catholic Church and UMWA District 22 co-sponsored the celebration to raise money for families of the Co-Op miners who had been on the long strike.

"Every worker must now be an organizer," Jesús Salazar told fellow workers in a discussion at the benefit.

Back on their crews, UMWA supporters are organizing to win the votes for the union of the 27 miners who had crossed the line during the strike. The impact of the efforts to win Co-Op production workers to the importance of voting for the UMWA was shown when eight of the miners who had crossed the line came to the July 17 fundraising dinner, joining in solidarity with those who had taken part in the strike.

Miners rally in Salt Lake City

BY PAT MILLER
AND JOEL BRITTON

SALT LAKE CITY—Three Co-Op miners spoke about their ongoing struggle to win union recognition for the United Mine Workers of America at a rally here July 17 in front of A-1 Disposal. The event was sponsored by Jobs With Justice, the Central Labor Council, and the state AFL-CIO.

A-1 Disposal is one of many businesses owned by the Kingston family, which also owns the Co-Op mine near Huntington, Utah.

More than 150 trade union officials from across the country—attending a "Voices at Work" conference—were among those picketing the garbage disposal operation. They came out of the buses that brought them to the picket line chanting union slogans in support of two of the battles currently taking place in Utah for union recognition: the 10-month-long fight by miners at C.W. Mining, and the union-organizing drive by nurses at Salt Lake Regional Hospital.

"Hospital management is working hard to discourage us, but with solidarity from other unions, we will continue to fight," said Lori Gay, one of the nurses' leaders.

On several occasions the Co-Op miners have joined informational picket lines organized by the nurses in Salt Lake City.

Urging those at the rally to continue supporting these struggles for union recognition, Ricardo Chávez said that the Co-Op

miners are in a fight that could turn into an important labor victory. Chávez recently returned from Idaho, where he had been working in a potato-packing warehouse, to get his job back at Co-Op after an NLRB-mandated agreement with the coal bosses. Chávez urged continued labor movement backing for the miners.

The crowd broke out chanting, "Shame on you! Shame on you!" at John Daniel Kingston—a member of the Kingston family—when miner Alyson Kennedy described the just-above-minimum wages the mostly immigrant workers earn at the mine and how the miners get "no decent benefits, and no pension."

Co-Op miner Jesús Galaviz, one of many stalwarts of the strike, also spoke. Chávez and Galaviz's remarks were translated by Archie Archuleta, recently retired administrator of minority affairs for the mayor's office in Salt Lake City.

"When the Co-Op strike started it was a local conflict," said Mike Dalpiaz, international executive board member for UMWA District 22. "But the fight has gone worldwide as these miners have exposed the exploitative conditions at the Kingston-run mine and won support from around the world for the struggle for justice."

Utah AFL-CIO president Ed Mayne told the rally, "The struggle of the Co-Op miners has brought strength to the Utah labor movement."

NLRB holds hearing on Co-Op miners

PRICE, Utah—A National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) hearing on which employees will be eligible to vote in a union representation election at the Co-Op mine in Huntington, Utah, was held here July 20–21 at the Carbon County courthouse. NLRB officer Nancy Brandt presided over the "fact-finding" hearing.

On behalf of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), attorney Richard Rosenblatt presented evidence rebutting the company's claims. Co-Op managers alleged that the large numbers of relatives of the mine owners and supervisors who are members of the Kingston family and are on the company's payroll should be allowed to vote in the election. The Kingstons own the Co-Op mine. Among the witnesses were Ronald Barton, a criminal investigator for the Utah attorney general, and LuAnn Kingston Cooper.

Representatives of the company "union," the International Association of United Workers Union (IAUWU), an outfit recognized by the NLRB more than 20 years ago, were also present to reinforce the bosses' allegations. The Co-Op miners say the IAUWU does not represent them. The company outfit claims to have more than 100 members—including supervisors, and managerial and office clerical employees. In their big majority they are close relatives of the Kingston family, miners report.

The UMWA lawyer called on witnesses who presented evidence supporting the argument that the relatives of the Kingston family employed in the mine derive benefits none of the other miners do, and their direct connection to the owners of the mine represent a "conflict of loyalty."

Rosenblatt also rejected the notion that the company union is a labor organization under the National Labor Relations Act and informed Brandt that the UMWA reserves the right "to litigate the labor organization status."

Co-Op miners and retired miners in the area who are stalwart supporters of the UMWA-organizing struggle attended the public hearing. Members of the Kingston family were also present.

The hearing was completed a day earlier than originally scheduled. The contending sides have an August 4 deadline to submit briefs to the NLRB regional director in Denver before a decision is rendered.

—R.C. & J.B.

1,000 miners rally to defend union contracts

BY JAY RESSLER

PITTSBURGH—More than 1,000 miners, members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) from across central Appalachia, protested in Lexington, Kentucky, July 20 outside a bankruptcy court hearing to demand the judge not throw out the union contracts with Horizon Natural Resources of Ashland.

UMWA miners at four Horizon-owned mines, Starfire, Marrowbone, Cannelton, and Ziegler No. 11 took one or two memorial days to protest the company's maneuvers to gut their contract.

"The hall for the rally was jam-packed," Darrell Keyes, president of UMWA Local 5890 at Horizon's Starfire mine in Hazard, Kentucky, told the *Militant*.

Newcoal LLC, formed by billionaire Wilbur Ross and four other investors, wants to buy Horizon's properties. But Newcoal doesn't want Horizon's union operations in Illinois, Kentucky, and West Virginia, according to a Horizon spokesman.

Horizon, the fourth-largest coal producer in the United States, operates 42 mines—27 surface and 15 underground—in Kentucky, West Virginia, Illinois, Indiana, and Colorado. The coal giant has been in insolvency proceedings for 18 months, and is now asking U.S. bankruptcy judge William Howard for permission to sell off its properties minus the contractual obligations the UMWA has won at the mines.

Horizon was created in May 2002, following the bankruptcy of its predecessor, Addington Enterprises Inc. (AEI), owned by the super-wealthy Addington brothers. Horizon went bankrupt six months later.

It has proposed a corporate reorganization under which it would not be responsible for medical benefits for miners and retirees who had worked at Zeigler Coal and Old Ben Coal under an earlier reorganization.

Horizon claims it cannot sell its union mines so long as the successor clause remains in effect, under which prospective buyers would have to recognize the union and honor contractual obligations, said Keyes. "If the judge rules in their favor it will set American workers back a long way," Keyes explained. "If they are able to do this, it'll give other bosses the idea they can do the same thing."

The July 20 rally follows on a similar protest of 600 on June 30.

Johnny Viars of London, Kentucky, a miner at the Starfire mine, said if UMWA contacts are not honored, the workers will lose health-care benefits. "All they want to do is cut, cut, cut," Viars told the Louisville *Courier Journal*. "We've had all the cuts we can take."

UMWA president Cecil Roberts said Horizon's demands would leave 1,000 miners and 2,300 retirees without health benefits. Other cuts reportedly proposed by Horizon include the elimination of 22 vacation and paid contract days, a freeze on wages for the duration of the contract, and elimination of the UMWA Fund's role in sick and accident benefits.

"People work hard all their lives to earn the benefits that will protect them later in life when they are no longer able to work," Roberts said, "and in one fell swoop, a bankruptcy judge can just take it all away with the stroke of a pen."



AP/Ed Reinke

Some 1,000 miners marched July 12 in Lexington, Kentucky, to demand that the bankruptcy court not throw out the union contracts with Horizon coal company.

Attorneys for Horizon at the June 30 hearing did not ask to have union contracts voided in the bankruptcy proceedings, the *Courier Journal* reports. Horizon attorney Douglas Lutz said disclosure statements in the case file presented terms of the union contract so potential buyers will realize that collective-bargaining agreements exist with some mines. The paper did not report on the company's plans for the Zeigler Coal and Old Ben Coal mines.

Roberts told the miners and their sup-

porters that Horizon managers "ran this company into the ground" and that the miners are now being asked to pay for it. Thousands of other workers face similar attacks, he said, because the U.S. bankruptcy laws are written to favor the bosses.

The Louisville daily reported that "the federal government has stepped in to protect the pensions of more than 4,800 nonunion employees at Horizon."

The U.S. Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp. announced last week that it has assumed responsibility for Horizon's pension plan. The coal company pension plan has \$45 million in assets to cover nearly \$132 million in benefit promises. Jeffrey Speicher of the government guaranty agency said the federal pension program would be liable for \$75 million of the \$87 million shortfall.

On July 6 Horizon gave 250 miners at its Zeigler No. 11 mine in Coulterville, Illinois, layoff notices effective September 4. Other than a unionized coal loading facility at Metropolis and a union mine in White County near the Indiana border, Zeigler No. 11 is the last UMWA-operated mine in southern Illinois, according to *The Southern Illinoisan*.

Jay Ressler is a member of UMWA Local 1248.

Showdown on concessions looms at Nebraska Tyson meatpacking plant

BY LISA ROTTACH

OMAHA, Nebraska—Tyson operates its flagship beef slaughterhouse in Dakota City, Nebraska, employing 3,800 workers. The contract with United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 222 expires in August. With negotiations set to begin soon, many workers and union officials say they expect that the food giant will demand deep concessions from the union.

"Strike Fear Chills Dakota City," was the headline of front-page article in the June 2 *Omaha World-Herald*. According to the paper, nearly all of the 30 workers interviewed said they are expecting or preparing for a strike. Workers said there are several reasons for this. Some referred to developments at other Tyson plants, like the one at Jefferson, Wisconsin, where Tyson forced UFCW members on a year-long strike that ended with a victory for the company. Others said union officials have reinforced such expectations.

"Everybody wants to go on strike," Juan Lopez told the *World-Herald*. "I'm not willing to work for \$6 an hour."

Magdaleno Lopez told the daily that "no one wants a strike but everybody says we're going to strike."

During two recent reporting trips, *Militant* reporters spoke with Tyson workers who live in a large trailer park in South Sioux City, a town adjacent to Dakota City.

The company is preparing to "lock us out," said Jeffrey Burg, a mechanic with 17 years in the plant. "I've heard that the company is willing to give a raise, but then increase our insurance co-pay by a significant amount."

Catalina Vargas referred to the recent firing of 350 immigrant co-workers in March for lacking proper documentation. "This is related to the upcoming negotiations for our contract," she said. "Also, the cops have set up checkpoints at the two entrances to our trailer park. This isn't a coincidence, either. They coordinate with the shift changes at the plant. It's very intimidating. They stopped me three times. First they asked for my license. Then it was to verify that my children's safety belts were strapped. Then it was to check my car lights. This is connected to what is happening in the plant."

Workers have gone on strike five times since the plant opened in 1966, including a 1977 strike where police outfitted with riot gear fired tear gas at strikers. The Da-

kota County sheriff, Alan Bligh, also called "Machine Gun," earned his nickname from the weapon he carried during the strike.

