

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

How working people won  
Social Security as right for all

—PAGE 6

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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## Protest firebombings of socialist campaign hall, café in Pennsylvania

Unionists, Black community leaders, others: prosecute arsonists!

BY VED DOOKHUN  
AND NORTON SANDLER

HAZLETON, Pennsylvania—“We are calling on the mayor and the police to arrest those responsible for this firebombing and prosecute them to the full extent of the law,” said Tim Mailhot, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Congress in Pennsylvania’s 11th C.D., in opening a September 13 news conference to protest the arson attack on the party’s campaign center here.

“We are sending a message that we will not be intimidated by this attack. We call on others in the area to join us in beating back attacks like this designed to prevent those who express views dissenting from the parties of the employers—the Democrats and Republicans—from participating in politics.”

The arson attack on the SWP’s northeast Pennsylvania campaign hall took place in the early morning hours of September 11. At about the same time, arsonists set fire to the back of the White House Café, a restaurant and tavern patronized by Blacks in nearby Wilkes-Barre.

Mailhot said that SWP campaigners are stepping up activities locally and across the state. This includes a several-day tour in the area by SWP vice-presidential candidate Ar-



Militant photos by Marty Ressler (left) and Brian Taylor (above) SWP campaign hall in Hazleton, Pennsylvania, after being firebombed the morning of September 11 (above). White House Café manager Bob Harris, on left, shows SWP candidates Arrin Hawkins and Tim Mailhot damage from arson attack on his bar in Wilkes-Barre Black community (left).

**FUNDS URGENTLY NEEDED!**

**to repair SWP campaign hall**

(see ‘What you can do to help’ on page 4)

## Utah miners build October 2 action to mark one year of union fight

BY ANNE CARROL  
AND GUILLERMO ESQUIVEL

PRICE, Utah—On Saturday, September 11, supporters of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) who work at the Co-Op mine in nearby Huntington, Utah, set up an information table at the “Price Alive” street fair on Main Street here. Their aim was to spread the word about their battle for union recognition and build an event set for October 2 to mark the one-year anniversary of the struggle. The local Chamber of Commerce designated a spot for the coal miners among other booths in the center of town.

Many coal miners and other workers came up to the table and said they supported the fight of the Co-Op miners to win representation by the UMWA. They also asked questions about where things stood in this struggle since the miners returned to work in July.

A couple who stopped by the miners’

**Order back issues of ‘Militant’ to learn about miners’ battle. Free with sub!** (see p. 2)

table had read about the strike in the Salt Lake newspapers. “I thought you guys had already won,” the man said.

The miners—Ricardo Chávez, Bill Estrada, and Berthila León, who staffed the table along with UMWA international representative Dallas Wolf—explained that

Continued on Page 4

rin Hawkins, who changed her schedule to campaign here. In addition to presenting the main demands on the party’s platform, socialists are getting out the facts about the arson attacks on the SWP campaign hall and the White House Café.

Several prominent local individuals are already circulating a statement asking others to send protest messages to Hazleton mayor Louis Barletta to take all possible steps to arrest and prosecute those responsible for the attack.

Signers include Kassie Harding, president of UNITE HERE Local 133-1, which organizes workers at the nearby Hollander Home Fashions garment plant; Anna Arias from the Pennsylvania Governor’s Advisory Commission on Latino Affairs; Douglas McKeeby, pastor of the Trinity Lutheran Church; Monsignor Michael Delaney of St. Gabriel’s Church; Beverly Collins, an activist in the Black community in Wilkes-Barre; and Walter Howard, a history professor at Bloomsburg University.

“Those who carry out attacks like this are emboldened by the political climate in this country today,” Hawkins told the media at the September 13 news conference. “The assaults on the wages, living standards, and rights of working people by the employers and the government, and by the twin parties of capitalism—the Democrats and Republicans, have deepened class polarization and increased the coarseness of bourgeois politics. Viciousness, slander, and innuendo—not civil discourse—have marked the election contest between John Kerry and George Bush. Rightists get wind in their sails to lash out violently because of this.”

At the widely attended news conference the socialist candidates described how the arson attack took place. A brick with incendiary material attached to it in a plastic bag was thrown through the window of the campaign office. An alert neighbor, who lives across the street, saw the fire burning about 4:30 a.m. and called the fire department, which put out the blaze. The fire badly damaged the front of the hall and burned campaign literature, a number of books, and leaflets publicizing upcoming events. Smoke filled the premises. As a result, the many books that line the shelves

Continued on Page 4

**Pathfinder  
supersaver  
sale p. 7**

## Major U.S. airlines use bankruptcy to gut pensions, cut pay and health care

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Three of the largest U.S. airlines—United, US Airways, and Delta—are using bankruptcy proceedings to wrench additional concessions from workers. These include moves to terminate pension plans, cut wages, increase employee payments for health-care benefits, and intensify job speed-up as they lay off thousands of workers.

United and American have led the way, beginning in 2002. Last year, American Airlines, the largest in the country, used the threat of bankruptcy to force \$1.8 billion cuts in annual wages and benefits.

On September 12, US Airways filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy reorganization, for

the second time in two years, after workers refused to accept a new round of wage and benefit cuts.

Attorneys for United Airlines told federal bankruptcy judge Eugene Wedoff at an August 20 hearing that the company would be within its rights to terminate pension plan agreements with the unions. A day earlier the court released papers in which United warned that it will “likely” have to end those pension funds in order to secure the loans it needs to get out of bankruptcy, CBS news reported.

CBS also said that United had failed to make a required \$72 million quarterly payment to its pension fund in July. The

Continued on Page 7

## Cheney: White House course breaks 25 years of ‘cut and run’ from ‘terrorism’

Buchanan: ‘Zionist cabal’ hijacks U.S. policy on Iraq

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

In recent campaign speeches Vice President Cheney has defended the shift in U.S. military strategy carried out by the Bush administration, calling it a necessary break from the course followed for a quarter century under both Democrats and Republicans. Under previous policies, Cheney argued, administration after administration—from Reagan to Clinton—reacted to “terrorist” attacks as criminal matters that could be dealt with through police actions, giving the impression to adversaries that Washington would cut and run if the attackers struck hard.

The Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon changed all that, Cheney said. They dictated a radical shift from the previous course if the U.S. rulers were to confront the challenges they faced abroad and, under the banner of the “global war on terrorism,” to defend U.S. strategic interests around the world.

Ultrarightist politician Patrick Buchanan, speaking September 5 on NBC’s “Meet the Press,” raised sharp criticism of the administration’s policy course in the Mideast, saying it is counterproductive to Washington’s interests. Expressing a view shared by a minority of the U.S. ruling

class, he argued that the White House is conducting an “unnecessary war” in Iraq and called for “a strategic withdrawal” of U.S. troops from that country.

This debate reflects the most serious dif-

Continued on Page 9

## Also Inside:

Meat packers in Canada’s Alberta province vote in union 2

Chechnya: a long history of struggle for national self-determination 3

Venezuela government says new sanctions by Washington are ‘imperialist blackmail’ 5

Gerardo Hernández, one of five Cuban militants in U.S. jails, is moved to new prison in California 11



# Canada: meat packers win union election

BY JOHN STEELE

TORONTO, Ontario—A majority of the 2,200 workers at Lakeside Packers in Brooks, Alberta, voted in favor of representation by the United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW). Brooks is a small town, about a two-and-a-half hour drive southeast of Calgary.

The Alberta Labour Relations Board organized the August 26–27 vote. After a massive campaign of intimidation by the company against union supporters, the vote in favor of the union was 905-857, or a 51.4 percent margin.

“If a union is there, maybe the job can be better and we can have job security,” Miller Mbiyi, who has worked at Lakeside for four years, told the UFCW.

“We don’t know what the union is going to do,” said Robert Reid, according to the *Brooks Bulletin*. Repeating company-inspired rumors, Reid said he was worried that the union would try to run longtime workers out of Lakeside.

Behind the majority support for the union are the brutal conditions in the giant plant, which processes a million beef carcasses a year—one-third of all the cows slaughtered in Canada.

On April 26 the bosses fired 70 workers, most of Sudanese origin, who had walked off the job to protest the firing of co-workers who had organized a parking-lot protest against the intolerable working conditions. Issues raised by the workers included the company’s practice of forcing injured employees to work, refusing requests to leave the line to use the washroom, and rejecting the right of women workers to return to their jobs after maternity leave.

None of the fired workers got their jobs back, reported Doug O’Halloran, president of UFCW Local 401, in a phone interview with the *Militant*. But UFCW officials report these workers’ willingness to stand up to the bosses was a factor in the majority vote for the union .

Union organizer Archie Duckworth told the press there are many other issues facing workers. “The biggest are the right to go and see you own doctor,” he said, “the fear of being fired if you’re injured, and the right to be treated fairly and with dignity and to be paid fairly.”

Lakeside Packers, the biggest slaughterhouse in Canada, is now owned by U.S.-based Tyson Foods, the world’s largest processor of chicken and red meat products. The UFCW had organized Lakeside years ago, but in a hard-fought strike in 1984 the union lost the battle and was decertified. The August vote was the third attempt by the UFCW to reorganize the plant in the last 10 years.

“We’re proud of the efforts of the employees standing up to the intimidation tactics of Tyson,” said O’Halloran. “If the employer hadn’t engaged in intimidation tactics over the past few days, I’m sure we would have received more than 60 percent support.”

In the days before the vote a small anti-union group distributed a leaflet that read: “We had a dream that the union actually won the vote—but it wasn’t really a dream—IT WAS A NIGHTMARE!” The leaflet claimed that negotiations to ratify a collective agreement would be lengthy, implying the company would not give out February pay and benefit increases. “No raises until there is a contract—whenever that is,” the anti-union tract stated.

As part of this anti-union campaign the Lakeside Packers plant manager distributed a letter to workers that concluded: “You don’t know what you’ve got ‘til it’s gone.”

“We don’t believe an outside, third party is needed to intervene in the relationship we have with our team members,” Tyson spokesperson Gary Mickelson said before the vote. “We know that our success depends on them and we work very hard to maintain an open line of communication with them.”

The Tyson bosses have not indicated yet whether they intend to appeal the certification of the union, or begin negotiations for a contract as the UFCW has requested.

A Labor Day UFCW press release celebrated both the union victory at Lakeside Packers and the August 2 certification of the UFCW at Wal-Mart in Jonquière, Quebec, the first union victory at a Wal-Mart store in Canada.

*John Steele is a member of UFCW Local 175 at Quality Meat Packers in Toronto.*

## Bay Area hotel workers rally for health care



Militant/Chessie Molano

SAN FRANCISCO—About 800 unionists and others demonstrated here September 6 at the Four Seasons and Hyatt Regency hotels to support the fight for a contract by UNITE HERE Local 2, which organizes hotel workers at 14 Bay Area hotels.

“I have been to four other rallies starting August 1 around this contract fight,” said Local 2 member Yuri Chauca, who has been bussing tables at the restaurant in the Hilton hotel for more than two years. “The company doesn’t care. They want to take \$75 out of our weekly checks for health care. They have a lot of money, but we are ready to strike.”

“This fight is focused on stopping the cuts in medical benefits for retirees and lower seniority workers,” said Meg Robertson, a UNITE HERE staff member. “Hundreds will lose all benefits if we don’t win.”

— LAURA ANDERSON

## FSP wins exemption from disclosure

BY CECELIA MORIARITY

SEATTLE—After public testimony on August 4, the Seattle Ethics and Election Commission voted not to appeal a federal judge’s July 14 ruling granting the Freedom Socialist Party (FSP) a permanent injunction against disclosing information on contributors to the campaign of Linda Averill, the FSP candidate for Seattle City Council in 2003. U.S. District Judge Robert Lasnik had issued a temporary injunction in August 2003 against a commission decision requiring FSP disclosure of names, addresses, and employers of contributors.

Connie Allen, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate, spoke at the hearing along with others supporting the exemption of the FSP from financial disclosure laws. Allen pointed out that reports listing detailed information about donors to campaigns of socialist and other working-class organizations provide a convenient “enemies list” for federal and local police agencies, employers, private spies, and right-wing groups and individuals.

“Since 1974 the Socialist Workers Party campaign and others have won exemptions because this disclosure is a threat to First Amendment rights to free association,” Allen told the commissioners. “This is part of the SWP’s decades-long support for the right of workers, farmers, and their

organizations to engage in political activity, including elections, free from government and right-wing harassment. The July 14 ruling by Judge Lasnik is an important confirmation of the First Amendment right to free association and should stand.”

Allen pointed out that the SWP candidates for U.S. president and vice president will be on the ballot in Washington State and that the Federal Elections Commission has granted the socialist candidates an exemption from disclosing names of financial contributors based on evidence of harassment throughout the United States, “including numerous examples from right here in Seattle and Washington State.”

An August 11 public statement from Advocates for Averill noted the vote by the six Seattle Ethics and Election Commission (SEEC) commissioners was unanimous to not appeal the federal court’s ruling. But several commissioners asserted “they did not consider the issue settled,” the group noted. Averill pointed out that she and other candidates must still apply for future exemptions. The statement also reported that Seattle’s two daily newspapers failed to mention the commissioners’ decision on the case in their reports on the SEEC meeting. During Averill’s campaign these papers published editorials opposing her request for non-disclosure and criticizing Judge Lasnik for issuing a temporary injunction.

## THE MILITANT

### Find out about Utah miners’ fight for union

*After a 10-month strike, Co-Op miners in Huntington, Utah, returned to work July 12 and have continued the battle for the union from inside. From day one of the strike the ‘Militant’ has given weekly coverage to this important labor struggle. New subscribers can get two back issues of their choice to find out more about it. Don’t miss a single issue!*



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Editor: ARGIRIS MALAPANIS  
Business Manager: MICHAEL ITALIE  
Washington Bureau Chief: SAM MANUEL  
Editorial Staff: Róger Calero, Michael Italie, Martin Koppel, Sam Manuel, Doug Nelson, and Paul Pederson.