Asked about the possibility of a strike, union president Marvin Harrington told the *World-Herald*, "The way things went with Cherokee and Wisconsin, it looks like things are headed that way." He was referring to other Tyson plants where the company forced major concessions. In a

June 22 phone interview with the *Militant*, Harrington commented that "negotiations begin August 7, and we've got some of the major issues like everyone else, such as health care and wages."

Lisa Rottach is a member of UFCW Local 271 and works on the kill floor at Swift & Co. Nelson González contributed to this article.

NAACP event plugs vote for Kerry

BY SAM MANUEL

PHILADELPHIA—Getting out the vote for Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry was the theme of the convention of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People held here July 10–15. In addition to numerous speeches condemning the administration of U.S. president George Bush, the convention featured a special screening for delegates of *Fahrenheit 9/11*, the anti-Bush "documentary" by Michael Moore.

Following the film showing, a written message from Moore was read to the convention. Members of the film's editing and production team, and U.S. Marine Cpl. Abdul Henderson, also addressed the delegates. Henderson, who refused to return to Iraq for service, appears in the film and is now a member of the Long Beach, California, NAACP branch. Henderson received a standing ovation as he thanked those who supported him in his decision to not return to Iraq. "The most important thing I can tell every young person is to find your way to the ballot box in November," Henderson said.

Unlike previous conventions, struggles to defend affirmative action, for equal employment, and against police brutality were relegated largely to workshops. A plenary session commemorating the 50th anniversary of the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision that declared school segregation unconstitutional was conducted as a round table discussion and featured no keynote speaker.

Kerry spoke on the final day of the convention. His main point was to condemn Bush for refusing an invitation to address the NAACP convention for the fourth time since his election in 2000. Initially White House officials had said that Bush could not

attend because of a scheduling conflict. But according to a report in the *Philadelphia Daily News*, Bush told reporters during a campaign visit to Pennsylvania, just days prior to the convention, that his relationship with NAACP leaders is "basically non-existent. You've heard the rhetoric and the names they've called me." Bush is scheduled to speak at the Urban League convention July 21–25 in Detroit, Michigan.

Kerry got a standing ovation. At the same time, a number of those present said they backed him as the lesser of two evils. "He said a little more than the last time I heard him," commented Carolyn Meeks from Richmond, Virginia. "He still needs to get more specific, but we know that what the other guy stands for is unthinkable."

"We don't have another choice," said 20-year old Lekesha Brown, who had come down from nearby Mount Laurel with her sister Casandra.

"If a branch isn't doing voter registration they ought to turn in their charter," said NAACP chairman Julian Bond in his opening speech. Getting out the vote to "defeat Bush" has been the central NAACP campaign since the 2000 election. Bond said that so far the NAACP had registered 100,000 voters in 11 of the so-called battleground states, where the contest is considered very close between Bush and Kerry.

One theme that has run through recent conventions is that Bush "stole the 2000 election" through massive disenfranchisement of Blacks, especially in Florida. NAACP president Kweisi Mfume announced that on July 2 the NAACP had asked the U.S. attorney general to stop the Florida election board from removing voters from its rolls. Some 47,000 voters have been removed from the voters rolls

according to the *Miami Herald*—2,119 for felony convictions even though their right to vote had been restored by the state. After a court order, state officials released the list, and later said they would scrap it after their "mistake" had been publicized.

A floor fight did break out at the convention, led by long standing members of the NAACP national board—among them, Hazel Dukes and Leroy Warren—and several state conference presidents. The dispute centered on a proposed amendment aimed at loosening restrictions on NAACP branches initiating "direct action" protests, such as boycotts, pickets, and rallies, without the prior approval of the association's national office signed by Mfume.

"We need to get timely responses to our request to take action," said Ishton Matthews of the Cincinnati, Ohio, branch. "Often by the time we get a response to our request everything is over, it's too late. Young people are telling us our methods are old and outdated."

"We need the room to take action," said Keith Brawley of the Hayward branch in Northern California. "We brag about the number of NAACP branches we have but we would be better off with just 400 lean and active branches than 1,700 that aren't doing anything."

Although the amendment passed 522 to 301, it was later reversed after Dukes took the stage to appeal to delegates to reach a compromise. The compromise amendment requires branches to submit requests to engage in direct action 15 days in advance. The NAACP national office would then have 10 days to give its decision. "This is ridiculous," Warren said in objection. "How are we supposed to know 15 days in advance that a police officer is going to shoot a Black child?"

N.Y. ballot effort

Continued from front page

and pamphlet sales and speaking engagements for the party's candidates. During the July 24–25 weekend, for example, SWP campaigners will be leafleting and getting some additional signatures at the Harlem Book Fair. They will also be doing the same at a Saturday night event sponsored by a coalition of groups in the city to celebrate 51st anniversary of the July 26, 1953, assault on the Moncada barracks, the opening act of the revolutionary war that led to the triumph of the Cuban Revolution half a decade later (see calendar on page 11).

"We are now in a position to put the SWP ticket on the ballot in 15 states and the District of Columbia," Sandler told the enthusiastic crowd of more than 80 campaign supporters packed into the New York campaign center. In each of these states, petitioning will be the launching pad for effective campaigning through the November elections, he added.

"By Friday, July 23, we will begin petitioning in Washington, D.C., to collect some 5,000 signatures to put the party on the ballot there," Sandler said. "We will launch an effort the same weekend to put the party on the ballot in the three Midwestern states besides Iowa where the resistance in the meatpacking plants has been the greatest: Minnesota, Nebraska, and Wisconsin." The SWP ballot drive in Iowa was completed in late June.

Most people at the rally had campaigned that day on the streets of New York City's five boroughs, as well as Hempstead, Long Island, and Yonkers in Westchester County, passing out thousands of campaign flyers and getting petitions signed for the SWP candidates.

The success in New York rested also on the mobilization of party members, supporters, and Young Socialists across the state—from Buffalo to Lackawanna, Albany, and Binghamton.

At the July 17 rally, campaign supporters contributed \$1,100 to pay for the printing of petitions, tens of thousands of flyers with the campaign platform, and other expenses for the New York ballot drive.

A team also stepped forward to help with the paperwork necessary to prepare the petitions to be filed with the state, making it possible to maximize the number of campaigners on the streets.

Sandler pointed out that the number of successes the SWP cadre, party supporters, and Young Socialists have had over the last six months is a sign of the bubbling working-class resistance to the bosses' offensive and the increased integration of the socialists in the working-class vanguard, and of the effectiveness of the party.

These gains, Sandler said, include a genuine worldwide campaign, anchored by several generations of SWP members, to finish on time and within budget the construction of the new party headquarters in New York early this year; the doubling of the subscription base of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* this spring and simultaneously selling quantities unprecedented in recent years of Pathfinder books and pamphlets in the process of building the April 25 women's rights march; and holding the SWP convention in June with the largest and most attentive participation since the turn of the new millennium. The success of the ballot drive in New York, and its implications nationwide, are part of this picture, Sandler said.

"This is how we learn and relearn what it means to be a campaign party," Sandler told the rally. He invited participants to actively back the ballot drives beyond New York and thanked the army of petitioners who have given the SWP campaign great momentum.

Undemocratic ballot requirements

To get on the ballot, socialist campaigners have to overcome a host of undemocratic restrictions. Requirements in many states to collect tens of thousands of signatures, pay fees, and meet special distribution requirements are designed to keep working-class parties off the ballot so the two-party system of the parties of capitalism—the Democrats and Republicans—remains unchallenged.

State authorities have so far certified the SWP slate for the ballot in three states: Colorado, New Jersey, and Washington State. SWP supporters have also filed petitions seeking ballot status, or are about to do so,

in Iowa, Mississippi, Utah, and Vermont.

In addition to New York and the states where ballot drives are being launched now, campaigners in Florida, Louisiana, and Tennessee are also signing up electors to place the SWP slate on the ballot in those states.

A by-product of the work to get the signatures needed to be on the ballot is the visibility the socialist campaign gets as thousands of leaflets, copies of the campaign newspaper, and pamphlets get into the hands of those who are interested in the campaign. The pace and scope of the effort in New York has had a noticeable impact in this regard.

"I was petitioning yesterday at Broadway and Flushing in Brooklyn," said SWP vice-presidential candidate Arrin Hawkins, in her remarks at the July 17 rally. "A young guy came up and said, 'I can't sign that. I already signed for you in Harlem last week. Then I saw your people at Union Square yesterday.'"

Support for unions gets hearing

"Hey, what's that all about?" shouted a sanitation worker driving a garbage truck to Karl Butts, an SWP candidate for U.S. Congress in the 11th Congressional District in Tampa, Florida, who came to New York like other socialist candidates to help out the party campaign here. Butts was handing out flyers near a campaign table on 8th Avenue and 35th Street in Manhattan's Garment District. Butts explained that the socialist campaign supported workers' right to organize unions and called for the defense of the labor movement from attacks by the bosses and the government. "Talk to the guy at the back of the truck, too," the driver told Butts after taking a leaflet. The worker riding at the back was very interested in the campaign. "Our contract has expired and the city refuses to negotiate," he said. The worker got so absorbed in the conversation that the truck was more than a block away before he realized it. He grabbed the leaflet and ran to catch up.

The same day, a half-dozen workers from the New Yorker Hotel lined up to sign petitions in the Garment District, after another campaigner explained the socialist candidate's uncompromising stance in defense of the right to organize unions. They described some of the conditions they face and the need for stronger unions.

"That's for me, I'm a worker," said a woman who signed a petition outside the ShopRite in Yonkers, after hearing what the socialist campaign was about. "How they abuse us where I work! The bosses are always accusing workers of things they didn't do. We need a union."

In Buffalo, a city in western New York, around a dozen people hit the streets to put the socialists on the ballot the second and third weekends of July, getting a very warm response and bringing in more than 1,800 signatures.

The Buffalo police seemed to have a special dislike for the socialist campaign, shutting down petitioning tables at most of the corners downtown during the day July 17. In response, the team devised a creative signature-gathering method they called "drive-by petitioning." Driving to the city's parks and through working-class neighborhoods, they stopped and collected signatures from picnickers, families sitting on their stoops, and others along the streets. Through this method they met their goal for the day.

Greens, Democrats, and tycoons

The socialists weren't the only ones collecting signatures for their candidates on the streets of New York, but the message of the SWP campaign distinguished it from all the rest.

A young man petitioning to get Abraham Hirschfeld, a real estate tycoon, on the ballot for U.S. Senate, bumped into the SWP vice-presidential candidate Arrin Hawkins in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. "How many signatures do you have?" he asked her.

When Hawkins replied that she had 80 signatures about two-thirds of the way through the day, the young man seemed shocked. "We usually get between 30 and 40 the whole day," he said. "This guy [Hirschfeld] just sold some property in Florida for \$50 million and he owns hundreds of parking lots. He pays us \$10 an hour to collect signatures. How much do you get paid?" When Hawkins replied that



Militant

July 17 rally in New York City to celebrate success in drive to put SWP presidential ticket on the state ballot. Speakers seated under banner are, from left, national campaign director Norton Sandler, SWP vice-presidential candidate Arrin Hawkins, SWP candidate for congress in New York's 8th district Millie Sánchez, and co-chairs Ryan Scott and Paul Pederson (at podium).

all the socialist petitioners were volunteers, the young man said he was impressed. He then signed to put the socialists on the ballot.

Ruth Robinett spent the day before the July 17 rally campaigning in Union Square. "Some wouldn't sign, telling me 'we've got to get Bush out,' but overall the socialist campaign stood out and attracted people to it," she said.

"I bumped into two young members of the International Socialist Organization who were petitioning for Ralph Nader at Union Square," reported Martin Koppel, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate in his remarks at the July 17 rally. "They were very defensive, almost apologetic, when we noted that Nader is telling his supporters that in tight races, they should 'vote their conscience,' that is, vote for Kerry. I asked them to sign our petition and they did. They didn't ask me to sign theirs.

"At another spot there were people registering voters at a table with a sign that said 'Beat Bush,'" Koppel reported. "We've seen a lot of people on the streets hustling votes for the Democrats. But a lot of them are not campaigning for Kerry. They're campaigning against Bush.... Kerry's campaign doesn't have much appeal. He's having a hard time distinguishing his campaign from the policies of the White House. One of his main themes is criticizing the Bush administration's war policies. But Kerry and other Democrats supported the imperialist invasion of Iraq and the U.S.-led occupation.

"We stand out," Koppel added, "We say, 'It's not who you're against, it's what you're for; Vote Socialist Workers in 2004,'" referring to the slogan on the banner that hung behind the speakers platform. "The socialist campaign is against many things: we're opposed to the death penalty; we're against imperialist oppression and exploitation. But

we're not simply against capitalism, which is true of many currents in bourgeois politics, left and right. Above all, we are for working people taking power out of the hands of the capitalist rulers, establishing a workers and farmers government, and joining the worldwide fight for socialism."

A campaign party

"For me, my first opportunity to campaign like this was this past April, at the March for Women's Lives in Washington, D.C.," said Millie Sánchez, the SWP candidate for U.S. Congress in New York's 8th C.D., speaking at the July 17 rally. Sánchez, who is also a member of the Young Socialists, was referring to the massive march to defend a woman's right to choose abortion on April 25. "We sold hundreds of books and pamphlets as we worked over the months leading up to the march to make sure the largest number turned out."

"This is what we are doing with this campaign. Many Young Socialists are joining in this effort," said Sánchez. "I am not the only Young Socialist who is running as a candidate for the Socialist Workers Party in this election." She pointed to Chris Barkanik, a Young Socialist from Hazelton, Pennsylvania, who is running for state assembly and Nicole Sarmiento from Miami, who is running for U.S. Senate in Florida on the SWP ticket.

Sánchez reported that at least four Young Socialists at the meeting—Ryan Scott, Bill Schmitt, Alex Alvarado, and Julian Santana—would be hitting the road to lend a hand to the SWP campaigns elsewhere. More volunteers are needed, she said.

For information on how to help, contact SWP campaigners nearest you (see directory on page 8) or the national center of the Socialist Workers Campaign at P.O. Box 380846, Miami, FL 33138; tel: (305) 756-4436; e-mail: miamiswp@bellsouth.net

SWP campaign appeals for funds

BY NORTON SANDLER

NEW YORK—The Socialist Workers Party national election campaign is gaining considerable momentum. For this reason, funds are urgently needed to take maximum advantage of the increased receptivity the socialist slate and its platform are getting among working people and youth across the United States.

After the tremendous success of the effort to put the SWP slate on the New York state ballot (see article above), the party campaign committee is finalizing plans for ballot drives in Washington, D.C., Minnesota, Wisconsin, Delaware, and Nebraska. Campaigners are targeting 15 states and the District of Columbia for ballot status for the presidential ticket in 2004. This is the party's most ambitious presidential ballot push since 1992.

A rapid collection of all the pledges to the special Campaign Appeal—which was launched mid-June at the conclusion of the SWP convention at Oberlin College in Oberlin, Ohio—is necessary to pay for travel expenses and for the cost of fielding the teams necessary to complete the ballot drives by mid-August and use them as the launching pad for effective campaigning to get the message of the party out and recruit. The next 10 days are decisive in

realizing the potential for contributions among campaign supporters.

As this issue of the *Militant* goes to press, \$51,250 has been pledged to the fund, which runs until August 1. A total of \$21,147 has been collected to date.

As the article above shows, the SWP campaign got a serious response from thousands of New Yorkers. "We are finding on street corner after street corner real interest in what we have to say," said Róger Calero, the party's presidential candidate. "And we are going to get a similar response in the next states where we will be petitioning and speaking at campaign events.

"The resistance of meat packers to the employers offensive in this country has been centered in Iowa, Nebraska, Minnesota, and Wisconsin," Calero continued. "Having our campaign on the ballot in those states will give workers and farmers a real alternative to the Democrats and Republicans, the twin parties of capitalism."

Please write your checks to the Socialist Workers National Campaign Committee and send them to the same at P.O. Box 42651, Philadelphia, PA 19101.

Norton Sandler is the Socialist Workers national campaign director.

Bush at Oak Ridge

Continued from front page

he added, citing the United Nations and International Atomic Energy Agency. A third element, Bush said, is what he called “bringing democracy” to the broader Middle East.

The president detailed what U.S. imperialism had accomplished in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and other countries, and noted plans for taking on other adversaries, particularly the governments of Iran and north Korea.

This U.S. government offensive also includes dealing with “threats within our own country,” Bush said. He described Washington’s use of the Patriot Act, greater collaboration between federal spy agencies and “law enforcement officials,” and focusing the FBI on “terrorism” as part of “homeland security.”

Libya and ‘nonproliferation’

Citing the case of Libya, Bush pointed to centrifuge parts and processing equipment for uranium that the government in Tripoli, after years of heavy U.S. pressure, had surrendered eight months ago. In the name of opposing “nuclear proliferation,” the Pentagon transported them to the United States and stored them at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, where Bush delivered his July 12 speech. “Libya is dismantling its weapons of mass destruction and long-range missile programs,” Bush said.

The Libyan government announced last December that it would dismantle its nuclear and chemical weapons programs and allow United Nations inspectors to verify compliance. Tripoli did so, effectively surrendering a good part of its sovereignty. The decision came after Washington and London made it clear that the Libyan regime might face a fate similar to that of former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein unless it bowed to U.S. demands on “weapons of mass destruction.”

Tripoli’s decision was hastened by the aggressive pursuit of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) by Washington and its allies.

“In the fall of 2003, American and British intelligence were tracking a large shipment of nuclear equipment bound for Tripoli aboard a German-registered cargo ship,” Bush said in his Oak Ridge speech. “We alerted German and Italian authorities, who diverted the ship to an Italian port where the cargo was confiscated. We worked together. These events helped encourage Libya to reconsider its nuclear ambitions. That was a dramatic breakthrough, achieved by allies working together.”

Bush first proposed the PSI on the eve of a June 2003 summit of the G-7 group of imperialist governments. The initiative was launched in September 2003 at a U.S.-organized meeting in Paris of representatives of 11 states. According to a White House statement, the founding members drew up a plan of action to “combat trafficking to and from states and non-state actors of proliferation concern of weapons of mass destruction, their delivery systems, and related materials.” The plan calls for boarding, searching, and seizing “suspect” vessels or their cargo, not only in ports and territorial waters but also on the high seas. By the time of the first anniversary meeting of the PSI in Krakow, Poland, more than 60 governments had signed on.

Pakistan and Saudi Arabia

Turning to South Asia and the Mideast, Bush noted, “Three years ago, Pakistan was one of the few countries in the world that recognized the Taliban regime” in Afghanistan. “Al-Qaeda was active and recruiting in Pakistan, and was not seriously opposed...the United States was not on good terms with Pakistan’s military and civilian leaders.”

As part of tightening the squeeze on the regime in Islamabad, Washington strengthened its military cooperation with the Indian government, an adversary of the Pakistani ruling class.

“Today, the governments of the United States and Pakistan are working closely in the fight against terror,” Bush said. “President Musharraf is a friend of our country,” he said glowingly about the military ruler, in a telling statement about the limits of Washington’s pursuit of bourgeois democracy in that part of the world.

Under U.S. pressure, Gen. Pervez

Musharraf’s regime arrested and forced confessions from top Pakistani nuclear scientists, including Abdul Qaeder Khan, known as the father of Pakistan’s nuclear weapons program. According to a statement that Pakistani authorities released February 1, Khan said he and other scientists had been “involved in leaking nuclear know-how outside Pakistan to groups working for Iran, Libya, and north Korea.” U.S. spy agencies reportedly uncovered this trail after Tripoli surrendered its nuclear program and other files about a month earlier.

In mid-June, the Pakistani government launched its third major offensive this year along the border with Afghanistan, unleashing 20,000 troops against local groups accused of opposing the regime and of collaborating with al-Qaeda forces. U.S. officials said in July that the decision by NATO to deploy its Response Force to Afghanistan would free up U.S. troops there to do the “heavy lifting” along the Afghan-Pakistan border, that is, launching assaults on pro-Taliban and al-Qaeda forces in the area in collaboration with the Pakistani military.

“Three years ago, terrorists were well-established in Saudi Arabia,” Bush said at Oak Ridge. “Inside that country, fund-raisers and other facilitators gave al-Qaeda financial and logistical help, with little scrutiny or opposition. Today, after the attacks in Riyadh and elsewhere, the Saudi government knows that al-Qaeda is its enemy. Saudi Arabia is working hard to shut down the facilitators and financial supporters of terrorism. The government has captured or killed many first-tier leaders of the al-Qaeda organization in Saudi Arabia—including one last week.”

A May 29 raid on a compound housing oil company employees in Khobar, Saudi Arabia, by forces opposed to the Saudi monarchy, and earlier attacks, provided new openings for Washington to work with the most pro-American elements of the royal dynasty to boost the U.S. military presence in the country. After having withdrawn most of its troops from Saudi Arabia a year earlier, the U.S. rulers showed the Saudi monarchy that they need the U.S. military for protection. On June 2, Riyadh announced it was shutting down all international charity organizations operating from its soil, saying that some had channeled millions of dollars to so-called terrorist groups.

“Saudi Arabia has seen the danger and has joined the war on terror,” Bush said.

Iraq, Iran, and rationalization for war

“Three years ago,” the U.S. president stated, “the ruler of Iraq was a sworn enemy of America, who provided safe haven for terrorists, used weapons of mass destruction, and turned his nation into a prison.”