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# Chechnya: a long history of struggle for self-determination

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

Moscow's brutal ending of the Beslan hostage crisis, leaving more than 330 dead, has put a spotlight again on the Chechen people's struggle for self-determination. The toilers of this mountainous region on the Caucasus have resisted national oppression for decades.

The Chechens' fight for national self-determination began with the struggle against tsarist occupation forces in the 19th century, culminating in liberation as a result of the Russian Revolution of October 1917, which was led by the Bolsheviks. With the degeneration of the revolution in the late 1920s and early 1930s, however, the regime of Joseph Stalin re-imposed Great Russian chauvinism, which has continued until today. The Chechens' fight for national self-determination picked up steam again after the fracturing of the Stalinist regimes in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe at the dawn of the 1990s.

The government of Russian president Vladimir Putin, however, like his predecessor, Boris Yeltsin, is attempting to paint the struggle of the 1.5 million Chechens with the brush of "terrorism." Referring to the 53-hour crisis that began September 1 in the small town of the southern republic of North Ossetia, Putin's foreign minister, Sergei Lavrov, said September 10 that Chechen leader Shamil Basayev "was in direct control of that operation." Moscow is also trying to link the school takeover to "international terrorism." Lavrov stated that "the information that there were Arabs has been confirmed," without offering evidence for his claims, reported the Associated Press.

In the midst of the takeover, former Chechen president Aslan Maskhadov distanced himself from the attack. At the same time, he pointed to Moscow's military domination by calling "upon the world to condemn the policy that has made such tragedies not only possible but unavoidable."

Not backing down from the government's justification for its course in Chechnya, Lavrov shot back that Maskhadov's statement "is a direct encouragement of terrorism, if not evidence that he was in control of all that."

Against similar charges of "terrorism" and "betrayal of the motherland," the Chechen people have fought for generations.

The tsarist government annexed the Cau-

casus in 1783 and began Russian colonization in order to better control the region. Organized resistance in Chechnya was led by national hero Imam Shamil in face of an invasion of Russian troops in 1830, finally going down to defeat with the 1859 incorporation of the territory into the empire of Tsar Alexander II.

Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin described the Russian empire as a "prison house of nations." Under tsarist rule the peoples of the Caucasus, the Baltic region, Ukrainians, Jews, and others were denied the most basic rights of language, religion, and control of cultural, economic, and political affairs. Great Russian chauvinism was the ideological whip used by the imperial rulers.

## Russian revolution and its degeneration

Following the victory of the Russian Revolution of October 1917, the Bolshevik Party headed by Lenin championed the right to national self-determination of peoples who had been oppressed under the tsarist empire, forging a genuinely voluntary federation of workers and farmers republics.

One of the very first actions of the Bolshevik-led government was to proclaim the right of all the subject peoples within the confines of the old tsarist empire to "free self-determination up to and including the right to secede." Finland, Estonia, and other states acted on this pledge, establishing their independence.

The Soviet government declared null and void all the tsar's colonial treaties and signed new treaties with China, India, and other countries that, among other provisions, canceled debts owed to the tsarist regime.

A few years later, at the 1920 Baku Congress of the Peoples of the East, leaders of the Communist International joined with other revolutionary fighters—from inside the borders of the old tsarist empire and beyond—in calling on all Muslim toilers in the region to join in a "holy war for the liberation of all humanity from the yoke of capitalist and imperialist slavery, for the ending of all forms of exploitation of man by man!"

The bureaucratic caste that began to emerge in the early 1920s, with Joseph Stalin as its foremost figure, pushed to reverse this course. In 1922 Lenin opened a political battle against this counterrevolution. But Stalin's reactionary policies pre-

## Garment workers strike N.Y. handbag maker



Militant/Paul Pederson

A crowd of 100 garment workers gathered along 33rd St. in Manhattan's Garment District September 15, the second day of a strike against posh handbag maker Judith Leiber. The bags they make sell for between \$3,000 and \$6,000, but 200-plus workers at the plant start at minimum wage. Organized by United Food and Commercial Workers Local 342, the workers walked out in the face of a contract offer that included a paltry 20 cent raise—not even enough to keep pace with inflation since the last contract—and moves to lengthen the work day. "Just imagine! Surviving is all I am doing," said Justina Burgos, who has three children. After 11 years at the plant Burgos makes \$8 an hour.

ailed following Lenin's death, reversing the Bolsheviks' program and course of action. In the 1930s, the Stalinist apparatus increasingly relied on Great Russian chauvinism to reassert Moscow's dominance over the tsar's former colonial possessions and other oppressed nationalities. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics reemerged as a prison house of nations inherited from tsarism and imperialism.

While Chechnya formally maintained its autonomy within the USSR, the reality was the opposite. During World War II the Stalin regime carried out deportations and brutal repression of oppressed nationalities who were charged as "collaborators" with the Nazi invaders. Under a decree issued by Stalin, the Crimean Tatars were "banished" from their native land for "betrayal of the motherland." Beginning in February 1944 hundreds of thousands of Chechens were forcibly taken from their homes and deported to Siberia and Kazakhstan on similar charges. They were not allowed to return until 1957.

The bureaucratic regimes in the Soviet Union, and those imposed on other countries of Eastern Europe where capitalist social relations had been overturned after World War II, served as reliable instruments for the transmission of capitalist values.

These regimes disintegrated in 1989–91 under the accumulated weight of the social and economic crisis generated by decades of bureaucratic misrule and the pressure of the deepening downturn of the capitalist system worldwide. As this process unfolded, the oppression of national groupings through the use of police repression and military force began to weaken.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Dzhokhar Dudayev, a former senior official in the Soviet air force, declared Chechnya's independence from Russia. Fearing the example this set for other oppressed nationalities, the government of Russian president Boris Yeltsin responded with military incursions, which were repelled by Chechen forces.

## Two full-scale wars

Since 1994, the Chechen people have fought two full-scale Russian invasions of their land aimed at restoring Moscow's domination. Yeltsin justified the bloody onslaught by raising the specter of "Islamic fanaticism" in Chechnya. Rebels there humiliated the Russian military in the 1994–96 war. At that time an invasion force of tens of thousands of Russian troops was dispatched to crush the independence movement. More than 30,000 people were killed and dozens of cities and villages were devastated, including the capital city of Grozny. But the Chechen resistance remained undefeated in a war that was unpopular from the outset among broad layers of working people and others in Russia. Chechen women blocking the way of Russian tanks on the road leading to Grozny, seen on television around the world, captured the heroic determination of the Chechen people's refusal to submit to Moscow's domination.

The Communist Party of Russia, representing the interests of one of the competing factions of the bureaucratic caste that shattered in 1991, voiced support for Yeltsin's assault on Chechnya.

In 1999 then prime minister Vladimir Putin, under the pretext of the bombing of an apartment complex and other unexplained explosions in Moscow, ordered another invasion of Chechnya. Putin built his popularity as a champion of the military offensive against "Islamic terrorists." He was elected president in 2000. Revealing some of the arrogance of the ruling caste in Russia toward the lives of working people, after one year of war Putin offered that civilian casualties in the war "could be counted on one's fingers." At that point, Russian forces had already driven 200,000 from their homes and depopulated Grozny.

The Putin government claimed victory in the war in early 2002, and most of Chechnya is dominated by Russian troops and pro-Moscow forces. But the Russian government has been unable to put down the Chechen independence struggle, whose fighters continue to control a large portion of the mountainous southern region and regularly skirmish with Russian forces and their local henchmen.

## N.Y.: Contempt for most voters rife among middle-class liberals

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

NEW YORK—An article published in the Sunday, September 5, edition of the *New York Times*, provided a glimpse into the attitudes of a section of the middle classes in New York on the November elections.

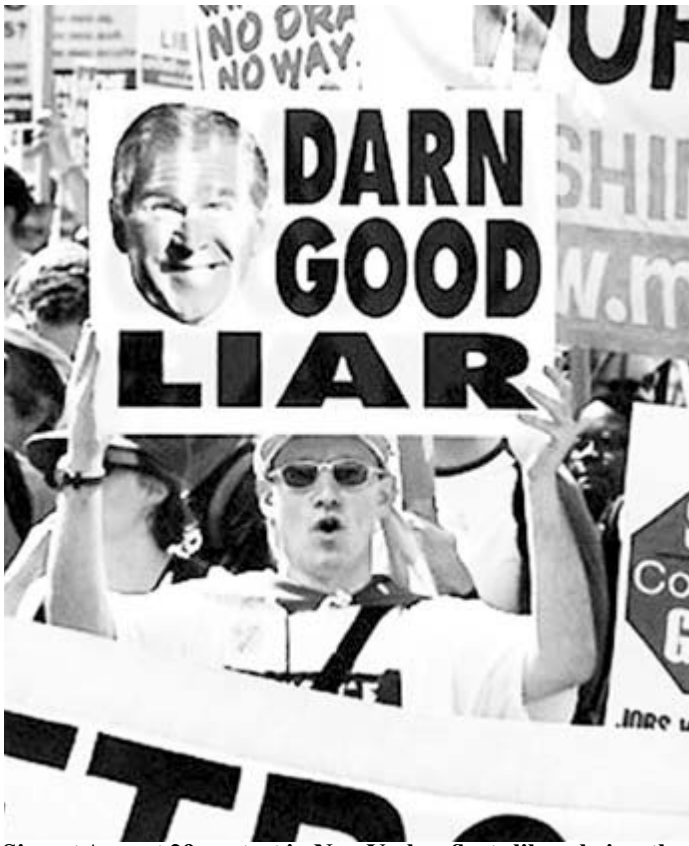
Rounding out the paper's coverage of the Republican National Convention that concluded here September 2, the article revealed some of the arrogance and anti-working class prejudice that predominates among many middle-class supporters of John Kerry's presidential bid. The author of "Ne'er the Twain Shall Meet," John Tierney, planted himself at the upscale Zabar's grocery on Manhattan's Upper West Side. This is a section of town whose residents are known for their liberal views and where the Democrats—one of the twin parties of American capitalism—enjoy support by the large majority.

Tierney interviewed Jill Howell, "who runs a company devising strategies for marketing to multicultural populations," as the author put it. "I don't know anyone in the city who's supporting Bush," said Howell. She acknowledged that many people actually did vote for Bush in 2000 and will again in 2004, but said, "It's amazing to me so many people out there don't recognize the damage he's done to the country. To a large extent they're probably lazy and don't want to examine what's going on."

"It's a complete mystery to me how anyone could support Bush," Leslie Zema, a dance teacher, told the *Times* reporter. "I just don't know anyone like that."

Retired college professor Charles Burkhart indicated to the *Times* he ventures a little more into the world than Howell and Zema do. He actually does know a couple of Republicans—in Maine, he said, but even they don't support Bush. Burkhart figured those who voted for the president are not so much lazy as they are dumb: Bush "fools them by appealing to their gut instincts—they think he's for family values," he said. Through this deception, Burkhart reasoned, Bush is able to hide the fact that "this has been the most tragic administration that has ever happened to the United States."

The notion that a majority of voters are increasingly to blame, or suffer from some form of stupidity for backing Bush, is becoming more and more pronounced among liberals, especially since Kerry slipped behind Bush in the polls after the



Sign at August 29 protest in New York reflects liberal view that those who vote for Bush are uneducated dupes.

Republican convention. Eric Linden, another Zabar shopper, a graduate student, gave this explanation for the seemingly growing support for Bush. "Honestly," he said, "I think it's a lack of education."



# Firebombings

Continued from front page

of the hall are unusable.

The neighbor's action helped prevent the attack from destroying the entire building where the SWP campaign hall is located, including the apartment upstairs where two families were sleeping.

The campaign office is a well-known political center in Hazleton, which is used to organize support for the SWP ticket of Róger Calero for U.S. president and his running mate, Arrin Hawkins; Brian Taylor for U.S. Senate in Pennsylvania; Tim Mailhot; and Kristofer Barkanic for Pennsylvania state house of representatives in the 116th District.

Taylor joined Mailhot and Hawkins at the news conference. Also speaking were pastors Delaney and McKeeby. Delaney spoke on behalf of the Human Relations Coalition for Unity.

"We support our friends' ability to present their views free of intimidation," Delaney said, adding that he joined with

other religious leaders here in "denouncing and rejecting violence in all parts of the country."

"This is an attack on the rights of working people to think and act," said Brian Taylor. "It is aimed at intimidating anyone who wishes to speak out in defense of the working class." Noting that books had been burned in the attack, Taylor stated, "Political ideas like those found in these books are increasingly important to the working class as we strive to understand the workings of the capitalist system, how to effectively resist the employers' attacks, and the lessons past generations have learned through revolutionary struggle."

## Wilkes-Barre arson

Four local television stations covered the press conference, as did reporters for the *Hazleton Standard-Speaker* and *El Mensajero*, a local Spanish-language weekly. A front-page article in the September 14 *Standard-Speaker* by Kent Jackson was headlined, "Fire damages Socialist Workers' base: Candidates from the party called on the public to condemn the suspected arson attack against their headquarters on Wyoming Street in Hazleton."

One television station followed its coverage of the attack on the SWP campaign hall with footage of the arson attack on a bar managed by African-Americans in nearby Wilkes-Barre the same night as the attack in Hazleton. In that attack, boxes and paper were ignited behind the White House Café. The fire damaged a garage and the stairs to the apartments above, making it impossible for the residents to occupy them.

The Wilkes-Barre *Citizens Voice* reported that cops have



Militant/Dan Fein

**September 13 press conference in front of the Socialist Workers Party campaign hall in Hazleton, Pennsylvania, to protest arson attack.**

arrested Michael Boyle, 23, and charged him with carrying out that assault, as well as arson attacks on two houses in the Black community. He was reportedly caught in the act while trying to set fire to a third house. The *Voice* said that Boyle confessed to the actions, stating that he hated African-Americans.

On September 14, Mailhot, Barkanic, and other SWP campaign supporters visited the White House Café to speak to the workers there and offer them their solidarity. The next day café manager Bob Harris showed the damage caused by the blaze (see front-page photo).

"In the days since the attack on the SWP campaign office, especially in the hours before the afternoon press conference was held, a steady stream of visitors came into

the campaign office to inspect the damage and express their solidarity," Mailhot said. "A handful made donations to rebuild the office and some purchased subscriptions to the campaign newspapers, the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*." Many of the visitors, he said, are workers employed at the nearby EXCEL meatpacking plant.

"We don't like this, because this is the most important store on the street," said one packinghouse worker, as he inspected the damage.

One man who came in said he is a local businessman and a "lifetime Republican, but this cannot be tolerated."

During the day on September 11, following the attack, SWP campaign organizers here went ahead with a planned barbeque fund-raiser, which was attended by half a dozen EXCEL workers and family members. Campaign supporters have staffed a regular campaign table outside the office in the days since the firebombing.

A local restaurant owner donated the use of his premises across the street so that a scheduled campaign meeting featuring Brian Taylor could take place September 12.

Meanwhile, teams of volunteers began cleaning the walls and floors, which have been badly damaged by smoke.

"Funds are needed immediately," said Mailhot. "We have launched a special Campaign Hall Rebuilding Fund and set a goal of raising \$3,500. We need your help to purchase wood, sheet rock, and paint to reconstruct the destroyed display area, and replace damaged office equipment and the entire stock of books that the smoke rendered useless." (See box on this page on what you can do to help.)

## SPEAK OUT IN DEFENSE OF POLITICAL RIGHTS

Protest the September 11, 2004 arson attack on the Socialist Workers 2004 campaign headquarters in Hazleton, PA. Defend the right to participate in politics through civil discourse—free of harassment, intimidation, and violence.

**Saturday, September 18, 7:30 P.M.**

**SWP Campaign office**

**69 N. Wyoming, Hazleton, PA**

**Initial Speakers:** Rev. Douglas McKeeby, Trinity Lutheran Church, Hazleton; Greg O'Connell, Attorney, Scranton; Arrin Hawkins, Socialist Workers Candidate for vice president

## The SWP 2004 ticket is on the ballot in the following states:

- |                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1) D.C.        | 8) New York    |
| 2) Colorado    | 9) Utah        |
| 3) Florida     | 10) Washington |
| 4) Iowa        | 11) Minnesota  |
| 5) Louisiana   | 12) Nebraska   |
| 6) Mississippi | 13) Vermont    |
| 7) New Jersey  | 14) Wisconsin  |

## Denied

- 15) Delaware

# Utah miners to mark one year of struggle

Continued from front page

they had won their jobs back but not the union nor a decent contract. The National Labor Relations Board had held a hearing in July to determine who will be eligible to vote in the union election, the miners said, but had not issued a ruling yet or set the date for the vote. The NLRB ruled earlier this spring that the Co-Op bosses had fired illegally the 75 miners a year ago for union organizing activity and ordered the company to reinstate the dismissed workers. After an unconditional offer to return, about two dozen strikers got back on the job and have continued their struggle for UMWA representation from inside.

The company owners, the Kingston multimillionaire clan, are using a boss outfit, called the International Association of United Workers Union, to prevent a UMWA victory, claiming that about 100 employees—including management and office personnel—who are Kingston family members or relatives should have a right to vote in the union representation election.

"That's an outrage," the man who stopped by the information table said, upon hearing these facts. "What is the government waiting for? You deserve justice." The couple signed a petition letter urging the NLRB to set a date for the union election and not allow the relatives of the Kingston family who work at the mine to vote, since their loyalty is with the company.

Throughout the day other passers-by expressed similar opinions, the miners said.

On display at the information table was the latest article from the *UMWA Journal* on the union organizing fight at C.W. Mining, also known as Co-Op, and stacks of many newspaper articles that covered the miners' 10-month strike that started Sept. 22, 2003. A couple of photo albums on the table depicted graphically activities in solidarity with the strike throughout the West and other parts of the country. Such support from the labor movement was behind the earlier NLRB ruling and the company's offer to return on the job, the miners told participants in the street fair.

"Forward to a real union! Solidarity with Co-Op miners. Future members of the UMWA!" reads the leaflet in English and Spanish to invite everyone to come to the October 2 anniversary rally that will be

held at the local UMWA district union hall. Miners say the event will include food, speakers, games, and prizes to be raffled. One miner has volunteered to make a goat stew as part of the meal for the event. The miners plan to make this a family affair, providing games for kids of various ages, including a large trampoline. The miners are also producing a few hundred T-shirts to commemorate the year-long struggle, they said.

"This is one of the most important labor struggles going on to today," said Mark Downs, a retired member of International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 19 in Seattle. "At the Co-Op mine there are many young workers who are super-exploited and who are putting up a fight to get a union. This is a fight for the whole working class and that is why unionists from Seattle, Washington, are going to be in Utah on October 2."

Most miners at Co-Op are being paid between \$5.25 and \$7 an hour, while wages for underground coal miners average above \$17 across the country. They also work under unsafe job conditions.

Downs, who was a longshoreman for 40 years, said that he and two other members of Local 19 have already purchased airplane tickets to fly to Utah for the October 2 anniversary celebration.

As part of its ongoing solidarity with the Co-Op miners, ILWU Local 19 introduced a resolution that was approved by the Washington State Labor Council.

"Whereas, workers who have been trying to negotiate a living wage for the work they do and establish safe working conditions on the job have been persecuted for trying to affirm their hope to establish a decent



Militant/Pat Miller

**Co-Op miners Ricardo Chavez and Bill Estrada (center) and Dallas Wolfe from UMWA (in back) staff table at Price, Utah, festival September 11 to get out the word about their struggle.**

and human workplace," says the resolution; "Whereas, the reality of this persecution has been authenticated by recent decisions of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) handed down in support of the workers, .... Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Washington State Labor Council go on record in support of these miners in struggle and monitor their progress in this dispute; and, be it further resolved, that the Washington State Labor Council contact the NLRB and petition them to not grant certification to the company union and to encourage our affiliates to write and send similar letters to the National Labor Relations Board."

For more information on the October 2 anniversary event, and to send letters of support or financial donations contact the UMWA District 22 at: Tel. (435) 637-2037; Fax. (435) 637-9456; or write to 525 East 100 South, Price, UT 84501.

Letters to the NLRB urging the board to set a date for a union vote and to back the UMWA on who should have the right to vote in the election should be sent to: NLRB Region 27, attn: B. Allan Benson, director, and Nancy Brandt, hearing officer; at 600 17th Street, 7th Floor—North Tower, Denver, CO 80202-5433. Tel. (303)844-3551; Fax. (303)844-6249.



# Let’s pick up the pace of the ‘Militant’ sub drive

BY PAUL PEDERSON

During the second week of the 10-week drive to win more than 3,000 readers to the *Militant* and its Spanish-language sister publication *Perspectiva Mundial*, 148 *Militant* and 27 *PM* subs were received by the business office. This is well below the weekly average of 250 *Militant* and 55 *PM* subscriptions needed over the course of the sales effort to meet the international goals.

The campaign remains slightly ahead of schedule only because of the large number of subscriptions sold at the very beginning through an intensive 12-day effort during the protests in New York that surrounded the Republican National Convention.

Picking up the pace now is necessary to stay on schedule.

A number of reports distributors sent in show how sub sales combined with campaigning for the Socialist Workers 2004 ticket, which includes selling books on revolutionary working-class politics like those included in the Pathfinder Supersaver Sale (see ad on page 7), can make this a reality.

At a day-and-a-half-long trip to Farmington, New Mexico, socialist campaigners from the Western coal-fields got an enthusiastic response to the *Militant* from coal miners at three large mines. The team sold at the gate of two surface mines that sit on land that makes up part of the Navajo Nation and at an underground mine nearby. Nine miners signed up for subscriptions to the *Militant*, and 39 bought single copies during the team’s

visit. Many were attracted to the paper’s ongoing coverage of the union struggle at the Co-Op mine in Huntington, Utah, and other labor battles. Over 600 miners, in their majority Navajo, work at these three sites, which are owned by BHP Billiton. In February, the workers, who are members of Local 953 of the International Union of Operating Engineers, held a 12-day strike and won their demands for a substantial wage increase and an allowance for traditional medicine.

In Seattle, campaigning for the socialist candidates in the senatorial race along with a steady weekly schedule of tabling on street corners, factory gates, and political events has kept the local supporters of the socialist press ahead of pace on their goal. “We were competing last week with the Democrats at one campaign table outside the Longshoremen’s hall,” reported Chris Hoepfner. “Supporters of the socialist presidential ticket and our candidate for U.S. Senate, Connie Allen, had a table outside the hall with a full spread of socialist books, pamphlets, and newspapers. Across from us, a local Democrat was handing out free barbeque to drum up votes.

“One young longshoreman, about 20 years old, came up to the table and noticed our sign in support of coal miners in Utah who are fighting for a union,” Hoepfner said. “This dockworker told us that he had met two of the miners when they spoke at a meeting of his local and he had contributed \$100 toward their cause. He said he was interested in flying out to Utah to join the miners at their one-year anniversary event October 2 marking the beginning of their struggle.” Hoepfner reports that two locals of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union as well as the Service Employees International Union are helping to build the miners’ event.

In Minnesota, campaigners visited Buffalo Lake, a town in central Minnesota where workers at Minnesota Beef Industries, a nonunion beef slaughterhouse that employs 125, are fighting to bring in the union.

Bill Schmitt, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress in Minnesota’s 4th C.D., joined the team, which included Jacob Perasso, who works at Dakota Premium Foods, a large slaughterhouse in St. Paul, Minnesota, where workers fought and won a groundbreaking union-organizing battle.

“We visited workers who live in a trailer park not far

## New Jersey: 250 protest killing by cop



Militant/Angel Lariscy

PERTH AMBOY, New Jersey—More than 250 people marched through the streets here August 25 to protest the police killing of Curtis Good five days earlier. Good, 41, was shot by Perth Amboy police officer Carmen Fazzolari after cops responded to a report of a disturbance. They are now claiming Good had cocaine in his system.

Chanting “No justice, no peace” and holding signs like the one above or saying “Cold-blooded murder,” marchers converged on the Perth Amboy police station. Speakers at the rally included Good family members and Gloria McCoy, president of the Perth Amboy NAACP.

—ANGEL LARISCY

from the plant,” Perasso said. “At one home, a worker invited us in. Three women who work on the kill floor and two men who work as cleaners at Minnesota Beef were sitting in the main room and a lively discussion began, ranging from the fight for the union to what’s unfolding in Venezuela.

“They were particularly interested in discussing what we had to say about the unions,” he said. “The coverage in *Perspectiva Mundial* on the fight for a union at the Co-Op mine in Utah was the thing that attracted the most interest. But workers had a lot of questions about the experience of workers at Dakota in our fight to defend the union. ‘What is it like to have a union?’ was the first question we got, followed by ‘How can we fight to get one?’ We sold three subscriptions to *PM* during our visit to the trailer park.”

## Venezuela gov’t blasts U.S. sanctions

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

The government of Venezuela said September 13 that new sanctions by the Bush administration represent imperialist blackmail. The statement came in response to a White House order to oppose loan requests from Caracas to international institutions during fiscal year 2005.

The U.S. government offered as rationalization for its action, which was announced in a presidential memorandum on September 10, the accusation that the administration of Hugo Chávez had failed to crack down sufficiently on “human trafficking.”

A report released by the State Department in June alleged that “Venezuela is a source, transit, and destination country for women and children trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation.” The report added that “Brazilian and Colombian women and girls are trafficked through Venezuela.”

“This is an attempt at blackmail,” Venezuela’s deputy foreign minister, Arevalo Méndez, said in a statement released in Caracas September 13. He said Bush’s order is an example of “feudal imperialist policies.”

Méndez said his government has been working hard to stop “human trafficking” through its territory. “We recognize we have a problem,” he said, “but it has neither the magnitude nor the nature that Mr. Bush’s government claims.”

A statement by Venezuela’s permanent mission to the United Nations in New York the next day said the White House order was unjustified and unusual. The communiqué pointed out that the government of Venezuela is a signatory to the United Nations Convention Against Organized Transnational Crime and the Protocol to Prevent and Penalize Human Trafficking, but Washington is not.

The White House order was the latest salvo by the U.S. rulers against the Chávez administration since a large majority in Venezuela defeated a presidential recall referendum in August aimed at removing the elected government. The pro-imperialist opposition coalition Coordinadora Democrática, which spearheaded the failed recall effort—the third attempt to topple the popular government in two years—is led by weighty sectors of Venezuela’s capitalist class and has had Washington’s support.