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON—The Butler Report on the flaws of British intelligence agencies in reporting on “weapons of mass destruction” in Iraq prior to the Anglo-American invasion was another victory for Prime Minister Anthony Blair and for the war party in the United Kingdom.

The conservative *Daily Telegraph* commented that Blair had emerged “almost unscathed” from Butler’s findings, which were published July 14.

A U.S. Senate Intelligence Committee had presented its report five days earlier on the performance of Washington’s spy agencies on the matter, with comparable conclusions. Both reports criticized the evidence provided by the U.S. and UK spy chiefs on Iraq’s weapons capacities, but concluded that the two governments did not deliberately distort the evidence to rationalize their drive to war. The two reports asserted that Blair and U.S. president George Bush were justified in claiming that Saddam Hussein was seeking nuclear weapons capability, arguing in particular that Baghdad had sought supplies of uranium from Niger in Africa.

“We conclude that, on the basis of the intelligence assessments at the time,” the Butler report said, “the statements on Iraqi attempts to buy uranium from Africa in the government’s dossier, and by the Prime Minister in the House of Commons, were



Reuters/Larry Downing

Bush next to centrifuges from Libya at Oak Ridge National Laboratory with Jon Keykes, an official from the center, which houses equipment Washington has confiscated in its offensive to bar oppressed nations from access to nuclear technology.

Taking the offensive against liberal critics of his administration who have questioned some of the White House rationalizations for launching the imperialist invasion of Iraq, Bush argued, “Although we have not found stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction, we were right to go into Iraq. We removed a declared enemy of America, who had the capability of producing weapons of mass murder, and could have passed that capability to terrorists bent on acquiring them. In the world after September the 11th, that was a risk we could not afford to take.”

Bush praised the work of the CIA and other spy agencies in the so-called war against terrorism. Acknowledging that the Senate Intelligence Committee had identified some flaws in Washington’s spying methods, he said the committee’s report on the matter, scheduled to be released July 22, would help the U.S. government improve its intelligence agencies. “Our nation needs more intelligence agents...to cover the globe,” he said. “We must have the best, cutting-edge technology to listen and look for dangers.”

The White House received a boost from a recent report by Robin Butler on behalf of an intelligence committee for the British House of Commons. It said that, in the months leading up to the March 2003 assault on Iraq, Bush’s claim that Baghdad had sought weapons-grade uranium in the West African country of Niger “was well-founded.” (See article below.)

In a column in the July 19 *New York Times*, William Safire said that “the 16 words” used by Bush in his January 2003 State of the Union address to outline this

argument for war “were pounced on by the wrong-war left to become the simple centerpiece of its angry accusation that ‘Bush lied to us’.”

Safire said former diplomat Joseph Wilson, who led “the he-lied-to-us charge,” was sent by the CIA to Niger on the recommendation of his wife, a CIA operative, to check out the story and came back saying there was nothing to it. “Two exhaustive reports came out last week showing that it is the president’s lionized accuser, and not Mr. Bush, who has been having trouble with the truth,” Safire asserted, referring to the Butler inquiry and a similar report released by the U.S. Senate days earlier.

Concluding his speech, Bush said the “war on terrorism” was in its early stages. “We’re working with responsible governments and international institutions to convince the leaders of North Korea and Iran that their nuclear weapons ambitions are deeply contrary to their own interests,” he said.

Although the Iranian government has insisted its nuclear program is being developed solely for energy generation purposes, Washington has made it clear, with broad bipartisan backing, that Tehran remains in the U.S. rulers’ crosshairs. Bush told reporters in the Oval Office July 18 that Washington was actively investigating reports, including allegations by the bipartisan 9/11 congressional commission, that a number of those who carried out the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks had traveled through Iran. “As to direct connections with September the 11th,” Bush said, “We will continue to look and see if the Iranians were involved.”

Butler report boosts war party in the UK

well-founded. By extension, we conclude also that the statement in President Bush’s State of the Union address of 28 January 2003 that ‘The British Government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa’ was well-founded.”

Blair responded to the report by saying he took personal responsibility for any mistakes but insisted that “Iraq, the region, the wider world is a better and safer place without Saddam.” Butler’s account was the fourth exhaustive inquiry to show the government had acted in good faith, Blair said, pointing out that Butler indicated it would be rash to say that “illicit weapons” will never be found.

It was reasonable to assume the Iraqi government was developing “illegal weapons,” Butler said. Iraq, he continued, “had the strategic intention of resuming the pursuit of prohibited weapons programmes, including if possible its nuclear weapons programme.”

Robin Butler, a faithful servant of the British ruling class, was unlikely to have drawn any other conclusion. A former cabinet secretary, he served under five prime ministers: Edward Heath, Harold Wilson, Margaret Thatcher, John Major, and Anthony Blair. He is referred to as “Lord Butler” in all the media here. His report serves well the British rulers, who have energetically backed the imperialist assault

on Iraq as reflected by the positions of both the Labour government and the Conservative Party (Tory) opposition.

The Blair government has used the publication of the Butler report, and the earlier Hutton inquiry into the death of arms inspector David Kelly, to boost domestic spying and strengthen the overall functioning of UK’s intelligence agencies in line with the reorganization of the British military that follows in the American Pentagon’s footsteps.

The government has announced the recruitment of an extra 1,000 intelligence agents, doubled spending for spy agencies, and appointed Blair ally John Scarlett as head of MI6—now renamed the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS). Scarlett, as chair of Britain’s Joint Intelligence Committee, was the lead author of what is known as the “September dossier” on the Iraqi weapons programs. The Butler report specifically recommended the government reject calls for Scarlett’s resignation. As SIS head, Scarlett will be in the driver’s seat to refashion the intelligence agencies to more effectively pursue the government’s “war against terrorism,” which the Butler report singled out for praise. These moves include greater cooperation between UK intelligence agencies, the establishment of the Joint Terrorism Analysis Center, and more effective collaboration with spy agencies in other countries.

Cuba and the coming American revolution

The following are excerpts from *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* by Jack Barnes. The Spanish edition is one of Pathfinder books of the month for July. The portion below is from the book's preface, written by Mary-Alice Waters, editor of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist* and president of Pathfinder Press. Copyright © 2001 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

More than forty years have passed since the last victorious socialist revolution. That is a long time, not on the historical scale, but in political time. A great deal has changed in the world.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

We don't have to look far or delve that deeply, however, to see within the United States social forces being propelled into motion that are capable of transforming themselves as they come to realize in struggle that we need the same kind of revolution that the workers and peasants of Cuba carried to victory. From the streets of Cincinnati to the coal mines on the Navajo Nation, from the farm cooperatives of southern Georgia to the dairy farms of Wisconsin, from the port of Charleston to the packinghouses of Omaha, from the fields of California's Imperial Valley to the garment shops of Los Angeles and New York, as the pages that follow explain,



Militant

Workers at Point Blank Body Armor rally July 2002 during successful struggle for union recognition at the south Florida plant.

"a vanguard layer of workers and farmers in this country is becoming more confident from their common fighting experience and thus more open to considering radical ideas, including the program and strategy of the modern communist movement. Whether they know it yet or not, their own experience in life and struggle is bringing them closer to that of the workers and peasants of revolutionary Cuba."

This is not an ideological question but a practical one, a question of proletarian integrity, habits of discipline, and morality of Marxism.

We've been reminded of that in recent weeks by the profound class divide that has opened once again in the United States following the acknowledgment by former Democratic U.S. senator Robert Kerrey of the civilian massacre he was responsible for

more than thirty years ago in Vietnam. (He was moved to "bare his soul" just days before the story was to be printed in the *New York Times* and broadcast nationwide on CBS's *Sixty Minutes*!) Liberals are wailing about the personal agony Kerrey has been obliged to live with "lo these many decades—"the bad war made him do it." Meanwhile conservatives intone phrases about the "realities" of battle, defending the "free-fire zones" where every Vietnamese man, woman, and child was assumed to be "the enemy." Kerrey's only betrayal, as far as they are concerned, was later becoming a Democratic Party officeholder.

The bipartisan sanctimonious posturing should serve to remind us not only of the enormous price paid in blood by the people of Vietnam to gain their independence, but also of the example of the Rebel Army during the battle at Playa Girón, where not one prisoner, by the invaders' own testimony, was mistreated or abused, denied food, water, or medical treatment equivalent to that available to the Cuban troops. The same was true

throughout the entire two years of the revolutionary war in Cuba where, despite the record of the Batista regime's brutal killers and torturers, no captured government soldier was treated by the Rebel Army with anything but humanity and respect.

What determined the outcome at Playa Girón, as in Vietnam and Algeria, was ultimately not which side had the superior armaments, but the class character of the contending forces and what they were fighting for. That's what the U.S. rulers did not and can never understand. They did their mathematical calculations, as Che Guevara is quoted saying here, but they failed to measure the moral relationship of forces. "They have always been wrong about us," Guevara concluded. "They always arrive late."

They still are wrong about the capacities of the toilers, and they still always arrive

late. And always will.

That class line is what hundreds of workers and farmers, and young people on dozens of campuses in the United States, were responding to during the recent speaking engagements by two Cuban youth leaders, Javier Dueñas and Yanelis Martínez. Their month-long visit to the United States took place as this book was being prepared. In talking about the opportunities and challenges facing working people and youth in Cuba today, in responding to what they saw and learned of the U.S. class struggle, and in answering the questions put to them everywhere about the world and the future ahead of us all, these young Cubans kept shifting the focus to the ordinary workers, farmers, and young people just awakening to political life in both Cuba and the United States. Above all, the two Cubans pointed to the capacities of working people and youth attracted to their struggles to rise to the level of consciousness, discipline, courage, and class solidarity necessary to take their own future in hand. This is what the people of Cuba have done, the example they've set, for the last forty-odd years.

"What is special is never the human material," says the author in the pages that follow, "but the times we live in and our degree of preparation. If we've worked together beforehand to build a disciplined, centralized workers party—with a program and strategy that advances the historic line of march of our class worldwide—then we'll be ready for new opportunities in the class struggle when they explode in totally unanticipated ways. We'll be prepared to build a mass proletarian combat party that can take on the capitalist rulers in revolutionary struggle and defeat them. That is the most important lesson that every one of us can draw."

If the victory of the people of Cuba at Playa Girón is still stuck in Washington's craw some forty years later, it is not because of something that happened long ago or miles away. It is because of the present and the future right here in the United States, where, as Jack Barnes concludes in the opening chapter of this book, the revolutionary capacities of the workers and farmers are "as utterly discounted by the ruling powers as were those of the peasant and proletarian masses of Cuba. And just as wrongly."

That is what *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* is about.

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And no one's behind bars—“The pharmaceutical industry has repeatedly violated federal law by failing to disclose the existence of



large numbers of its clinical trials to a government database... The issue has gained urgency with recent disclosures that the publicly avail-

able research on treating children with antidepressants obscured the fact that in most studies, the drugs were no better than sugar pills. Drugmakers chose not to publish those studies.”—*Washington Post*.

You tell us—“That’s a surprise to me. Tell me why it’s not enforced.”—Catherine DeAngelis, editor in chief of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, professing ignorance of a 1997 law requiring drug companies to disclose the results of research.

Pass the screwdriver—“Drug

makers raised prescription prices by nearly triple rate of inflation in the first three months of this year—just before Medicare began its pharmacy discount card program—negating much of the savings the government promised to seniors...”—Associated Press.

Talk about bitter gall—“After several years of improvement, Delaware’s infant mortality rate is now the worst in the nation because of a lack of money [!] and attention,” says the Delaware *News Journal*. The state of Delaware is in the vest pocket of DuPont, one of the most powerful

chemical dealers in the world.

Bright spot in the economy—“As baby boomers age into retirement, the funeral services industry prepares for a surge in the nation’s death rate —and the increase in opportunities that will bring. The National Center for Health Statistics projects the number of deaths will soar 22 percent in the next two decades.” —*Arizona Daily Star*.

Not a happy family?—“Faculty and librarians at Eastern Oregon University voted to keep their union. Opponents launched a decertification drive, citing a

lack of ‘collegiality’ [?] between faculty and administration since the union was formed in 2003.”—News item.

Stagehands USA—It’s now disclosed that when the Marines marched into Baghdad, a colonel in the Army’s psychological unit rapidly summoned GI’s to topple a massive statue of Saddam Hussein. TV cameras slanted it like it was done by joyous Iraqis. (The U.S. flag that adorned the fallen statue was quickly replaced by an Iraqi flag.) Another deft move was to pack a vehicle with cheering Iraqi children.

Pathfinder finds interest at U.S. librarians conference

BY TONY THOMAS

ORLANDO, Florida—Hundreds of the 25,000 librarians and others who attended the June 24–30 conference of the American Library Association (ALA) here, showed an interest in Pathfinder books. Conference participants took hundreds of copies of Pathfinder catalogs and of the “New and Noteworthy” brochure by the publisher, available in English, Spanish, and French, as well as many handouts describing the newly reprinted 14-volume set of *The Writings of Leon Trotsky*.

More than 80 librarians, book reviewers, book distributors, library students, and other attendees signed up for future visits from a Pathfinder sales representative and to receive regular mailings from the publisher.

Among the hundreds who dropped by the Pathfinder table were convention participants from India, Canada, Albania, Trinidad and Tobago, Russia, Cameroon, Haiti, Brazil, Germany, China, New Zealand, Korea, and the United Kingdom.

Volunteers staffing the table found that the improved indexes, the expanded photo spreads, the extensive glossaries, and the improved type and other new features of Pathfinder books made them especially attractive for libraries. Many who stopped at the table noted that Pathfinder was a source of books on the Cuban, Russian, and Nicaraguan revolutions and by authors like Leon Trotsky, Malcolm X, Che Guevara, and Thomas Sankara that are not available from other publishers.

Librarians and booksellers alike were interested in the expanding number of books

Pathfinder offers in French, Spanish, and other languages. Some spoke of recent visits by Pathfinder sales representatives. Others, particularly from Florida, helped arrange sales visits with the volunteers staffing the Pathfinder table who came from Miami, Tampa, Daytona Beach, and Gainesville, Florida.

The ALA met in a climate of continued cutbacks on public funds for libraries, which is part of the attacks on the social wage of working people. The ALA reported that 41 states have cut library budgets, some as much as 50 percent. Among the more than 1,600 exhibitors at the conference were a variety of library fulfillment houses, electronic book vendors, library automation companies, and others seeking to offer libraries solutions to decreased funds and reduced staffs.

The ALA press release issued at the close of the conference was entitled *Opposition to Iraq War Pervades ALA in Orlando*. Most of the official program, however, emphasized pro-Democratic Party opposition to the Bush administration. The convention’s keynote speaker was Richard A. Clarke, “counter terrorism czar” under both the Bush and Clinton administrations.

A special showing of Michael Moore’s anti-Bush film *Fahrenheit 9/11* took place for all conference participants.

A resolution calling for the withdrawal of American troops from Iraq was defeated by a vote of 39 to 55 in the ALA’s governing council “at the urging of councilors who said the war was not a library issue,” according to the ALA release.

At a number of workshops, librarians called for repeal of Section 215 of the Patriot Act that allows the government to obtain records of what books library patrons take out and what web sites they visit, but forbids librarians from telling anyone when this happens. At the convention, the ALA announced it will launch a study they hope will persuade Congress not to reauthorize Section 215 when it comes up for renewal at the end of 2005.

A workshop took place June 27 sponsored by the ALA’s university subdivision, the Association of College and Research Libraries. Deborah Caldwell-Stone, deputy director of the ALA Office of Intellectual Freedom, told librarians at that meeting, “You are a librarian, not a police officer or FBI agent.”

Eugene Wiemers, associate vice president for academic affairs and librarian of Bates College, called the Patriot Act “an assault



Militant/Kay Sedam

Pathfinder booth at June 24-30 convention of American Library Association in Orlando, Florida. Volunteer Barbara Bowman, with glasses, shows books to librarians.

on civil liberties.” He continued, “We have an obligation to protect the right to read and think and speak.”

James Neal, vice president for information services and university librarian at Columbia University, told the workshop that Columbia library employees are instructed not to disclose information to the FBI or other government officials, but to refer them to the university’s legal department.

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —

THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE
NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

August 2, 1954

“America’s monopoly corporations have scented the possibility of super-profits from private control of the atomic energy industry. They have launched a campaign to take it over and exploit it for their own gain.”

So warned the *Militant* on June 19, 1950, more than four years ago. The warning was based on a revealing article in *Collier’s* magazine by David E. Lilienthal, former chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, who demanded that the atomic energy industry be “freed” from “government monopoly” and turned over to “free enterprise.” What we then described as the “opening shot” in the “monopoly drive for atomic control” has now developed into a victorious major offensive signaled by the passage in the Senate of the administration-sponsored atomic energy bill. This bill has as “one of its purposes,” according to the July 28 *N.Y. Times*, “to favor private industry in the development of atomic power.” That, in fact, is its chief purpose.

Leland Olds, former chairman of the Federal Power Commission and a leading power expert, puts the matter conservatively in the July 17 *Nation* when he says that the atomic energy bill will “unquestionably prove the most far-reaching piece of legislation in its effect upon our social order of any in recent times. At stake is the question of who shall control the ushering in of the atomic age.”

By the “ushering in of the atomic age” is not meant the production of atomic weapons to wipe out mankind, but utilization of a source of unlimited power for peacetime production that could virtually revolutionize all industry and open the way for universal

bounty. To safeguard the atomic future of the American people means to set up a Workers and Farmers Government which would not only retain full control of the atomic energy industry, but would develop its full useful possibilities to the maximum and gear them to all the other basic industries, which likewise would be nationalized.



August 3, 1979

LOS ANGELES—On July 17 the Nicaraguan community here went out en masse to celebrate Somoza’s flight to Miami. The crowd was reported by TV news as more than 3,000. It was jubilant and obviously supportive of the Sandinista fighters who led the struggle against the dictator.

Two days later, Sandinista supporters occupied two tuna fishing boats in San Pedro Harbor. The registration of the boats was being changed from Nicaragua to a Somoza company with headquarters in Florida.

Fifty Los Angeles motorcycle police confronted the occupiers, who were attempting to protect Nicaraguan property. A lawsuit to stop the illegal expropriation of Nicaraguan property by the ex-dictator has been announced.

Sandinista supporters peacefully took over the Nicaraguan consulate in Los Angeles on July 20. The acting consul is Manuel Valle, a longtime Nicaraguan activist in Los Angeles.

The Frente Amplio Anti-Somocista (the Broad Anti-Somoza Front) has called on supporters of the Nicaraguan revolution to join in a victory parade and rally on Saturday, July 28, at noon at the Olvera Street Plaza in downtown Los Angeles.

U.S. gov’t imposes steep fines for unauthorized trade with Cuba

BY RÓGER CALERO

The U.S. Treasury Department ordered a \$168,500 fine last month against biotechnology company Chiron Corp. for selling pediatric vaccines to Cuba. At the same time, Washington approved a deal allowing a U.S. drug manufacturer to work with the Cuban government to develop three experimental cancer drugs.

The Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), an arm of the Treasury Department, took the action against Chiron Corp. after the company voluntarily disclosed to the Treasury Department that it had “inadvertently” shipped two vaccines for infants to Cuba between 1999 and 2002 through a European subsidiary. Currently, the company has approval to ship one type of vaccine to Cuba through a UN program.

OFAC is responsible for enforcing Washington’s more than 40-year-long economic war on Cuba, as well as sanctions against six other countries.

The Associated Press reported July 8 that this is the second-highest fine issued by OFAC this year and the highest against a U.S.-based company. Alpha Pharmaceutical Inc., based in Panama City, Panama, was fined \$198,700 for trading with Cuba.

Meanwhile, another California-based firm, CancerVax Corp., got the green light July 15 from the Bush administration to pay the Cuban government \$2 million a year to develop three experimental cancer drugs created in Havana. Washington required the payments to be made in food and medicine, not cash.

The agreement “is the first such commercial deal approved by the U.S. gov-

ernment between a U.S. biotechnology company and Cuba, which has spent \$1 billion on building a biotech program that is among the most advanced in the Third World,” reported the Associated Press.

OFAC also reported that 122 companies were fined this year a total \$1.97 million for trading with Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, north Korea, Sudan, and Syria, most of the cases involving violations of the economic embargo against Cuba.

The Treasury Department has fined 226 individuals a total of \$348,000 so far this year, claiming they have violated existing laws and executive orders restricting travel to Cuba and laws related to sending money to the island.

In the last three months the number of people who were ordered to pay fines, or agreed to a settlement with OFAC, for travel to Cuba without state authorization was more than 50 percent higher than during the same period last year. Most of the settlements were between \$1,000 and \$2,000.

With the ultimate goal of overthrowing the socialist revolution and reimposing capitalist rule in Cuba, Washington has maintained a relentless economic war carried out by Democratic and Republican administrations designed to increase the financial pressure on the revolutionary government in Havana.

Earlier this year, the White House announced a new round of measures against Cuba. These impose new limits on travel there by Cuban-Americans, and restrict the number of family members on the island to whom remittances can be sent.

Demands to confront capitalist crisis

Continued from front page
and stopped seeking work.

Bosses have used the relatively high levels of unemployment to keep wages down through competition for jobs. Real wages today are less than what they were when the recession ended in November 2001, and the gap has widened between the lowest-paid and better-paid sections of the workforce.

Millions of workers receive the federal minimum wage—an unlivable \$5.15 an hour, which Congress has refused to raise in seven years. Because the minimum wage isn't indexed to inflation, its real value has steadily dropped, and is now two dollars an hour below its 1968 level. This erosion not only devastates the incomes of the lowest-paid workers but drags down all wages.