Militant/Perspectiva Mundial Fall Subscription Drive Aug. 28–Nov. 7, 2004: Week 2 of 10					
Country	Militant			PM	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold
ICELAND	25	13	52%	2	0
AUSTRALIA	55	11	20%	8	1
NEW ZEALAND					
Auckland	45	12	27%	1	0
Christchurch	35	4	11%	1	0
N.Z. total	80	16	20%	2	0
SWEDEN	30	6	20%	5	1
UNITED KINGDOM					
Edinburgh	25	4	16%	2	0
London	50	7	14%	12	1
UK total	75	11	15%	12	1
CANADA					
Montreal	32	9	28%	12	1
Toronto	85	7	8%	18	1
CANADA total	117	16	14%	30	2
UNITED STATES					
Craig, CO	50	15	30%	20	1
Seattle	50	13	26%	10	0
Birmingham	35	9	26%	8	1
Twin Cities	105	26	25%	40	3
Des Moines	65	16	25%	25	5
Tampa	40	9	23%	10	0
Atlanta	80	16	20%	20	2
Omaha	55	11	20%	45	2
Houston	75	14	19%	20	3
Los Angeles	150	28	19%	50	18
Price, UT	50	9	18%	20	7
Pittsburgh	65	11	17%	4	0
Boston	100	15	15%	40	1
Cleveland	35	4	11%	8	0
Washington	115	13	11%	21	2
New York	250	28	11%	70	6
Philadelphia	95	10	11%	10	0
San Francisco	100	10	10%	25	0
NE Pennsylvania	55	4	7%	15	4
Chicago	100	7	7%	40	2
Detroit	50	2	4%	10	2
Newark	125	5	4%	25	5
Miami	100	2	2%	50	0
U.S. total	1970	277	14%	596	64
14-day campaign*	-	179	-	-	31
Int'l totals	2506	529	21%	676	100
Goal/Should be	2500	500	20%	550	110
*14 days of campaigning in New York Aug. 21–Sept. 3 at protests and events leading up to and during the Republican convention					
	IN THE UNIONS				
	Militant Goal	Sold	%	PM Goal	Sold
AUSTRALIA					
AMIEU	8	2	25%		
UNITED STATES					
UNITE HERE	50	10	20%	40	6
UFCW	135	25	19%	150	18
UMWA	30	3	10%	15	1
Total	215	38	18%	205	25
CANADA					
UNITE HERE	2	0	0%	1	0
UFCW	6	0	0%	3	0
Total	8	0	0%	4	0
NEW ZEALAND					
NDU	2	0	0%		
MWU	2	0	0%		
Total	4	0	0%		
SWEDEN					
Livs	2	0	0%	1	0

AMIEU—Australasian Meat Industry Employees’ Union; LIVS—Food Workers Union; MWU—Meat Workers Union; NDU—National Distribution Union; UFCW—United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA—United Mine Workers of America.

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



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Mon., Sept. 20, 7:00 p.m.

For tickets and information call

1-800-436-7082; pin: 2065949 and #

Organized by The Coalition to Welcome President Hugo Chavez



# How working people won Social Security

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

Today the employers in the United States are stepping up their offensive against half a century of social gains by working people. Republican and Democratic politicians are discussing steps to roll back Social Security and Medicare, all in the name of saving these programs from “bankruptcy.”

In campaign speeches around the country, President George Bush has been pushing for voluntary “individual retirement accounts.” Other capitalist politicians and financiers propose raising the retirement age, cutting benefits for future retirees, increasing Social Security taxes, or cutting cost-of-living adjustments in benefits. (See “U.S. rulers press attack on Social Security” in September 21 *Militant*).

All these proposals are aimed at undermining the character of Social Security as a right for all—a social right that ties the working class together—and at shifting more of the responsibility for retirement and health care onto individual workers and farmers.

The Clinton administration opened the breach by pushing through the bipartisan Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, which eliminated Aid to Families with Dependent Children, the main federally guaranteed welfare program. It got away with this assault by playing on divisions between employed and unemployed workers and scapegoating sections of working class, especially women living alone with children.

The elimination of “welfare as we know it” has paved the way for more sweeping attacks on Social Security and other gains. Because these were conquered in struggle, the ruling class knows that rolling them back will generate resistance. But the ruling families are forced to carry out this offensive out of economic necessity in order to reverse the long-term crisis of declining profit rates that began in the early 1970s.

Social Security and other entitlements were the by-product of two historic waves of struggles by working people. Under the pressure of the rising labor battles of the 1930s, workers and farmers won a number of conquests codified in the Social Security Act of 1935. This included social insurance for the elderly, which is funded by payroll taxes and taxes paid by employers. It provides benefits to workers after they reach retirement age (originally set at 65, and currently being increased to 67). It also included unemployment benefits, disability insurance, and aid to families with dependent children.

As a result of the mass struggles for Black freedom in the 1950s and early 1960s, the provisions of the Social Security Act were consolidated and expanded to include Medicare, Medicaid, food stamps, cost-of-living protections, and other programs. Working people fought for and won a measure of social protection—a safety net—from the ravages of the capitalist system and the dog-eat-dog competition it fosters among our class. These gains constitute the *social wage*, that is, the extension of wages that the labor movement fights to establish as a social right for all, and thus for the entire working class. They are not a “handout,” as capitalist spokespeople claim, but part of the wealth produced by working people through our labor.

The October 1929 stock market crash announced the opening of a deep-going depres-

sion in the United States. Between 1929 and 1933 industrial production plunged nearly 50 percent. Bosses drove down wages and millions were thrown into the ranks of the unemployed—the reserve army of labor. By 1933, one out of four workers was jobless. An estimated 1.5 million homeless wandered the roads of the country in search of work. Working farmers were driven off the land as farm foreclosures skyrocketed.

## Fruits of 1930s labor upsurge

Until the 1930s there was no government-guaranteed retirement pension system, unemployment insurance, or other minimal social protection in the United States. Jobless and pauperized workers had to rely on private charities and stingy public relief on a local level.

After the initial shock of the economic crisis, unemployed workers began to organize. National hunger marches were organized in 1931 and 1932 to demand unemployment compensation, a shorter workweek with no cut in pay to create jobs, and social insurance for old age, illness, accidents, and maternity. In March 1932 some 4,000 workers seeking jobs demonstrated at the Ford River Rouge plant in Detroit. Cops and Ford company thugs fired on them, killing four and wounding many. Four months later 25,000 unemployed veterans of World War I and their families marched on Washington seeking payment of their bonuses. On orders from the Herbert Hoover administration, Gen. Douglas MacArthur led U.S. troops to drive out the veterans with tear gas, fire, and bayonets.

Liberals and union officials have peddled the myth that Democratic president Franklin Delano Roosevelt, out of humanitarianism and “love for the little man,” gave jobs to the unemployed, granted labor the right to organize, and established the Social Security system as part of the administration’s “New Deal” policies. In reality, Roosevelt, who was elected in 1932 on a platform advocating cuts in federal spending and a balanced budget, was forced to make concessions to the working class in response to a huge labor upsurge. His administration made the smallest possible compromises to stave off a deeper working-class radicalization and save capitalism.

Labor resistance accelerated in 1933 and exploded in 1934. In 1929 there had been 921 strikes involving 289,000 workers. By the end of 1934, more than 1.4 million workers had struck across the country. The story of this upsurge is recounted in detail by Art Preis in *Labor’s Giant Step—The First Twenty Years of the CIO: 1936-55* (see ad below).

The strike wave of 1934 was marked by three decisive battles: the strikes by the auto parts workers at the Electric Auto-Lite Co. in Toledo, the Teamsters in Minneapolis, and the longshore workers in San Francisco.

In the spring of 1934 the country was electrified by the Toledo Auto-Lite strike. The auto workers turned for leadership to the Lucas County Unemployed League. This group, led by what became the American Workers Party, had won respect among the working class in Toledo for its effective mass actions by jobless workers. With up to 10,000 on the picket line, workers confronted the bosses, scabs, cops, and courts. They fought a six-day pitched battle with the National Guard and prevailed, winning a raise and their first union contract.

In Minneapolis, workers in the trucking industry carried out three combative strikes, using mass pickets to defeat assaults by the police. The workers, led by members of the Communist League (forerunner of the Socialist Workers Party), shut down the industry through the use of “flying squads”—pickets on wheels. They then set out to organize every truck driver and inside warehouse worker in Minneapolis. The leadership instilled in the ranks a healthy distrust of capitalist politicians, government mediators, and the courts, fostering reliance on their own mobilized power against the bosses. They produced a daily



Minnesota Historical Society

**Teamsters Local 574’s Federal Workers Section, an unemployed workers auxiliary to the union, at a Sept. 13, 1935, demonstration demanding jobs and relief in the Twin Cities, Minnesota. The march was tear-gassed by cops.**

strike newspaper, organized a women’s auxiliary, forged an alliance with farmers groups, and extended solidarity to other workers. The bosses finally capitulated, recognizing the union and signing a contract. A vivid account of the Teamsters battles can be found in *Teamster Rebellion* and three subsequent volumes by Farrell Dobbs, one of its central leaders (see ad on page 7).

In San Francisco, a strike by more than 10,000 members of the International Longshoremen’s Association became a cause for the entire working class in the city, which carried out a two-day general strike in response to a murderous crackdown by the cops and National Guard. The dockworkers won a contract. Within a year they had won the union hiring hall up and down the West Coast.

The Roosevelt administration began to enact legislation in response to this labor upsurge. But the much-touted New Deal of 1933 was actually a “raw deal,” many workers said. The government’s works programs never provided jobs for more than 25 percent of the jobless. Hundreds of thousands of workers would periodically get thrown off the relief programs. Some 400,000 were fired from Works Progress Administration jobs right after Roosevelt was reelected in 1936, for example.

The payments to workers on the relief projects, as the Unemployed League put it, were “not enough to live on and just too much to die on.” They received as little as \$40 a month in the North and \$19 a month in the South. Instead of real jobs they were given make-work projects, which sometimes literally meant one group of workers digging a hole and another group filling it up.

## Jobless protest indignities of relief setup

The unemployed hated the relief setup and protested the indignities they were subjected to by investigators prying into their lives to determine their eligibility. In *Teamster Power*, Farrell Dobbs explains that in Minneapolis a woman receiving Aid to Dependent Children would be cut off if she worked or if there was any evidence of a man living with her. Government investigators would sometimes show up at her home in the middle of the night, trying to catch a man in her bed.

In Minneapolis, Local 574 of the Teamsters took the lead in organizing the unemployed into a union auxiliary known as the Federal Workers Section. Setting an example for the entire labor movement, Local 574 championed the struggles of jobless workers in their fights with the authorities for improved relief payments, and organized those on the federal government’s Emergency Relief Administration (ERA) projects. This union-sponsored organization helped protect workers from the deliberate confusion that the Roosevelt administration sowed among the unemployed groups by reorganizing the federal relief system from the ERA into a new setup called the Works Progress Administration (WPA).

It was under pressure from the deepening of these labor struggles that the ruling class gave bigger concessions in the form of the Social Security Act of 1935, in an effort to placate and undermine this movement.

A new, even bigger strike wave rolled across the United States in 1936-37. During this period workers carried out more than 1,000 sit-down strikes. In 1937 workers

organized a sit-down strike at three General Motors auto plants in Flint, Michigan, demanding recognition of the United Auto Workers (UAW) union. For six weeks the workers stopped production and refused to leave the plants. They faced tear gas attacks and heat shutoffs, battled cops and company thugs, and stood up to the National Guard. In a decisive victory for the labor movement, the GM bosses gave in, signing a one-page agreement to bargain with the UAW.

These battles began to transform the labor movement in the United States, opening the process that forged the industrial union movement, which took the form of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), launched in 1936.

The CIO became a powerful social movement as workers poured into the unions, seeking not only the right to organize on the job but to improve broader conditions of life.

The most class-conscious workers fought for extending basic social protection to all working people. For example, the National Unemployed League called for a 30-hour workweek and public works, libraries and recreational centers, rural electrification, union-scale wages for those on relief, and unemployment insurance without discrimination.

This working-class upsurge was ended, however, by the class-collaborationist course of the CIO and AFL officialdom, which tied the labor movement politically to supporting the Democratic Party and blocked any action toward organizing a labor party based on the unions and independent of the capitalist parties. As the U.S. ruling class began its preparations for entering the second imperialist world war and whipped up a patriotic propaganda campaign, the labor bureaucracy buckled to Washington’s demands for “sacrifice.” It agreed to compulsory wage controls and signed a “no-strike” pledge.

As the imperialist slaughter unfolded, labor resistance resumed. The most outstanding example was the 1943 strike by 530,000 coal miners. When Roosevelt threatened to send in the army if they didn’t return to work, the miners defiantly responded: “You can’t dig coal with bayonets.” They subsequently won their demands for an acceptable pay increase.

Following World War II, a massive labor upsurge held off the attempts by the employer class to deal major blows to the labor movement and roll back the social conquests of the 1930s. The post-war strike wave involved a total of 5 million workers.

## Black rights battles of 1950s and ‘60s

The U.S. rulers had tried to keep the concessions made to the working class in the 1930s as limited as possible. Social Security was not intended to be something that workers and farmers could live on after retirement—and it was not, until the 1960s. Workers who retired had to find other sources of income. What’s more, the system was designed so that most workers would die before receiving many benefits. At that time average life expectancy was 59, and the “normal retirement age” for receiving full benefits was 65.

Working people extracted further concessions from the ruling class, however, as a result of the massive movement by

**Continued on next page**

## Labor’s Giant Step

by Art Preis

The story of the explosive labor struggles and political battles in the 1930s that built the industrial unions. And how those unions became the vanguard of a mass social movement that began to transform U.S. society.

**\$26.95**



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# U.S. airlines wield club of bankruptcy

**Continued from front page**

company said doing so would have been a "huge financial burden." United said it planned no further payments into the fund while it remained in bankruptcy.

In response, the Association of Flight Attendants and the International Association of Machinists asked the judge to replace United chief executive officer Glenn Tilton with a court-appointed trustee to oversee the bankruptcy.

The *Financial Times* of London reported in August that United also plans to cut 6,000 jobs. In the last three years the company has reduced its workforce by nearly 40,000.

In December 2002, United threatened bankruptcy unless the unions approved \$5.2 billion in wage and benefit concessions over five and a half years. The federal government, through its Air Transportation Stabilization Board (ATSB), demanded the concessions from the unions as a condition for granting United \$1.8 billion in federal loan guarantees the company said it needed to avoid insolvency. Union officials agreed to grant most of the concessions. But the company went into bankruptcy anyway.