For a three-person family, a minimum wage income is 27 percent below the official poverty line. But it's not uncommon for workers making double that, \$10 an hour or more, to find they are struggling to make ends meet and falling into debt. Millions are putting in many hours of overtime or working a second job just to get by. Growing numbers are working past retirement age because they cannot afford not to.

One out of three people below the age of 65 lacks medical insurance, and the numbers are even higher for workers who are Black or Latino. Many more have health coverage with so many deductibles and co-payments that, as medical costs soar, they have to think twice before seeking care.

At the same time, the bosses' productivity drive is creating a pressure cooker on the job. Workers in many industries—from coal and ore mines to assembly lines, garment shops, and slaughterhouses—are being pushed to work faster, harder, and longer hours. As a result, on-the-job injuries and fatalities increase.

This economic grind is the result of the built-in contradictions of the capitalist system. The bosses are driven to push down wages and squeeze more labor out of fewer workers in order to reverse the long-term decline in the rate of industrial profit—a decline that began in the early 1970s with the exhaustion of the post-World War II economic expansion. The employer class carries out this offensive with the aid of its government—from the White House and Congress to the state courts and city police—and its two parties, the Democrats and Republicans.

To combat persistent unemployment, the Socialist Workers candidates demand that the government launch a massive, federally funded public works program, at union-scale wages that can put millions to work building badly needed schools, hospitals, housing, day-care centers, recreation facilities, roads, bridges, and tunnels. In addition, the *workweek should be reduced to 30 hours' work at 40 hours' pay* to create enough jobs to spread the available work around.

While there has not been a sharp rise in inflation, workers and small farmers have been hit by a jump in the price of fuel, housing, milk, transportation, and health-care costs. Working people need *full and automatic cost-of-living protection* for all wages—including the minimum wage—as well as for Social Security, Medicare, workers compensation, and unemployment benefits. This means that all union contracts should assure an automatic rise in wages and benefits at least as high as the increase in the price of consumer goods, and that the federal government should guarantee the same for all workers.

The labor movement needs to lead a fight to *raise the minimum wage to union scale* as an elementary affirmative action measure that starts with the needs of the most vulnerable sections of the working class. Raising the minimum wage—which serves as the floor on which the overall wage structure is built—will put all workers in a stronger position to fight for much-needed pay increases.

Labor should also demand that all social security, health care, unemployment, disability, welfare, and retirement payments be brought into a *comprehensive, nationwide, government-guaranteed social security program for all*.

It is in response to the bosses' drive to slash wages and benefits, extend work hours, combine and eliminate jobs, and speed up production at the expense of safety that many workers are seeking to use their unions or to organize unions in self-defense. The Socialist Workers campaign backs these union struggles—from meat packers in Nebraska to coal miners in the West—which point the way forward for all working people.

When the wealthy property owners and their lawyers and politicians argue that these demands are not “realistic,” workers must answer that if capitalism is unable to satisfy the demands that inevitably arise from the calamities this system generates, then let it perish. Whether any of the above demands is realizable or not depends on the relationship of forces between workers and the capitalists, and can only be decided in struggle.

Through such struggles, no matter what their immediate practical successes may be, workers and farmers—if helped by fellow combatants—will best come to understand the necessity of charting a road independent from and in opposition to the bosses' government and their twin parties, the Democrats and Republicans. This requires building a revolutionary workers party that can mobilize millions to remove the billionaire class from power and establish a government of workers and farmers. Such a government would organize working people to uproot capitalist wage slavery and join the worldwide struggle to build a socialist society, founded on human solidarity and dignity.

Economic grind

Continued from front page
necessities.

According to figures released July 16 by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), real average weekly wages have steadily fallen over the past seven months, dropping by 0.8 percent in June alone, after a smaller decline in May. Inflation, which, according to BLS figures, has fluctuated around 2 percent over the last half decade, rose to an annual rate of 4.9 percent in the first half of 2004, largely due to increases in fuel prices.

The minimum wage, which has not been raised in seven years from \$5.15 an hour, has steadily fallen in value over the past three and a half decades. In real terms, the minimum wage is now two dollars an hour less than it was in 1968.

More workers are staying in the workforce past the official retirement age because they need the money.

And the cost of medical care is rising, while the number of people lacking health insurance has grown. Nearly 82 million residents of the United States—one out of three people under the age of 65—were uninsured at some point during 2002-2003, according to a report issued June 16 by the health consumer group Families USA. More than half of them were uninsured for at least nine months. Nearly 43 percent of Blacks and 59 percent of Latinos had no health insurance.

Democratic Party presidential candidate John Kerry has blamed the Bush administration for the dismal employment and income figures, seeking to make them an issue in the election. These economic trends, however, are not due to the particular economic policies of a given administration. They are a result of the systemic crisis of the capitalist economy, manifested in decelerating growth and heightened volatility.

One sign of this volatility was a recent report by Ian Douglas of the London-based financial firm UBS, which said that global liquidity—the total dollar value of fixed reserves (in gold) of central banks around the world—fell in April by \$8.3 billion, the first drop since December 2001. In the 12 months before this drop, global reserves had grown by an average of \$65 billion a month. Douglas warned that this could be an ominous sign of rising deflationary pressures. “If we are right that the rate of reserve accumulation will continue to fade,” he said, “it may be prudent to unload some risk more generally—and drink that Bordeaux before the prices start to fall.”

The roots of this crisis lie in the long-term decline of the rate of industrial profit going back to the early 1970s, when the curve of capitalist development turned downward after the long post-World War II economic expansion.

Persistent levels of joblessness

Real wages have stagnated for much of the last three decades. The first few years after the 1990–91 recession became known as the “jobless recovery.” Relatively high unemployment allowed bosses to maintain pressure on workers' income through competition for scarce jobs. Hiring rose in the second half of that decade, which also saw the first sustained real wage growth since the 1970s. But the first two years after the 2001 recession were again marked by little or no net growth in employment, and wages have remained stagnant. While there has not yet been a sharp rise in inflation, prices of gasoline, dairy products, and a few other basic consumer goods have squeezed the income of working people.

The employment picture adds to the pressures facing workers. After each of the last two recessions, bosses have kept employment down by ratcheting up labor productivity—squeezing more labor out of fewer workers.

Unemployment continues to hover around an official rate of 5.6 percent—about 8.2 million workers nationwide, according to BLS figures. Some 10.1 percent of workers who are Black, 6.7 percent of Latino workers, and 16.8 percent of teenagers are out of work. These figures do not include workers who have become discouraged and stopped seeking work, or those who are eking out a living on part-time work.

In addition, the average length of unemployment—10.8 weeks—is higher during this upturn in the business cycle than it was during the “jobless recovery” of the early 1990s.

Democratic Party politicians have used the employment figures to blame the Bush administration for the loss of 3 million jobs. They blur the actual facts, however.

First of all, the recession that took place between March and November 2001 was simply the downturn in the normal business cycle of the capitalist economy, which goes through periodic recessions and recoveries, regardless of who is in the White House or Congress. Secondly, some newspaper commentators and economists—especially Democrats—have described the post-recession period as another “jobless recovery.” This is not true of the last several months, however. Since the fall of 2003, net employment has grown.

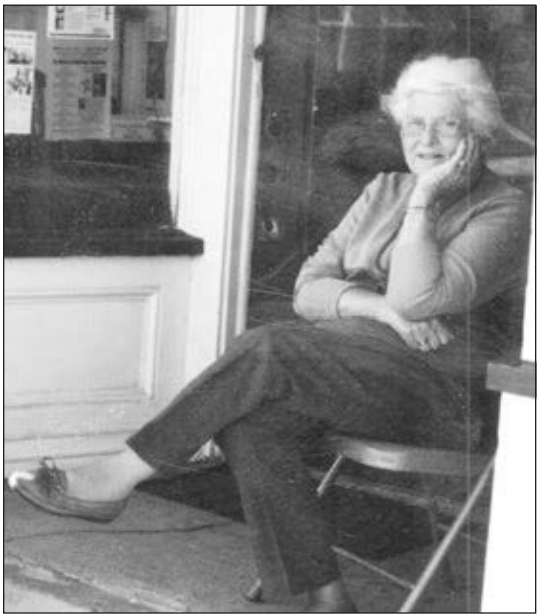
On the other hand, for the first two years after November 2001 there was little or no growth in employment. Two methods used by the BLS, however, give different results.

According to the BLS's payroll survey (also called the establishment survey), a monthly report based on data from about 400,000 private businesses, there was a net loss of 1.1 million jobs between December 2001 and June 2003. The payroll survey has generally been taken by economists of different political stripes to be the best indicator of job gains.

Using a different method, called the household survey and based on a random sample of about 60,000 households, the BLS reported that 600,000 jobs have been created since the recession ended in November 2001. While economists have not been able to explain the discrepancy between the two methods, one difference may be that the household survey registers “off the books” employment as well as contract workers hired through temporary agencies.

In either case, the tightness of the employment situation, the erosion of real income, and the squeeze from high costs of health care contribute to the intensifying economic pressures that workers face today.

Almeda Kirsch, 58-year cadre of SWP, dies at 83



Militant/Eva Braiman

Almeda Kirsch, a 58-year member of the communist movement, died July 19 from a heart attack. In photo above, taken in July 2002, Kirsch was selling communist books and pamphlets outside the SWP hall in Cleveland. She joined the Socialist Workers Party in 1946 in Cleveland, where, as part of building the party for nearly six decades, she was active in the civil rights movement, the anti-Vietnam war movement, the fight for a woman's right to choose abortion, and other campaigns the SWP was involved in. A meeting to celebrate her life and contribution to building the party will take place in Cleveland shortly. For more information on the meeting, and to send messages, contact the Ohio Socialist Workers Campaign office, 11018 Lorain Ave. Cleveland, OH 44111; swpcleveland@yahoo.com; Tel. (216) 688-1190. Please send a copy of e-mail messages to the SWP national office at swpno@verizon.net

Gulf of Guinea

Continued from page 3

as U.S. “security concerns” in Africa were Nigeria, Somalia, and Sudan.

As the U.S. military build-up takes place, labor and other struggles continue in Nigeria. A five-day strike by oil workers at Elf Petroleum Nigeria, a subsidiary of the Paris-based oil monopoly Total, and a fuel price strike affected major cities across the country.

Oil workers at Elf Petroleum Nigeria Limited forced the company to shut down its entire crude oil production in early July in face of their demands for the placement of more Nigerians in technical and other senior level jobs, and “positions and pay comparable” to European and North American employees, according to AP.

Members of the National Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers (NUPENG) and the Petroleum and Natural Gas Senior Staff Association of Nigeria (PENGASSAN) have also demanded that the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation fix and revamp antiquated and abandoned oil refineries and put thousands of the unemployed back to work. Government plans to privatize refineries have also stirred up oil workers.