**US Airways presses for wage cuts**

US Airways had threatened to go into bankruptcy unless the airline's unions agree

to \$800 million in wage and benefit cuts. The airline filed for bankruptcy protection in August 2002 and emerged the following April with a \$900 million gift in the form of a loan guarantee by the ATSB. During the bankruptcy proceedings, union officials accepted two rounds of wages and benefits cuts worth \$1.9 billion in the name of "common sacrifice" to save "our company."

US Airways chairman David Bonner said a second bankruptcy could turn into a Chapter 7 liquidation because the company would not be able to attract new investors. Bonner is also chief executive of Retirement Systems of Alabama, a pension fund that has invested \$240 million in US Airways and holds a 36.5 percent stake in the airline.

US Airways was facing a mid-September deadline to pay nearly \$1 billion to cover pension obligations and the next installment on its loan guarantee. At least one major credit rating agency, Standard and Poor's, has downgraded the company's debt bonds to "Junk."

The airline is demanding a 16 percent pay cut from pilots, amounting to an estimated \$300 million. Negotiations between US Airways and the pilots' union collapsed at the end of August, according to Reuters. "Since the beginning of these talks, we have witnessed a disturbing trend by the company

to seemingly dismiss several significant proposals from our pilot negotiators," said Jack Stephan a union representative. "Instead," Stephan continued, "management has responded by piling on additional demands."

After the pilots association and other unions refused to accept new wage cuts, US Airways filed for bankruptcy on September 12, seeking reorganization under Chapter 11. Under existing law, the company can ask the courts to throw out its current union contracts and impose the cuts the bosses say they need to continue operating.

So far, no major airline has survived a second bankruptcy reorganization.

**Mass layoffs at Delta**

Gerald Grinstein, the chief executive officer of Delta Air Lines, announced September 8 plans to cut up to 7,000 jobs in the next 18 months if the company does not get concessions from pilots and other airline workers, the *New York Post* reported. The company said it will cut administrative and management costs by 15 percent. It is also expected to announce wage reductions and increased payments by workers for health insurance at the end of September. Despite all these measures, however, Grinstein said, "bankruptcy is a real possibility."

Delta has been held up by airline bosses as an example of a company that has kept costs under control by keeping the unions out.

The airline's management is demanding that the pilots give up at least \$1 billion in concessions, including a 35 percent pay cut and work, scheduling, and pension changes. The union, which represents 7,500 active pilots at Delta, had proposed a 23 percent pay cut and other concessions that would add up to \$705 million a year, reported the *Cincinnati Post*.

Delta is also demanding renegotiation of its agreement with the pilots that makes them eligible to retire at 50 years of age. William Greene, an analyst with the investment bank Morgan Stanley, told the *Cincinnati Post* that retirements by most senior pilots flying Delta's largest planes on lucrative overseas routes could force the airline to ground its fleet of Boeing 777s, resulting in severe financial losses.

Delta has said that over the past months pilots "in greater than historic levels" have opted for early retirement and are taking half of their benefits in a lump sum payment. The company said 2,000 of its 6,900 pilots are currently 50 or older and eligible to retire.

The airline bosses are using bankruptcy proceedings to protect social capital, which is normal under capitalism. It is likely that not all major airlines will survive the current crisis.

To justify their antilabor moves, the airline owners are citing tougher competition from lower-fare carriers—like JetBlue and Southwest Airlines—most of which are non-union, and higher costs of fuel. They are getting most of the concessions they are asking without any serious fight, however, because of the degree of misleadership of the labor movement by the union officialdom.

## How workers won Social Security

**Continued from previous page**

Blacks to bring down the Jim Crow system of racist segregation in the 1950s and early 1960s. This social movement exposed and denounced the miserable living conditions—in terms of health, housing, education, and other areas of life—faced not only by Blacks but millions of working people throughout the United States. This forced the government—under both Republican and Democratic administrations—to enact a series of measures that expanded the Social Security Act.

In 1957 a national Disability Insurance program was established, providing cash payments to workers over 50 who were totally and permanently disabled; the age limit was lifted in 1960. During the 1950s, Social Security benefits were extended to state and local government employees, members of the armed forces, some farm workers, domestic workers, and the self-employed.

As Black rights battles were in full swing, Medicare and Medicaid were introduced in 1965. Medicare provides health-care benefits to all those over 65. Medicaid provides means-tested medical benefits for those with very low incomes. Means-tested programs require that eligibility be proven by investigating a person's financial situation—often enforced by social workers prying into every aspect of one's life.

In 1972 U.S. Congress passed a law that for the first time pegged Social Security and other benefits to a cost-of-living index, automatically increasing payments to compensate for inflation. In 1974 the federal government established the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program, a means-tested cash program for those who have disabilities.

Other federally guaranteed programs instituted in the 1960s and 1970s include food stamps, housing subsidies, school lunches, the Low-Income Energy Assistance program, and Supplemental Food Programs for Women, Infants, and Children.

As a result of the civil rights struggles, Social Security and related programs became a social wage that, however inadequate, working people could expect to more or less live on when they were out of a job, disabled, or retired.

During the 25-year post-war economic boom, however, the labor misleadership institutionalized policies that weakened the unions' fighting capacity. The officialdom focused attention on the gradual improvements in wages of those sections of the working class already in the strongest unions. It traded off these narrow gains for class-collaborationist policies that tangled the unions in red tape. It refused to lead an effort to organize the unorganized majority and to champion the demands of Blacks and other oppressed nationalities.

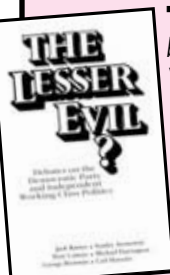
The labor officialdom allowed lawyers to

write contracts that were long and complicated. It focused on company-specific benefits rather than fighting to improve wages and working conditions and simultaneously campaigning to extend the social wage for all workers. This was the opposite of the

example set by the class-struggle leadership of the Minneapolis Teamsters in the 1930s. At that time, short contracts written in plain English, which usually lasted a year or so and often covered wages and working condi-

**Continued on Page 10**

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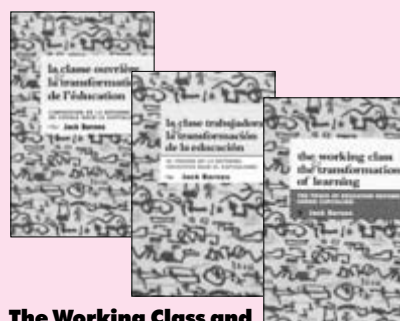
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# Che Guevara and today's imperialist reality

Below is an excerpt from *Che Guevara and the Imperialist Reality*. The Spanish-language edition of the pamphlet, *Che Guevara y la realidad imperialista*, is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for September. The article was first circulated to participants at the conference on "The Twenty-First Century: The Legacy and Relevancy of Che's Works," held in Havana, Cuba, Sept. 25–27, 1997, and was the basis of a presentation to that gathering by Mary-Alice Waters, a central leader of the Socialist Workers Party in the United States. Copyright © 1998 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

"Twenty-one years have elapsed since the end of the last world conflagration, and various publications in every language are celebrating this event, symbolized by the defeat of Japan. A climate of optimism is apparent in many sectors of the different camps into which the world is divided." Yet, "it is appropriate to ask whether this peace is real."

These were the words with which



Juventud Rebelde

Che Guevara at Dec. 20, 1963, event in solidarity with the people of Vietnam.

Ernesto Che Guevara opened his 1966 Message to the Tricontinental, "Create two, three...many Vietnams: That is the watchword."

These words are an appropriate place to begin today—not only because this message, Che's last major political article, was published thirty years ago in the magazine that has taken the initiative to bring together the participants in this international symposium. Far more important is the fact that Che's Message to the Tricontinental so accurately depicts the imperialist reality of the world we seek to change, the reality we must face unflinchingly if our anti-imperialist struggle is to be victorious, within the United States as elsewhere.

Che's words remind us how well he understood the world in which, at the side of Fidel and others, he helped lead the working people of Cuba to establish the first free territory of the Americas and open a new chapter in the history of the modern working-class movement. They help focus our attention on the most important change that has occurred over the thirty years since Che's death: the fact that the relationship

of class forces in a world still dominated by imperialism—with ups and downs, advances and setbacks—has shifted in favor of the oppressed and exploited.

The post-World War II economic and social order christened by Washington's heinous flood of fire against the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki is still with us. But the "climate of optimism" Che pointed to in 1966 is no more. Today's climate is rather one of foreboding among the imperialist masters, marked by short periods of "irrational exuberance" (to quote the top central banker serving the U.S. rulers) and lengthening periods of gloom; heightened anxiety among the middle classes of all countries who count on the propertied rulers for protection and stability; social polarization marked by aggressive probes by rightist and incipient fascist currents; and, most important of all, signs of resistance and rising defensive struggles among those from whose labor capital extracts surplus value in an attempt to reverse its long-term crisis.

In the United States, for the first time in years, an important section of the work-

ing class nationwide, the UPS (United Parcel Service) workers organized by the Teamsters union, emerged victorious from a hard-fought strike that drew popular support in the United States as well as worldwide attention. A new preoccupation is palpable in serious bourgeois circles in the United States, as they face the prospect of more frequent and more successful working-class resistance to declining real wages, accelerated speedup, two-tier pay scales, and other stratagems that seek to divide workers and weaken solidarity on the job. The employers are also considering the upsetting implications for their precarious economic health of the possibility that defensive battles by workers may set an example and bring weighty reinforcements to other social struggles—against police brutality, for immigrants' rights, in support of women's equality, against racist discrimination.

The United States is no exception in this regard. Throughout the imperialist world, and especially in Europe, the pattern of growing resistance and sharpening class conflict is evident.

Those who dominated the other two "sectors of the different camps into which the world is divided"—to whom Che referred almost thirty years ago and who, as he noted, shared the "climate of optimism" with imperialism's ruling families—also find the weather sharply changed. The bureaucratic castes that dominated much of what was termed the socialist camp today find themselves in disarray as they run after a declining capitalist system. And the bourgeoisies of the third world—from Mexico to Malaysia—are discovering the awful truth that the so-called miracle of emerging market economies doesn't culminate in emerged industrially advanced capitalist countries, stable currencies, and broadening well-being, but leads instead to explosive instability and increased domination and ownership by all the parasitic forms of imperial capital. Both these formerly optimistic ruling elites today confront urban and rural toilers in greater numbers, toilers increasingly impatient with the long wait for the promised capitalist prosperity for all.

The dawn of the twenty-first century brings with it not a new international order but speculative frenzies and growing capitalist division and disarray. Che was right: the peace was not real.

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# Buchanan v. Cheney

**Continued from front page**

ference among the U.S. rulers on how to conduct the “war on terrorism” to advance Washington’s strategic interests.

In criticizing the Republican administration, Buchanan argued demagogically that a small group of “neoconservative” officials in the Defense Department has hijacked U.S. foreign policy and “imposed” it on Bush. He suggested that those officials are more loyal to the Israeli government than to Washington and that, through their influence, U.S. foreign policy serves the Israeli regime. Seizing on news leaks that the FBI has been questioning a Pentagon analyst over charges that he gave secret documents to a pro–Tel Aviv lobbying group, Buchanan called for an investigation about a possible “nest” of Israeli spies within the Defense Department who might be guilty of “treason.”

Buchanan’s target is not only “the Jews” in the Pentagon but above all Cheney and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

## Cheney defends ‘Bush Doctrine’

In a September 6 speech in St. Paul, Minnesota, Cheney contrasted the U.S. government’s current military strategy with the course followed by the last several administrations, from that of Republican Ronald Reagan to the Democratic White House under William Clinton. All of them taught “terrorists” that “they could strike us with relative impunity” and that “if they hit us hard enough, they could change our policy,” he said.

Cheney went down a list of attacks on U.S. targets that took place during the two decades before 9/11. He cited the 1983 car-bombing of the U.S. military barracks in Beirut that killed 241 Marines, the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center, the 1996 attack on the Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia, the 1998 bombings of the U.S. embassies in Tanzania and Kenya, and the attack on the *USS Cole* in Yemen in 2000. The 1983 incident took place under the Reagan administration, and the others under Clinton. By inference, he was also alluding to the Republican administration of the senior George Bush as well as James Carter’s Democratic White House in 1977–81.

“What were the consequences of these attacks?” Cheney asked. “Not much. We fired off a few cruise missiles once. Basically they struck us with impunity and got away with it.”

The vice president has elaborated on this question—clearly with Bush’s approval—in a number of other speeches over the past year. In an August 12 speech in Joplin, Missouri, he noted that for decades Washington approached each of these incidents “as some kind of criminal enterprise” through police actions that put individuals in prison.

“Then the attack of 9/11, and, of course, it changed everything. I think everybody came to realize at that moment that we were, in fact, at war—that we’d been at war for some time,” Cheney said. Until then, “we hadn’t really as a nation come to grips with that basic fundamental proposition.”

These carefully worded remarks, which amounted to saying that the Bush administration shared responsibility for what led to September 11 along with several previous governments, were an appeal to Democrats as well as Republicans to come on board.

Cheney asserted that the U.S. government won the Cold War by the opening of the 1990s and that Washington acted over the following years as if it had less need for waging wars. It took the U.S. rulers about a decade to figure out that the “peace dividend” from the end of the Cold War, which included scaling back military spending, was over and an adjustment was needed to meet the challenge of “the new enemy.”

The Bush administration, he said, did learn the lesson of 9/11 and has since applied it through the so-called Bush Doctrine. He said this policy means that any government or individual deemed to be protecting “terrorists” will be targeted, and Washington will “preemptively” attack opponents, “not wait for the next attack.”

Cheney said Washington has made progress with this approach. He cited the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq and the establishment of regimes favorable to U.S. interests there. Subsequently, the Libyan government gave up its weapons program and the government of Pakistan arrested a top scientist there who allegedly sold nuclear material abroad.

Most recently, the governments of Yemen and Indonesia have taken steps to eliminate

“anti-American terrorists” in those countries.

Cheney said Washington was in for a long struggle, with serious dangers ahead. Its new strategy has “set the course for the nation maybe for the next half century.... We have a very long way to go.”

## Kerry’s position

In a September 8 speech in Des Moines, Iowa, the vice president attacked Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry’s position. Kerry “said that he would use military force. He’d like to do it in the fairly traditional way, when the U.S. is attacked,” Cheney stated. If Washington falls back “into the pre-9/11 mindset” that “these terrorist attacks are just criminal acts, and that we’re not really at war,” he said, the United States will be attacked again and again. “We’re now at that point where we’re making that kind of decision for the next 30 or 40 years, and it’s absolutely essential that eight weeks from today, on November 2nd, we make the right choice. Because if we make the wrong choice, then the danger is that we’ll get hit again.”

While Democrats immediately howled that Cheney had slandered Kerry, the vice president was in fact offering a coherent explanation for the course that Washington has taken and the challenges it faces. Because there is no alternative course today to the U.S. government’s “global war on terrorism,” the Bush administration’s position has majority support among the American ruling families and thus in public opinion.

Kerry and other Democratic politicians have supported the basic war policies followed by the White House, raising tactical disagreements only over how to carry them out. The disadvantage for Kerry is that the incumbent president has a consistent three-year record of implementing this course, while Kerry has appeared to vacillate in his position, something that liberal commentators have publicly complained about and that Republicans have taken full advantage of.

As a result, the Democratic contender has gained no traction on the issue of Iraq and appears headed for defeat in November, despite mounting attacks in Iraq on the Anglo-American occupation forces and a death toll of more than 1,000 U.S. soldiers.

The closest to an alternative position among the liberal Democrats was the one taken by former presidential candidate Howard Dean. Before last year’s invasion of Iraq, Dean said he would support a U.S. military assault to overthrow the Saddam Hussein regime only as part of a United Nations–sponsored intervention and disagreed with doing so “unilaterally.” Today, Dean supports the U.S.-led occupation of Iraq but calls for other foreign troops to share the responsibility and cost.

Nonetheless, the Democratic Party rejected Dean’s candidacy knowing that it would be an electoral disaster. And it rejects out of hand advocating the immediate or rapid withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq. That position would at least mobilize the most liberal vote, but Bush would still win by a landslide.

## Buchanan’s criticism of Iraq war

Within this ruling-class debate, ultrarightist politician Patrick Buchanan expresses most clearly an alternative foreign policy course for Washington, albeit a minority view in U.S. ruling circles.

Appearing on “Meet the Press” September 5, Buchanan insisted that the U.S.-led war on Iraq “is an unnecessary war; it is an unjust war.” The proof, he said, is that the question posed by U.S. defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld—“Have we been creating more terrorists than we are killing?”—has been answered affirmatively and that supporters of Osama bin Laden are gaining more support.

The armed opposition in Iraq to the U.S.-led occupation “could turn into a failed state in chaos and civil war,” Buchanan said. “I would execute a strategic withdrawal from Iraq.”

In an interview two days earlier on the cable TV program “Real Time,” Buchanan told host Bill Maher that he supported the U.S. invasion and occupation of Afghanistan because the Taliban-led government had been connected to al-Qaeda and the attack on the World Trade Center. But he said he had warned Bush before the 2003 assault on Baghdad that in occupying Iraq “we’re going to inherit our own West Bank, only it’s going to be 25 million Iraqis. And that’s exactly what happened.”



U.S. barracks in Beirut, Lebanon, after bombing that killed 241 Marines in 1983.

Patrick Buchanan is an incipient fascist politician who uses radical, often anticapitalist, demagoguery to tap middle-class insecurities and resentments among broader layers of the population bred by the growing capitalist disorder. He has attacked both the Republican and Democratic parties for representing the “Beltway establishment” and betraying “the little guy.”

Buchanan has kept one foot in traditional bourgeois politics while seeking to recruit cadres to the longer-term goal of building a popular, rightist street movement that can eventually impose radical solutions to protect the interest of capital in times of acute crisis. In the 2000 elections he ran for president on the Reform Party ticket. He writes regular columns in his biweekly magazine, *The American Conservative*.

The ultrarightist recently issued his latest book, *Where the Right Went Wrong: How Neoconservatives Subverted the Reagan Revolution and Hijacked the Bush Presidency*. Taking an America First position, he denounces the Bush administration’s foreign policy as “the imperial edict of a superpower.” He argues that “terrorism is the price of empire. If we do not wish to pay it, we must give up the empire.”

In response to statements by Bush that the World Trade Center was attacked by forces who “hate what we stand for,” Buchanan contends, “We are hated for what we do. It is not our principles that have spawned pandemic hatred of America in the Islamic world. It is our policies.”

## Claims ‘neocons’ hijacked U.S. policy

Elaborating on the themes of his book, Buchanan argued on the NBC television program that it was a small group of “neo-conservative war hawks [in the Pentagon] who planned, prepared, and propagandized for a war in Iraq as far back as 1996. This was their class project.” He added, “I believe they imposed it upon the president.”

In making these claims, Buchanan promotes a claim that has been repeated by a range of liberal, left-radical, and right-wing commentators and politicians who attack the Bush administration by attributing its foreign policy and military strategy to a small group of “neocons” in the Defense Department. They often point to Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, Undersecretary of Defense Douglas Feith, and former Pentagon advisor Richard Perle. Some go further, implying that a Jewish “cabal” is involved.

Buchanan has taken this argument to the hoop. On the September 5 “Meet the Press,” the show’s host, Tim Russert, quoted from Buchanan’s book: “We were attacked...because of our uncritical support of the Likud regime of Ariel Sharon.” Then Russert asked, “Are you suggesting that our alliance with Israel is one of the reasons that we were attacked on September 11?” Buchanan replied yes, and criticized the administration for “the refusal to condemn that wall snaking through the West Bank.”

Suggesting that the Bush administration is being run by “neocons” who are more loyal to the Israeli government than to Washington, Buchanan declared, “We also need to investigate whether there is a nest of Pollardites in the Pentagon who have been transmitting American secrets through AIPAC, the Israeli lobby, over to Reno Road, the Israeli embassy, to be transferred to Mr. Sharon.” He said, “We are getting dangerously close to the T-word,” meaning “treason,” and then added, “I’m sure the president has no involvement in this.”

“Pollardites”—a codeword meaning “Jewish spies for Israel”—refers to Jonathan Pollard, a U.S. Navy intelligence analyst who in 1987 was convicted and sentenced to life

in prison on charges of selling classified U.S. government documents to the Israeli government. Supporters of Tel Aviv have campaigned for his pardon.

Buchanan was referring to recent news “leaks” that the FBI has been investigating Defense Intelligence Agency analyst Lawrence Franklin, who reportedly worked in the Pentagon under Feith and Wolfowitz, over charges that he gave “sensitive” U.S. documents on Iran to the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), a pro-Tel Aviv lobby group.

In a September 8 syndicated column, Buchanan called for investigating “Israeli espionage, and possible treason, against the United States.” He said, “If there has been a recurrence of Pollardism at the Pentagon, we need to know and the president needs to act, as Truman did not with Alger Hiss and Harry Dexter White.”

Hiss and White, officials in the Truman administration, were accused of being Soviet agents during the McCarthyite witch-hunt; White was not indicted while Hiss was convicted and jailed on charges of perjury for denying the spy charges.

Although Buchanan has a proven record as a Jew-hater, his main target in this case is not Jews but central officials in the Bush administration—Cheney and Rumsfeld, who are not Jewish. Cheney has been the main spokesman for the administration in recent weeks. As the top official of the Defense Department in the last two years, Rumsfeld has most forcefully advocated Washington’s new military strategy, especially the restructuring and repositioning of the U.S. military.

Many liberal politicians and middle-class radicals have also been demanding Rumsfeld’s resignation and have targeted Cheney for most of the evils of the Bush administration. This is one point of convergence between ultrarightists like Buchanan and left-liberals such as “independent” presidential candidate Ralph Nader. Buchanan, in fact, is a bolder critic of the U.S.-led war on Iraq because, unlike liberals, he is not beholden to electing “Anyone But Bush,” that is, Kerry.

Buchanan is seeking to fan a witch-hunt campaign, under the banner of exposing “Zionist” (read: Jewish) spies in the government, to go after these “neocons.”

In the early 1950s, Sen. Joseph McCarthy, an incipient fascist politician, pushed a witch-hunt campaign around “Soviet spies” in the Truman and Eisenhower administrations. Like Buchanan, McCarthy was careful not to go after the commander-in-chief, but rather targeted figures in the State Department.

## No one challenges Buchanan

A notable aspect of the “Meet the Press” program was the lack of response by the other two panelists, Republican former House speaker Newton Gingrich and Democratic senator Robert Graham from Florida, both of whom exchanged views with Buchanan in a friendly tone. They did not challenge Buchanan’s diatribe about “neocons” acting as virtual Israeli spies. Graham said that the Bush administration was not “fully engaged” enough to help resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and that the White House should “come clean” on its ties to the Saudi government in response to 9/11.

Despite the wide media coverage of Buchanan’s statements, there has been no public outcry or answer to them outside of the most militant supporters of the Israeli regime. To a large extent this is due to the fact that the main object of Buchanan’s target in this case is not primarily Jews but figures like Cheney and Rumsfeld, against whom many liberal politicians and commentators have also aimed their fire.



# Protest arson attacks in Pennsylvania

“In the early morning hours of Sept. 11, 2004, an arson attack was carried out against the Socialist Workers 2004 campaign office in Hazleton, Pennsylvania. The campaign headquarters was significantly damaged and the safety of the families who live in the apartments upstairs threatened. Quick action by a neighbor resulted in the fire department being called to put out the fire.”

That’s how an appeal by a number of prominent individuals, mostly from northeast Pennsylvania, begins.

It continues: “We ask you to join with us in defense of civil discourse, free political exchange and debate, and the right of the Socialist Workers Party to campaign free of harassment and attack.

“Join us to:  
 • Send an urgent message to Hazleton mayor Louis Barletta, City Hall, 40 N. Church St., Hazleton, PA 18201, urging that all possible steps be taken to apprehend those responsible for the arson attack and to prosecute them to the full extent of the law. The Mayor can be contacted at 570-459-4910, or faxed at 570-459-4966. Please send copies to the Socialist Workers Campaign at [69 North Wyoming St., Hazleton, PA 18201].

• Send a message of solidarity to the Socialist Workers campaign protesting this attack and defending their right to campaign free of harassment.

• Send a much needed contribution to help rebuild their office. Make checks payable to Socialist Workers 2004 Campaign, earmarked “Rebuilding Fund,” and mail to the Socialist Workers Campaign at the address above.

“Only a vigorous and broad public response can beat back attacks like this one and defend the right to civil discourse and to practice politics free from harassment.”

The appeal is signed by Monsignor Michael Delaney,

pastor of the St. Gabriel Church; Douglas McKeeby, pastor of the Trinity Lutheran Church; Walter Howard, professor of history at Bloomsburg University; Anna Arias, from the Pennsylvania Governor’s Advisory Commission on Latino Affairs; Umberto Hernández, owner of Umberto’s International Cuisine restaurant; Beverly Collins, an activist in the Wilkes-Barre Black community; Kassie Harding, president of UNITE HERE Local 133-1 at Hollander Home Fashions; David Greenleif, UNITE HERE union representative; Gregory O’Connell, an attorney; and Róger Calero, SWP presidential candidate.

We wholeheartedly agree with the signers and urge action along the lines they suggest.

The firebombing in Hazleton, and a virtually simultaneous arson attack on the White House Café in the Black community in nearby Wilkes-Barre, are signs of the times. They are by-products of the assaults by the employers and the government on the wages, working conditions, living standards, and political rights of working people. This bipartisan offensive results in sharpening class polarization and produces a climate in which civil discourse is used less and less in bourgeois politics. This in turn emboldens rightists and racists to carry out such assaults.

There is no reason to believe, however, that civil rights advocates, socialists, or freethinkers of all varieties should expect similar attacks to be quickly generalized around the United States. The class struggle has not reached a point where the ruling class needs to act this way to safeguard its property and prerogatives. But as the signers of the appeal quoted above explain, only a quick, vigorous, and broad public campaign in this and any other similar instance can beat back such attacks and minimize the chance they will be repeated.

# Build October 2 union rally in Utah

“I thought you guys had already won,” a man told coal miners seeking support at a Price, Utah, street fair for their struggle to win representation by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) at the Co-Op mine in Huntington. He said he had read in Salt Lake City newspapers that the miners had won their right to get back on the job.

Indeed. The miners did win that battle after a nearly 10-month-long strike. And they may win more battles down the road. But winning the war to bring in the UMWA at the Co-Op mine is a process. As the record has shown, UMWA supporters in that mine are determined to fight to the end. The final outcome, however, is not in their hands alone. It will be determined not only by what these courageous fighters have done and will do, but on the actions of their allies in the labor movement and beyond.

The Co-Op miners need support from the unions and the broader working-class movement in the West and throughout the United States now as much as ever.

As they have told the world, they are asking unions and other organizations that back their UMWA-organizing struggle to send delegations to the one-year anniversary of their strike. The event is set for October 2 at the UMWA hall in Price. On Saturday, September 18, the miners and their allies in the state capital, Salt Lake, are holding a picket line outside the office of Carl Kingston, one of the prominent members of the capitalist family that owns Co-Op. The miners deserve the full support of the labor movement for these activities and the broadest possible participation in them.

The stakes in this fight are high. If the Co-Op workers win, their success will give a boost to the entire UMWA, especially in the West, and strengthen the hand of miners everywhere who are fighting for their livelihood and safety on the job. If the company prevails, the bosses will be able to step up their anti-union drive. About 55 percent of the coal produced in the United States is mined west of the Mississippi. Yet only about half a dozen mines in that region are union. Given the current boom in coal production, miners are in a better position to push for livable wages and working conditions if they make some breakthroughs in organizing

that boost their self-confidence.