Oil workers at Mobil Producing Nigeria, a subsidiary of ExxonMobil Corp, threatened to strike if their demands for “improved welfare package, a major review in employee compensation, benefits and a halt to the influx of expatriates” were not met by next month, according to *This Day*, a Nigerian daily.

In June, a fuel price strike called by Nigeria's Labor Congress closed banks, schools, and retail stores in major cities throughout the country to protest the sharp rise in gasoline prices after the government cut subsidies to fuel imports. Nigeria, the seventh-largest oil exporter and source of one-fifth of oil shipped to the United States, imports 80 percent of the total finished petroleum products distributed in the country because it has little refining capacity. Gasoline prices increased from 42 naira (\$0.30) per gallon to about 55 naira per gallon.

According to CNN, 70 percent of the population live on less than \$1 a day.

Florida: hundreds protest anti-Cuba sanctions

BY FEDERICO ARTEMIS

MIAMI—More than 200 people gathered July 10 in front of Hialeah’s city hall to protest the latest sanctions by Washington against Cuba, which include new restrictions on Cuban-Americans visiting family on the island and sending remittances to relatives.

“We are here to defend our right to travel, to help out our families,” Antonio Maceo Brigade leader Andrés Gómez told the crowd before the protest got under way. Along with the brigade, the José Martí Association and Alianza Martiana built the event. These groups oppose the 45-year-long U.S. economic war against the Cuban Revolution. The Yoruba Association, an Afro-Cuban religious group, was also a sponsor. An airplane flew overhead during the protest with a banner reading, “Bush: don’t divide the Cuban family.”

A counter-demonstration of seven people took place across the street.

Most people interviewed opposed the new restrictions, which went into effect June 30 after an announcement May 6 by U.S. president George Bush.

“I’m totally opposed to the measures,” said René Suarez, a 39-year-old truck driver who emigrated from Cuba 10 years ago. “They hurt Cubans who are here and in Cuba.” A few drivers who passed by honked their horns to show support.

Holding up a sign reading, “The family is sacred,” Roque García, 67, who has lived in the United States for 25 years said, “These measures are being taken by people who don’t have family in Cuba. Even if they don’t have family there they shouldn’t do this.” This was García’s first protest.

When someone offered García a Spanish-language leaflet of the Socialist Workers Party 2004 presidential campaign, another protester, Pedro González, 71, jumped in. “We can’t vote for that,” González said. “It would be giving a vote to Bush, like voting for the Green Party.” After listening to the argument by SWP campaign supporters that the socialist candidates not only call for the repeal of the latest measures but the normalization of relations with Cuba and for an end to Washington’s economic war, González added, “Kerry is going to help the poor. We’ve gotten Social Security with the Democrats.” The view of González, who was also taking part in his first demonstration, was typical among many demonstrators.

Several protesters came up to offer their opinions on the measures.

“I’m not in total disagreement with the measures the president has taken,” said Aurelio Caldez, one among a number of protesters who opposed only some of the restrictions.

Ernesto, Lao 51, a security guard who has lived here two years, said, “Most people I work with are against the measures. Fidel’s blockade isn’t our fault. The Cuban people shouldn’t suffer because of the measures.”

SWP campaign supporter Elvis Samson responded that Washington is the one that has imposed a “blockade” on Cuba. The U.S. government recently blocked the Jamaican hotel chain SuperClubs from doing business in Cuba by invoking the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act, known as the Helms-Burton law, threat-



Militant
July 10 protest in Hialeah, Florida, against new U.S. government restrictions on travel to Cuba and on sending of cash remittances to relatives on the island.

ening to cancel the U.S. visas of company officials, he said.

Lao said he supported the Helms-Burton law, but not the latest measures. Former president William Clinton signed this bill into law in 1996, tightening Washington’s economic war on Cuba. The legislation mandates U.S. government sanctions against companies in third countries that do business in Cuba.

“All my family is in Cuba,” said Noraika Vargas, a nurse who has lived here three years and who participated in a June 19 car caravan to protest the Bush administration measures. “Everyone I know is against the measures.”

Silvia Mendoza, who has lived in Miami eight years and used to work at Miami International Airport, said, “I thought this was a democratic country, but now one person is denying me the right to visit my family in Cuba.” The last time Mendoza had visited the island was in January 2003. “They say they are going to put U.S. security agents in other countries to snitch on people who go by third country to avoid the rules on travel,” she added, “in Canada, Mexico, and Jamaica.”

“I’m going to travel to Cuba,” said another protester, who asked that his name not be used. “These laws are so absurd they make you violate them.”



RACHELE FRUIT

TAMPA, Florida—About 200 Cuban-Americans protested noisily here in the pouring rain against Washington’s new sanctions against Cuba. The first of its kind in Tampa, the July 17 demonstration took place for three hours on Himes Avenue in West Tampa. It was followed by a car caravan around the neighborhood.

Participants held a variety of views about Cuba.

“I am a Republican at heart,” said one protester. “I did not go to Cuba for 30

years. Then I went and I found peace. He [Bush] can’t tell me who is my family and who is not.”

Many joined the protest because they said they were outraged by George Bush’s latest propaganda attack against Cuba at a July 16 conference in Tampa, where the U.S. president accused the Cuban government of organizing “human trafficking,” especially of women and children involved in prostitution.

Manuel Mojarena and his wife Juana have been in the United States for two years. They heard about the demonstration on the radio and came to stand up against the lies that the U.S. government peddles about Cuba. “Cuba is a poor country, but they have everything,” Manuel Mojarena said. “Not everyone has a lot of food, but no one in Cuba dies of hunger. And they help others everywhere in the world. Education is better there. People follow what is happening all over the world.”

Across the street, about 100 counter-demonstrators held signs and chanted their support for the Bush administration’s policy against Cuba.

“This represents a split among Cuban Americans,” said Maura Barrios, assistant director of the Latin American and Caribbean Studies Department at the University of South Florida, herself a Cuban-American.

Although many protesters expressed support for Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry, Barrios said, “It’s not really around Democratic or Republican politics. It’s coming from the right to travel law. Bush is the one implementing the measures, with the support of the Cuban right-wing people. That’s what’s creating the split. That’s why Bush becomes the target.” Henry Mendoza, one of the organizers of the protest, promised participants that there would be continuing actions until the new sanctions are reversed.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

NEW YORK

Manhattan

The Housing Crisis in New York Fri., July 30. Dinner, 7:00 p.m.; program, 8:00 p.m. Both events held at: 307 W. 36th St., 10th Floor (use north elevators). Suggested donation: \$5 for dinner, \$5 for program. Tel: (212) 629-6649.

CANADA

Montreal

Justice for Maher Arar, Open All the Secret Files, Defend Workers’ Rights Fri., July 30, 7:30 p.m. 6955 boulevard St. Michel (corner of Bélanger). Tel: (514) 284-7369.

NEW ZEALAND

Christchurch

The Struggle to Electrify the World: The Stakes for Building a Fighting Alliance of Workers and Farmers. Fri., July 30, 7:00 p.m. Pathfinder Books at “The Gloucester” Arcade 129 Gloucester St. (near the Theatre Royal). Suggested donation: \$3. Tel: (03) 365-6055; email: mlfchch@paradise.net.nz.

UNITED KINGDOM

London

Our Programme Starts with the World, Capitalism’s Long Hot Winter has Begun: Report from the 42nd SWP Convention Speakers: Jonathan Silberman, member of the Central Committee of the Communist League; Yonatan Mosquera, Young Socialists. Sat., July 31. Buffet dinner, 6:00 p.m.; program, 7:00 p.m. 47 The Cut (nearest tube: Waterloo and Southwark). Suggested donation: £3 for dinner, £3 for program. Tel: (020) 7261-1354.

—CALENDAR—

NEW YORK

Manhattan

An Evening of Solidarity with the People of Cuba: Join the celebration of the 51st anniversary of the July 26 attack on the Moncada Barracks. Keynote speaker: The Cuban Mission to the U.N. July 24. 7:00 p.m.–midnight. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Labor Center - Auditorium, 310 W. 43rd St. (between 8th & 9th Ave.) Subway: A/C/E to 42nd St. Tel: (212) 926-5757.

—LETTERS—

Social explosion in Peru

Paul Pederson correctly pointed out that the social explosions that have begun to occur in Latin America are the result of the deep economic crisis these countries are going through (see “Latin America: 25 years of deepening crisis” in the July 20 *Militant*). He put forward as an example the social explosion in the town of Ilave, Puno, Peru.

On the other side, the bourgeois press has only emphasized the fact that the people killed the mayor of the city. The news about this incident has spread around the world. But one must first ask, “What really lies behind these events?”

The town of Ilave is a small impoverished urban center surrounded by a number of organized peasant communities, where the farms and cattle ranches are abandoned and depressed. This town demanded that the mayor deliver on the promises he made during the election campaign: paving a

road, repairing a nearby bridge, and paying the residents from revenue in the municipal budget.

The municipal authorities rejected their demands. The government of Alejandro Toledo has branded the townspeople as smugglers and drug traffickers.

The people of Ilave organized to fight back. They blocked the roads, defied the police, called an indefinite strike, executed the mayor, and occupied the municipal building. They also demanded their own mayor, Miguel Angel Flores Chamba, who is not recognized by the government of president Alejandro Toledo, and rejected Ramón Arias, the mayor appointed by the national board of elections.

These struggles continue to mobilize the majority of the population of Ilave, more than 15,000 residents who form part of the Aymará nationality, an oppressed nationality of the Andean region of Peru. The majority of residents

of Ilave speak Aymará. Spanish is their second language.

This is what the big business press has omitted from the news it has reported worldwide. An oppressed people in the Peruvian Andes are standing up and fighting to win a road and a bridge—the mediums of communication that modern life calls for in order to escape backwardness and marginalization—and they are setting an example.

This is the real explanation for this social explosion, and not the way the bourgeois press wants to present it: “a town in the Peruvian mountains that simply killed its mayor.”

Juan Sebastián León Roca
Lima, Peru

‘Fahrenheit 9/11’ I

Having just seen the new Michael Moore film *Fahrenheit 9/11* it struck me that this would be an

important movie for the *Militant* to review. Because of its controversial subject matter, its recent film awards, and its difficulty in finding a distributor, this movie has had lots of publicity. Tens of thousands of folks are heading to the theaters to see it, and I have been told that many of the shows are sold out and end with standing ovations and sustained applause. Unusual for any movie, let alone a documentary. Would love to see a clear analysis in the *Militant*, if possible.