The Co-Op miners, most of whom were born in Mexico, are standing up for their rights in response to the brutal drive that the coal barons have been waging nationwide to jack up their profit rates. This includes longer work hours, increased levels of coal dust miners breathe, refusal to pay black lung benefits, speed-up and other work rules that result in growing numbers of deaths in the mines, disregard for the environment, and efforts to weaken and keep out the union. Miners around the country have taken part in struggles opposing employer and government efforts to loosen coal dust rules, demanding federal black lung benefits for retired and disabled miners and their widows, exposing the bosses’ cover-up of fatal mine disasters, and resisting company attempts to use bankruptcy proceedings to tear up union contracts.

The Co-Op miners have been fighting for more than a year for decent wages, benefits, job safety, and dignity against the Kingstons—a capitalist family notorious in the region for their brutality against the workers they employ in their \$150 million empire. The miners have succeeded—to a large degree through widespread support from the labor movement in the United States and other countries—in forcing the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to rule they were fired illegally, order the company to take them back, and set a representation election. But months later, the NLRB, as usual, has yet to make a ruling on who is eligible to vote or set the date for the election. The bosses will try their best to use the labor board to tie up the struggle in red tape and prolong any decision, hoping they can force enough of the miners to leave or drop the fight.

Solidarity has helped these miners come this far. Solidarity can help them win not only the next battle but the war for the union and a contract at Co-Op.

Send messages to the NLRB backing the UMWA’s opposition to voting rights for the mine owners’ family members in the union election! Send letters of support and financial donations to the miners! Build the September 18 and October 2 union-organizing activities in Utah!

proliferation.” Along with Iran, north Korea is among the main targets of these unrelenting and bullying pressures. In a world in which 2 billion people—one-third of humanity—has no access to modern energy of any kind, finance capital is organizing to prevent nations in the semicolonial world from expanding electrification to all, through nuclear power if they so choose.

Washington and its allies also have no right to decide what measures of self-defense are taken by governments that the U.S. rulers target with their massive nuclear and strategic arsenals. It is the United States, the only one ever to use atomic weapons against the people of another country, that represents the threat to humanity.

On the anniversary of the founding of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, the Socialist Workers Party welcomes the opportunity to fight together with you against our common enemy, Yankee imperialism. We pledge to continue getting out the truth about the unending threats and pressures by Washington against the DPRK, as well as about the Korean people’s fight to reunify your country.

Withdraw all U.S. military forces from Korea’s soil and waters!

End the threats against Korea!

# Kerry assails Bush Korea policy

BY PAUL PEDERSON

Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry has accused the White House of abandoning the Clinton administration’s policy of “aggressive engagement” of north Korea, and allowing a “nuclear nightmare” to develop.

“During [the Bush] administration, North Korea has advanced its nuclear program and a potential route to a nuclear 9/11 is clearly visible,” said a statement Kerry’s campaign released September 12. “North Korea’s nuclear program is well ahead of what Saddam Hussein was even suspected of doing.... What is unfolding in North Korea is exactly the kind of disaster that it is an American president’s duty to prevent.”

“They have taken their eye off the real ball,” Kerry told the *New York Times*, according to a September 13 article. “They took it off in Afghanistan and shifted it to Iraq. They took it off in North Korea and shifted it to Iraq.”

These statements were preceded by a barrage of accusations against Pyongyang following a September 9 explosion in the northern region near the border with China. The blast reportedly sent a cloud into the air that extended two miles across. The capitalist media speculated that Pyongyang had carried out a nuclear test.

The government of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) denied the charge. It said construction crews detonated the blast to remove a mountain to build a hydroelectric plant. U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell and other top officials also said the blast was “not any kind of nuclear event.” A British diplomat has reportedly been invited by Pyongyang to visit the site.

The U.S. government has stationed tens of thousands of troops near the 38th parallel, which has divided the country between north and south since the Korean War ended in 1953. In collaboration with Tokyo, Washington controls the waters around the peninsula, increasingly boarding and inspecting north Korean vessels. The U.S. government maintains a tight economic and trade embargo against the north Korean workers state, while Tokyo imposes economic sanctions against it.

Pyongyang has consistently maintained that it needs to develop its military defenses because of the U.S. troops in the south and Washington’s ever-present nuclear threat.

In October 2002 the U.S. government cut off oil shipments to the DPRK that had been established in a 1994 agreement under the Clinton administration. Tokyo and Seoul followed suit. Under the accord, Washington had promised to assist in the construction of nuclear power reactors in north Korea suitable only for energy generation, in exchange for assurances from Pyongyang that it would not develop nuclear weapons. The DPRK agreed to open some of its nuclear sites to UN surveillance.

In response, Pyongyang removed monitoring equipment from one of its nuclear power plants and expelled UN “inspectors” from the site in December 2002. It withdrew from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and said it would resume efforts to develop nuclear arms. Since February, Washington has drawn Moscow, Tokyo, Beijing, and Seoul into talks aimed at isolating Pyongyang and forcing it to dismantle its nuclear program.

This summer, Washington began moving its troops south of the DMZ, out of range of north Korean artillery. The move indicates that the U.S. military is adopting a strategy of launching devastating strikes against the DPRK in case of a new military conflict, rather than fighting another land war.

# Social Security

Continued from Page 7

tions across several companies and states, became a hallmark of the victories by labor. At the same time, the Teamster militants fought for a government-sponsored safety net that would protect the entire working class.

“The bureaucracy turned its back on any fight for nationwide government health care and improved retirement and unemployment benefits for the working population as a whole. Instead, it sought to negotiate industry-by-industry ‘fringe benefits,’ more and more tied to the profits of individual industries and companies,” Jack Barnes notes in *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics* (see ad on page 7).

Today, the employers and their government are seizing on these weaknesses of the labor movement to renew their assault on the social wage. Under the cover of bankruptcy proceedings, companies such as United Airlines and Horizon Natural Resources are pushing to tear up pension plans for thousands of workers. The White House is pointing to this reality to argue for proposals that would move further in the direction of individual workers having to fend for themselves.

Millions of workers and farmers, however, regard Social Security and other gains as part of their rightful living standards. The political vanguard of the working class not only calls for opposing the government’s attacks on these entitlements. It champions the demand to bring all retirement pensions, medical claims, welfare payments, child care, and other social guarantees into a comprehensive, nationwide, federally guaranteed entitlement for all. This is part of the battle to prevent the rulers from tearing up the class solidarity of working people.



# U.S. jailers transfer Cuban revolutionary

Below is a letter by Gerardo Hernández—one of the Cuban Five—to supporters of the campaign to free him from jail, informing them he has been moved from Lompoc, California, to a new maximum security prison in Adelanto, California.

These five Cuban revolutionaries are currently serving prison terms of between 15 years and a double life sentence after being framed up and convicted in June 2001 in a U.S. federal court.

The five revolutionaries were in the United States on an internationalist mission to defend the sovereignty of their country and the Cuban Revolution. They were gathering information on the activities of counterrevolutionary groups in Florida that have a history of launching violent attacks on Cuba from U.S. soil. These groups have been able to operate with impunity from Florida, often with the assistance of, training by, and funding from the U.S. government.

Unable to prove any illegal acts by the five, the federal government pushed through convictions on a series of conspiracy charges, including conspiracy to act as an unregistered agent of a foreign power, to commit espionage, and to commit murder. The five are René González, Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, and Fernando González. Hernández got the harshest sentence—two consecutive life terms plus 80 months in jail on the trumped-up conspiracy charges, including conspiracy to commit murder.

In March, the five appealed their convictions at a hearing in Miami of the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals, which has not ruled on the appeals yet.

An international campaign is being waged by various organizations to explain the truth about the cases of the five and to demand they be released from prison. Extensive information on this fight can be found at [www.themilitant.com](http://www.themilitant.com).

As an aid to new readers we are reproducing on this page a short biographical note on Hernández that the *Militant* first published in 2002 along with similar material for the other four Cuban militants incarcerated in U.S. jails. We also reprint the addresses where cards, letters, and books can be sent to the five.

## Write to the Five:

**Gerardo Hernández** (Manuel Viamontes), Reg. #58739-004, U.S.P. Victorville, P.O. Box 5500, Adelanto, CA 93436

**René González**, Reg. #58738-004, P.O. Box 725, F.C.I. Edgefield, Edgefield, SC 29824

**Antonio Guerrero**, Reg. #58741-004, U.S.P. Florence, P.O. Box 7500, Florence, CO 81226

**Fernando González** (Rubén Campa), Reg. #58733-004, F.C.I. Oxford, P.O. Box 1000, Oxford, WI 53952-0505

**Ramón Labañino** (Luis Medina), Reg. #58734-004, U.S.P. Beaumont, P.O. Box 26030, Beaumont, TX 77720-6035

The letter below was sent by Hernández to the National Committee to Free the Five, one of the main groups that organize their defense campaign in the United States, which can be contacted at [www.freethethefive.org](http://www.freethethefive.org).



Dear compañeros and compañeras,

On August 11, I was transferred to Victorville prison by highway in a trip that lasted about four hours. Since the Lompoc prison will no longer be designated “maximum security,” all those prisoners who, according to the [Federal] Bureau of Prisons, have to be in a “maximum” regime, will be transferred over time to the new prison in Victorville, also in California.

This place is recently built and we were the first to occupy it. Compared to Lompoc, whose installations are very old and neglected, the conditions of life here are better in a general sense. At least the cells are a little bigger and with better lighting. As it will take some time to fill the prison, I may be able to be without a cellmate for two or three months.

On the other hand, and also because it is a new place, the disciplinary regime is stricter, and there are regulations and rules that we didn’t have in Lompoc. But as we Cubans say, “nothing so terrible.”

The prison is in an area that I understand is part of the Mojave desert. The climate is much hotter than in Lompoc, very similar to that of the island [of Cuba].

The new address to correspond with me is [below].

Before leaving Lompoc, since they didn’t let me bring the hundreds of letters that I need to respond to, I had to pack them up and send them to compañeros who will see that they get to my family in Cuba. Please excuse me again, for those of you who haven’t received a reply.

I’d like to take this opportunity to express anew our appreciation of the Five to friends around the world who have continued to support and inspire us with your solidarity, especially our Cuban brothers and sisters, who are working with extreme care and dedication to repair the damage caused by hurricane Charley. It is moments like these that we lament even more not being able to be together with you physically. We are convinced as always that our battle-tested people will prevail.

Receive all our gratitude and revolutionary embrace of the Five.

*Gerardo Hernández  
USP Victorville  
August 2004*



## Gerardo Hernández

Gerardo Hernández was born into a working-class family, in the city of Havana on June 4, 1965. In high school he became a leader of the high school students association, and in the 11th grade he joined the Union of Young Communists. In 1989 he graduated with a degree in International Political Relations from the Superior Institute of International Relations “Raúl Roa García” of the Ministry

of the Exterior.

Soon after his graduation, together with thousands of Cuban volunteers, Hernández joined the internationalist mission to Angola in which Cuban military forces played a decisive role in defeating an invasion of newly independent Angola by the South African army of the apartheid regime. He was stationed in Cabinda, an area of strategic importance because of oil wells located there, and headed a scouting platoon in a tank brigade.

In Angola, Hernández distinguished himself in 54 combat missions. After completing his tour in 1990 he was awarded medals of honor for his courageous role in combat. Three years later he was admitted into the ranks of the Cuban Communist Party after being nominated by his co-workers.

In the mid-1990s Hernández and the other four Cuban revolutionaries undertook an internationalist mission in the United States. In 1997, in his absence, he was elected as an honorary delegate to the 14th World Festival of Youth and Students, organized by the World Federation of Democratic Youth and celebrated in Havana that year.

Urbano Bouza, a Cuban combatant who fought under Hernández’s command in Angola, said Hernández was politically, humanely, and psychologically prepared for the dangerous mission in the United States. “A scout must be observant, show level-headedness in the face of danger,



Gerardo Hernández

and be discreet and courageous. I can appreciate all these qualities in Hernández,” said Bouza.

Bouza described how he was initially surprised when the news about the frame-up trial first appeared in the press. But once he realized that “it was the same Hernández, just a little more bold, I felt so proud, and I began to excitedly tell people: that was my chief in Cabinda!”

Hernández is a cartoonist who has been published in the national press and presented in diverse galleries. A book of his work has also been published.

## —MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

### AUSTRALIA

#### Sydney

**The working-class alternative to the capitalist war party—Australian rulers press “anti-terror” drive at home and abroad**

Speaker: Ron Poulsen, Communist League candidate for Watson, House of Representatives seat in federal elections Sat. Sept. 25, Dinner 6 p.m., Program 7 p.m. *3/281-7 Beamish St., Campsie (upstairs in arcade near Evaline St.) Tel: (02) 9718-9698*

### NEW ZEALAND

#### Christchurch

**It’s not who you’re against, it’s what you’re for! Campaigning for socialism in the U.S. presidential election**

Speaker: Terry Coggan, Communist League, socialist campaigner at protests surrounding the Republican National Convention. Fri., Sept. 24, 7:00 p.m. “The Gloucester” Arcade *129 Gloucester St. Tel: (03) 365-6055*

### CALIFORNIA

#### Los Angeles

**U.S. hands off Iran! Support the right of power-poor semicolonial nations to develop electrification**

Speaker: Seth Dellinger, Socialist Workers Party Fri., Sept. 24, 7:00 p.m. *4229 S. Central Ave. Tel: 323-233-9372*

### FLORIDA

#### Miami

**Chechnya’s independence movement v. Moscow**

Speaker: Lawrence Mikes, Socialist Workers Party, Fri. Sept. 24, 7:30 p.m. *8365 NE 2nd Ave., #206 Tel: 305-756-4436*

### MICHIGAN

#### Detroit

**Why capitalism creates a housing crisis**

Speaker: Ellen Berman, Socialist Workers Party Fri., Sept. 24, Dinner 6:30 p.m., Program 7:30 p.m. *4208 W. Vernor St. (Between Scotten and Clark, southwest Detroit, Tel: 313-554-0504)*

### NEW YORK

#### Manhattan

**Buchanan v. Cheney: The deepest division in ruling class on how to defend U.S. imperialism’s strategic interests**

Fri., Sept. 24, Dinner 7 p.m., Program 8 p.m. *307 W. 36th St. Floor 10 (enter on north elevators), Tel: 212-629-6649*

### UTAH

#### Price

**Malcolm X: revolutionary internationalist**

A film featuring Malcolm X’s speeches. Fri., Sept. 24, Dinner 6:30 p.m., Program 7:30 p.m. *11 West Main, Room 103 Tel: 435-613-1091*

## —CALENDAR—

### TEXAS

#### Dallas

**2nd Annual Palestinian Film Festival**

Sept. 16-19 at Southern Methodist University, Tel: 214-288-8120 or visit [www.United4PnJ.org](http://www.United4PnJ.org)

## —LETTERS—

### Puerto Rico protest

*“¡Dile no! ¡Dile no! ¡A la privatización! ¡Estudiantes y obreros, unidos venceremos! ¡La UPR no se vende!”* [Say No to privatization! Students and workers, united will triumph! The UPR is not for sale!] On Wednesday, August 25 about 250 UPR students and service workers protested the privatization of UPR, AAA, and AEE electricity and water companies. The marchers also demanded more class offerings, more money for scholarships and service workers, more professors, and pay cuts for the bureaucratic administration.

Many students testified about how they registered for classes and then on the first day of class found out there was no professor

to teach that class. As they tried to get into other classes, they were not permitted because classes with a limit of 10-25 were already over their limit. In one of my classes, for example, there are not enough desks and the last nine students to arrive to class are forced to sit on the floor.

Students who were unable to register for new classes because some have been canceled have been forced to become part-time students, thus losing all of their scholarship money.

The march was organized by el Movimiento Socialista de Trabajadores, la Unión de la Juventud Socialista, UPR’s Instituto de Relaciones Laborales, and the International Socialist Organization. There is to be another picket

August 30 in front of Decano Académico.

*Diego Negrao  
University of Puerto Rico*

### Names policy

For a couple of years now I’ve occasionally browsed the online site of your newspaper and in fact subscribed for a brief period here in New Zealand. While I’ve learned some useful things, even more so from several of the books Pathfinder publishes, and believe they can play a useful educational purpose to those newly familiar with socialist politics, things like calling people by their full Christian name are off-putting even to myself who can overlook it when it occurs.

For those just coming into

contact with distributors of the *Militant*, however, while I don’t know of any concrete cases, it may very well put them off from enquiring any further. No one in the real world for instance calls Bill Clinton William or bothers to say the full name of Bush and Kerry as done in the main article this week. To connect to working people as you maintain you do, it wouldn’t hurt to at least use language that most of the public uses, rather than the sometimes exceedingly formal and off-putting stuff that is occasionally published in your paper.

*Niko K.  
New Zealand*

### Mikey Powell case

September 7 marked the one-

year anniversary of the killing of Mikey Powell by the Birmingham, England, police (see “Protesters in England demand prosecution of killer cops” in Dec. 8, 2003, *Militant*). For an update on this campaign for justice contact [www.mikeypowell-campaign.org.uk/caseupdate](http://www.mikeypowell-campaign.org.uk/caseupdate). *Tippa Naphtali  
Chair of Friends of Mikey Powell Campaign for Justice*

**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.**



# Equatorial Guinea: London tied to coup plot

## Attempt to overthrow government in oil-rich West African nation foiled

BY PAUL DAVIES

LONDON—Recent revelations have implicated the governments of Britain and Spain in backing a failed coup attempt in March in Equatorial Guinea, a nation in West Africa. The coup was aimed at overthrowing the government of President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, in a country that has recently become one of the largest oil producers in Africa.

Simon Mann, a former British Special Air Service (SAS) officer, led the coup attempt. SAS is an elite unit of the British military. A court in Zimbabwe convicted Mann in late August of attempting to buy weapons for the coup, according to BBC News. Mann headed Executive Outcomes, a mercenary force with a record of defending British imperialist interests across Africa over the past decade. Mann maintains his innocence.

Fourteen other mercenaries arrested in Equatorial Guinea are scheduled to be tried there. Meanwhile, the government of South Africa arrested Mark Thatcher, son of former UK prime minister Margaret Thatcher, for allegedly providing financial backing to the mercenary forces. Mark Thatcher was subsequently released on bail. The government of Equatorial Guinea has also accused Ely Calil, a London-based oil millionaire, and David Hart, a Tory party political advisor, of involvement in the coup. According to an article in *The Guardian*, Hart was Margaret Thatcher's "chief enforcer during



Getty Images

**Former British special forces officer Simon Mann, far right with beard, with other mercenaries arrested in Zimbabwe for planning to stage coup against the government of oil-rich Equatorial Guinea. Madrid has also been implicated in the plot.**

the (1984–5) miners' strike," who "handed out money to strike breakers from a suite in Claridges," a hotel.

Simon Mann had graduated from the elite military academy Sandhurst to rise to the post of SAS commander. He served the British military, including in Ireland and in

Iraq during the 1991 Gulf war. Mann then left the army to establish mercenary operations, often referred to euphemistically as "security firms," in the mid-1990s.

Writing in the London *Times*, Michael Groves described these firms as being "scrupulous about operating within western

policy goals while maintaining a discreet distance" from actual British state forces. In his article, titled "Why the World Needs Men Like Simon Mann," Groves argued that "the West would have been able to pocket a strategic gain without the sacrifice of precious regular soldiers," if it had used Mann's Executive Outcomes more consistently in Sierra Leone in the 1990s.

In 1995 Mann's mercenary group was responsible for defeating forces of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone and helping establish the more pro-imperialist regime of President Ahmad Tejah Kabbah. According to the BBC, Executive Outcomes also "earned millions from the Angolan government guarding oil installations."

Two of those arrested alongside Mann were heads of the South African mercenary outfit Meteoric Tactical Solutions. The British government has hired this company to provide security for British officials involved in the current occupation of Iraq and to help train the new Iraqi police force.

Equatorial Guinea is a former Spanish colony. Spain is now home to Severo Moto, head of the self-proclaimed government in exile. Miguel Mifuno, an advisor to Equatorial Guinea's president, has charged Madrid with sending a warship with 500 marines that was due to arrive in Equatorial Guinea the day of the coup. The Spanish government has denied the allegations.

Equatorial Guinea has become Africa's third-largest oil producer in the last decade. U.S. companies invested about \$5 billion there in the late 1990s. The Texas-based CMS Energy discovered a significant new off-shore gas field in 2001. CMS Energy's vice president Ken Keag admitted that "the petroleum sector...is still in a position where a large proportion of revenues generated are going to the oil companies." Exxon is already exporting nearly 300,000 barrels of oil a day to the United States. Marathon is investing \$3 billion in one of the world's largest natural gas plants. Despite the newly found oil wealth of the country, making it attractive for imperialist intervention, Equatorial Guinea has a life expectancy of 48 years for men and 50 for women, according to United Nations figures.

The conviction of Mann and the arrest of Mark Thatcher come as competition among the imperialist powers, especially Washington and Paris, is sharpening over influence in the region. This includes a recent show of force by a U.S. Navy battle group off the waters of Nigeria, São Tomé, Equatorial Guinea, and other African countries that are major oil producers.

# U.S. gov't uses Darfur crisis to threaten Sudan

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, D.C.—U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell has charged the government of Sudan with genocide against its non-Arabic-speaking African minorities in the Darfur region. It is the latest step by Washington in its campaign against Sudan under the cover of responding to a humanitarian crisis. Khartoum is on Washington's list of so-called failed states as part of the "war on terror" through which U.S. imperialism seeks to strengthen its domination of the Mideast, as well as Africa and other parts of the world, at the expense of its rivals.

Not to be outdone, Democratic Party presidential candidate John Kerry responded to Powell saying the United States should take the lead role in ensuring "the immediate deployment of an effective international force to disarm militia" in Darfur. Kerry made the remarks to delegates at the National Baptist Convention being held in New Orleans. The group is among the largest religious organizations of African-Americans. Kerry made a similar call for military intervention in Sudan at the convention of the NAACP.

The day before Powell's testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, U.S. diplomats to the United Nations circulated a draft resolution that threatened sanctions against Sudan's oil industry if it did not disarm and arrest pro-government militias that Washington says are responsible for the deaths of thousands non-Arabic-speaking African Sudanese in Darfur. It also calls for the establishment of a UN commission of inquiry to determine whether Khartoum and the militias are responsible for genocide. It calls on UN Secretary General Kofi Annan to report on Sudan's compliance with the resolution's demands within 30 days, indicating that sanctions could go into effect at that time. The resolution also demands that Khartoum permit the expansion of an African Union-sponsored "monitoring" force to patrol Darfur. The resolution leaves open the size of the force, but Jan Pronk, the UN special envoy to Sudan, said that it should be at least 5,000 troops, reported the *New York Times*.

The September 9 London *Guardian* reported that Khartoum said it would agree to an increased monitoring force as long as its mandate did not include "peacekeeping," a

cover for imperialist intervention. An African Union-sponsored force of nearly 400 soldiers currently operates in Darfur as part of a cease-fire agreement last April between the government and opposition forces.

Negotiations between Khartoum and its armed opponents, held in Nigeria's capital Abuja, have included proposals to send at least 3,000 troops to Darfur led by Nigeria. The Abuja regime headed by Olusegun Obasanjo has emerged as a key ally of Washington in defense of imperialist oil interests in Africa. Nigeria—the world's fifth-largest exporter of crude—also heads the 12-member African Petroleum Producers Association. Sudan took in \$1 billion in oil revenues in 2002.

Washington's campaign against Sudan enjoys bipartisan support. The U.S. Congress has already passed a resolution charging Khartoum with genocide. And several prominent Democratic Party politicians, among them Congressman Charles Rangel,

have gotten themselves arrested in protests at the Sudanese embassy here demanding military intervention against Khartoum.

Imperialist governments in the European Union also back the threat of sanctions against Sudan but have stopped short of charging Khartoum with genocide. They differ with Washington on how best to advance their imperialist interests in the region and fear that military intervention in Sudan would lead to greater U.S. imperialist dominance of the region at their expense. "We have not discussed specifically the use of the word 'genocide,'" said EU spokesman Jean-Charles Ellerman-Kingombe. The EU representative characterized Darfur as an "extremely serious" situation that requires a "huge humanitarian aid effort."

China and Pakistan, both members of the Security Council, have opposed moves to impose sanctions on Sudanese oil. China has also threatened to use its veto against Washington's newest resolution.

# Greece: thousands protest attacks on Albanian immigrants

BY GEORGES MEHRABIAN

ATHENS, Greece—A September 9 march of 3,000 protested anti-Albanian violence that has occurred in many parts of Greece. The attacks resulted in the killing of one Albanian immigrant worker and the wounding of more than 200.

The right-wing violence erupted on the night of September 4, when the Greek soccer team, which won the European championship, lost to Albania in a World Cup qualifying match in Tirana, Albania.

"When the Albanians went out to celebrate the victory of the team at Ommonia Square, right-wing gangs and cops were already waiting for them at the metro exits," said Ervin Sehou, a leader of the Albanian Forum, an Albanian immigrant rights group. Ommonia Square is in downtown Athens. "They started beating people wildly. The cops also joined in. They beat up all sorts of people, including families returning home. In Pireaus, when the match was over groups of right-wing Greeks left one coffee shop, where they had been watching the game, to go to another where Albanians were watching TV and attacked them. Similar attacks took place in Thessaloniki, Zakynthos,

Chios, Crete, Ioannina, Volos—all over the country. It was a real climate of terror!

"I want to stress that these attacks were not by chance," Sehou said. "A tremendous nationalist climate has been created through the Olympic Games this summer and Greece's earlier victory in the soccer Eurocup. Many people have been won to the myth of superior Greek DNA."

The September 9 demonstration was called by the Albanian Forum and was backed by some 30 organizations. Protesters assembled at Ommonia Square and marched to the Greek parliament. Throughout the demonstration, they were followed and flanked by riot police. The 300-strong Albanian contingent let the police know that they held them responsible for the brutality of September 4. "Cops are pigs and murderers!" was the most common chant of the Albanians. At other times they chanted "Let no more Albanian blood flow!" and "Greeks and foreigners, workers united!"

A march of several hundred also took place September 8 in Thessaloniki, the country's second largest city. Demonstrations also took place in Hania, Crete, and Ioannina, the largest city in the north near

the Greece-Albania border.

"Greeks celebrated the victory of the Greek national team in streets through out the world and nothing of the sort happened," said a Greek-born school teacher who did not want to be identified. "Albanians should be given the same rights. What happened is shameful."

The Prefect of Thessaloniki, Panayotis Psomiadis, a member of the ruling conservative New Democracy party, defended the actions of the rightists and cops. "Instead of receiving thanks from Albanian immigrants for all their new country has offered them," he said, "Greeks are insulted, reviled and humiliated in their own country."

Most voices in ruling circles, however, have condemned the anti-Albanian violence. "Regardless of whether the Albanian immigrants were provocative or not, they also have the right to celebrate," said Giorgos Orfanos, deputy minister of culture and sports. The opposition social democratic PASOK party also issued statements condemning the attacks.

The Albanian Forum is demanding that the right-wingers and cops involved in the attacks be prosecuted and punished.