Barbara Greenway
Frederick, Maryland

‘Fahrenheit 9/11’ II

I expected Michael Moore’s film *Fahrenheit 9/11* to be a somewhat shrill argument for voting Democrat this fall. It was. But it was also crudely racist. He bristles at the information that “Saudis” own 6 percent of “our” economy. And is indignant at the fact that the Saudi

ambassador was welcomed by the Bush family as a supper guest a few days after 9/11. He treads common ground with Noam Chomsky in the assumption that terrorism does need to be combated—but that the rulers don’t do it properly because they’re too rich. Just thought those readers who don’t have time or money to squander on the outrageous price of movie tickets might be able to use these observations in discussions over the coming weeks as you explain why the *Militant* trumps Moore every time.

Katy LeRougetel
Toronto, Ontario

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.

Brazil gov't seeks to keep workers in line

While in conflicts over trade, Wall Street applauds da Silva's pension cuts

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

The first 18 months in office for Brazilian president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva have been marked by a cautious optimism on the part of domestic and international finance capital that the social democratic government is making headway in safeguarding the interests of the bourgeoisie while keeping in check struggles by workers and farmers. Washington has sometimes come into conflict with the da Silva administration over its trade policies. But the U.S. rulers seem satisfied with its ability to maintain capitalist stability so far in the largest country in South America.

The Brazilian president has been largely successful in convincing workers and farmers to look to the Workers Party (PT) government he leads as the force that can bring them out of the rising unemployment and inflation of the last six years. While promising to eliminate hunger and expand rural electrification, with limited results until now, his administration has also cut pensions of public employees and dished out other "bitter medicine," as he called it, that previous governments had been unable to enact in face of mass opposition.

In a test of the administration's ability to contain the struggles of working people, thousands protested July 16 in the streets of major cities against high unemployment and the slow pace of economic recovery promised by the PT. In São Paulo, the country's financial and industrial center, unionists, unemployed workers, and landless peasants marched down the Brazilian equivalent of Wall Street. "I voted for him, but I was expecting a quicker recovery," Creusa Pereira Gonçalves, a 44-year-old unemployed auto worker told the *New York Times*, referring to da Silva.

Virtually the entire middle-class left of the country has joined the PT administration, or is backing government policies, practicing class collaboration as it attempts to tie the labor movement into an alliance with the "progressive" capitalists. The Communist Party of Brazil, for example, has two ministers in the administration.

The Movement of Landless Rural Workers (MST), which endorsed da Silva in his October 2002 presidential bid, has been an exception to this social pact. After a pause in protests in early 2003, the group has resumed its strategy of organizing land occupations that have won land for hundreds of thousands of rural toilers since its founding in 1984.

Lula's landslide election victory registered discontent among workers, farmers, and middle-class layers in Brazil who were devastated by the effects of the worldwide economic depression and the austerity policies of the previous government, headed by Fernando Henrique Cardoso. Numerous columnists warned of a possible default by a PT government on Brazil's \$260 billion debt, despite Lula's reassurances that he would honor the terms of a \$30 billion emergency loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The Brazilian president's record since then has largely calmed Wall Street and the IMF, as his government has continued to make regular payments to the imperialist lending institutions. In a June 1 editorial, the London *Financial Times* expressed satisfaction with the PT government's "determination to stick to agreements." At the same time, the editors of the London daily warned that "Brazil's reputation is far from secure: signs of backsliding are likely to be punished."

Businessmen plentiful in the cabinet

The Workers Party choice of Jose Alencar for vice president could only have reassured the White House that the da Silva administration would act in the interests of the employers. Alencar is the owner of Coteminas, one of the largest textile companies in Brazil, with 11 factories across the country.

Da Silva reinforced the favorable impression on big business by appointing prominent capitalist figures to his policy team, both before and after election day. They took their seats alongside the seven trade



Reuters/Jamil Bittar

Workers in Brasilia, capital of Brazil, burn flag with logo of the International Monetary Fund at July 16 protest in front of the Finance Ministry.

union leaders in the cabinet of 29. Luiz Fernando Furlan, president of Sadia SA, Brazil's largest chicken- and food-processing company, was named minister of trade and industry. Roberto Rodrigues, the minister of agriculture, is a soy and sugarcane businessman and head of the Brazilian Association of Agribusiness, which includes dozens of domestic and foreign commodity giants.

Brazil's economy, held up as a model for "emerging" capitalist countries in Latin America in the mid-1990s, entered a tailspin in 1998. The gross domestic product contracted and interest rates for credit card and other such debts shot up 150 percent. The downward spiral continued in 2002, when the value of the real, the national currency, declined by 35 percent, and unemployment climbed, reaching 20 percent in São Paulo.

Shortly after coming into office da Silva announced a "Zero Hunger" program. The plan raised monthly welfare payments to \$25 per family, which the president promised would be made available to 50 million people by the end of his term in 2006. One-third of Brazilians live on less than \$1 per day.

Increased welfare allotments, however, do not address the fundamental question of joblessness. Brazil's economy contracted by 0.2 percent in 2003, its worst performance in a decade. Joblessness in the six largest cities reached an average of 13 percent in April, a three-year high. Companies cut 1 million workers from the payrolls last year in these cities alone. While the jobless rate declined to 12 percent in May, the average real wage for workers in Brazil continued to decline. It was about 866 reais (\$279) per month in May—a 1.4 percent drop compared to a May 2003, and 0.7 percent lower than April of this year.

In the 2002 election Lula campaigned for doubling the minimum wage over four years. The Workers Party had also spoken out against attempts by previous governments to enact pension "reform" on the backs of retirees. The PT also maintained an alliance with the MST, and promised to carry out an agrarian reform to aid the millions of rural workers without a job or land to till.

The minimum wage is a vital question for working people, as one-third of the workforce and state pensioners live off this small monthly sum.

In June the Brazilian president won a parliamentary battle to limit the increase in the minimum wage this year by only 8 percent—to about \$83 a month—against opposition parties' efforts to enact a larger pay raise. The Brazilian Senate had voted earlier to increase the minimum wage to \$90, but Lula succeeded in reducing it in a later vote in the lower house of Congress. "It is impossible to have a higher minimum wage," he said after the vote for a lower the minimum wage hike, because of the impact it would have on the state budget. "When we discuss the minimum wage in Brazil we are really discussing pensions."

Da Silva's success in cutting state pensions played an important part in convincing the IMF and Wall Street that he could be counted on to carry out austerity moves that his predecessors feared to attempt in the face of popular opposition. In December 2003, the PT government won congressional approval for increasing the retirement age for federal workers, while forcing them to pay more into the pension fund. Retirees who receive above a set cap in benefits will now pay an 11 percent tax on their pensions.

The fight for land and the means to make a living at farming has been a central feature of the struggles of the toilers in Brazil, where 1 percent of the population of 175 million owns 40 percent of the land. The MST has led many of these struggles. The group reports that in the last 20 years 250,000 families have won title to 15 million acres of land through MST-organized actions.

Da Silva has spoken in favor of land reform, but has distanced himself from land occupations. Agrarian reform "will be done in the calmest, most peaceful way, because the landless understand that this country has laws, has rules," said the Brazilian president after a wave of MST-led occupations in April that included the takeover of vacant buildings on the outskirts of São Paulo. He warned the squatters, "The bottom line is either they get

out, or they get out."

The occupations, which the MST called a "Red April," were in response to the PT government's refusal to act on its promises to expand the land reform. Official estimates indicated that only 11,000 families had been provided with land, far short of the 115,000 families the administration had promised would be given land this year. In mid-July the MST announced it would soon launch a new wave of protests, although a spokesperson said there would not be as many land takeovers as in April, the *Miami Herald* reported.

Conflicts with Washington

To further advance Brazilian capitalists' market share, Brasilia has brought cases to the World Trade Organization (WTO) against Washington and the European Union over their agricultural subsidy policies in cotton and sugar, respectively. The WTO ruled in June that U.S. subsidies of cotton growers violated trade rules. Brazil filed the suit charging that the \$3 billion in U.S. subsidies cost it \$600 million in sales.

Brasilia has taken the lead among semi-colonial countries that have demanded more favorable terms of trade with the imperialist centers. Conflict between the two sides was at the center of the breakdown of WTO trade talks in Cancún, Mexico, in September 2003, and the failure of a Miami meeting in November of last year to make progress in establishing a U.S.-dominated Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). The U.S. rulers seek to use such a pact to break down trade and investment barriers in Latin America and the Caribbean, while strengthening their edge over Washington's European imperialist rivals.

The Brazilian president angered Washington during the 2002 presidential campaign when he described the proposed FTAA as "tantamount to annexation of Latin America by the U.S." U.S. trade representative Robert Zoellick said, after Lula's electoral victory, that if the new Brazilian government didn't agree to the FTAA, then it could "take the southern route to Antarctica."

Friction between Washington and its imperialist allies, on the one hand, and the PT government, on the other, also rose to the surface over the latter's plans to augment the production and use of nuclear fuel to expand rural electrification. (See article in last week's issue.)

Rise in Jew-hating incidents reported in United Kingdom

BY PAUL DAVIES

LONDON—A Jewish community center and synagogue in north London were subject to arson attacks in quick succession in June.

The South Tottenham United Synagogue, in Crowland Road, Haringey, was set on fire in broad daylight on June 24. The fire was spotted by construction workers who were working on a house opposite the synagogue. The workers called the fire fighters. The attack was publicly condemned by Keith Flett, chair of Haringey Trades Union Council, and by Haringey mayor Sheila Peacock.

A day later the Aish HaTorah, a Jewish community building in Hendon, was set on fire just after the Jewish Sabbath began on Friday evening.

No one has claimed responsibility for either of the anti-Semitic attacks.

The assaults come in the wake of reports in the media here of a rise in anti-Semitic violence in recent years. Reported assaults rose from 236 in 1998, to 310 in 2001 and to 350 in 2002, the Community Security Trust reports.

More than 100 synagogues in Britain have been desecrated since September 2000, according to a study by the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia.

Anti-Semitic remarks by leading capitalist

politicians have also become more prominent in the news. In February, the chairman of the ruling Labour Party, Ian McCartney, referred to the opposition Tory shadow chancellor, Oliver Letwin, as a "21st century Fagin," who would "pick the pockets of Scotland's pensioners." Fagin is a Jewish villain in the Charles Dickens novel *Oliver Twist*. Letwin, who is Jewish, was until recently a director of the British branch of NM Rothschild bank. Ultrarightists often scapegoat bankers with Jewish names for the effects of the social crisis, seeking to divert the attention of working people and middle-class layers away from the source of the crisis—capitalism. Social-democratic and other politicians have recently adopted this method as well.

Left-wing Labour politicians have directed anti-Semitic jibes at opponents in the party's leadership. During the Anglo-American invasion of Iraq last year, for example, Labour Member of Parliament Tam Dalyell claimed that the "Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs" was driving the U.S.-UK policy towards Iraq. Dalyell added that British prime minister Anthony Blair was too strongly influenced by Downing Street's Middle Eastern envoy, Michael Abraham Levy. Levy, who is Jewish, raises funds from wealthy donors for the Labour Party.