

SWP candidate for president Róger Calero

Break from parties of the employers!

For a labor party, based on the unions, that fights in the interests of workers!

Back right of oppressed nations to electrification for economic development

BY DAVID ROSENFELD

OMAHA, Nebraska—"The only way to defend ourselves on the job from the bosses' offensive against our wages and working conditions is to organize unions where we don't have them and to make them stronger where we do have them," said Róger Calero, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president.

Calero was speaking to a group of workers here October 7 outside the Swift & Co. slaughterhouse.

"It's also high time that we not only fight on the economic level, but organize on the political level as well," Calero told the workers. "We have to break from the parties of the bosses—the Democrats and Republicans. I urge you to vote socialist." The SWP campaign, he said, is for a labor party based on the unions that fights in the interests of workers and farmers.

Calero said he is also for the right of semicolonial countries to develop full electrification, including through nuclear power if necessary, to achieve economic development.

For two hours Calero and campaign supporters exchanged experiences with workers as they streamed out of the plant that afternoon. Lisa Rottach, SWP candidate for Congress in Nebraska's 2nd District and a meat packer at Swift, joined Calero in campaigning at the plant gate.

If you look at the dispute between Boeing and Airbus over who will sell more airplanes around the world, you can see the intensifying competition between the bosses, Calero said. This dispute had

made the news the previous day (see article on page 4). Driven by this capitalist competition, Calero said, the employers are speeding up production, lengthening the workday and workweek, and lowering real wages to shore up their declining profit rates. "The wealthy families that rule this country will continue this offensive against the working class in the United States and workers and farmers around the world regardless of whether Bush or Kerry wins in November," Calero continued.

"That's why workers need to organize unions and strengthen those we have, now and after November 2. Mobilize union power. Solidarity—one for all and all for one! These should be the watchwords of the day," he said.

"Together we can do it," responded a kill floor worker in Spanish. "That's what a union is." She and other workers pointed out that two years ago meat packers at this plant won a lengthy struggle for union representation by United Food and Commercial Workers Local 271 and their first contract. They have since continued the fight on the job to enforce the contract.

Another worker told Calero that 20 years ago he worked at a union plant and made more money than he does now. "The company told us to take concessions and promised to stay open," he pointed out. "Six months later, they closed the doors. Two years ago we got the union in this company and now things are getting better little by little."

The socialist candidate replied that what

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Socialist candidate for Senate in N.Y. debates Green, Libertarian opponents

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

NEW PALTZ, New York—Martin Koppel, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate in New York, took part in a debate here October 11 with opponents David McReynolds of the Green Party and Donald Silberger of the Libertarians.

The three candidates took part in a similar debate two days later as part of Hofstra University's Day of Dialogue on the U.S. elections. That campus is located in Hempstead, Long Island.

Students Against Empire at the State University of New York (SUNY) at New Paltz sponsored the debate on that campus, 75 miles of north of New York City. About 120 people, mostly students, attended.

The candidates of the two main capitalist parties, Democrat Charles Schumer, the incumbent, and Republican Howard Mills, as well as Conservative Party candidate Marilyn O'Grady, declined to participate. Jim Gordon, a reporter for the *New Paltz Times* and other local newspapers, chaired the event.

McReynolds was introduced as an enrolled Democrat and former Socialist Party candidate for president. "Since Schumer is

certain to win in this election you really can vote for what you believe," McReynolds said in his opening remarks, arguing for a protest vote for his campaign. This is in line with the Green Party approach in the elections nationally, which is to try to help the Democrats by not running candidates in "swing states," where the contest between the Democrats and Republicans is close. The Greens have split, with one group backing Ralph Nader, who is running as an "independent," and the other supporting David Cobb, the Greens' candidate for president.

"The SWP ticket is the working-class alternative to all capitalist parties in these elections, including the Greens and Libertarians," said Koppel in his opening statement. The problems working people face—from declining wages to imperialist wars—are rooted in the system of capitalism, he said, which is based on the rule of a tiny minority of billionaire families that run the country off the wealth produced by the vast majority.

"The ruling class today is on an offensive against working people. Through attacks on our wages, job conditions, and living standards the bosses are trying to increase their profits," Koppel stated.

"Whether George Bush or John Kerry is elected they will enforce that system. Others such as Ralph Nader, the Greens, and Lib-

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Militant/David Rosenfeld

Róger Calero, Socialist Workers Party candidate for president (center), campaigns October 7 at plant gate at the Swift & Co. slaughterhouse in Omaha, Nebraska. Meat packers there won representation by United Food and Commercial Workers Local 271 and their first contract two years ago after long struggle.

Utah miners demand reinstatement of leader of union-organizing fight

UMWA attorneys are representing the miners in fighting bosses' lawsuit against union backers

BY GUILLERMO ESQUIVEL

HUNTINGTON, Utah—Two weeks after the dismissal of a leader of the Co-Op miners' struggle to win representation by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), miners here are pressing for the

reinstatement of Celso Panduro, who was fired September 30.

Three days earlier the bosses had suspended Panduro with intent to discharge. After two meetings with the company, production supervisor Shain Stoddard informed Panduro by phone that he was being terminated "for insubordination."

"They think they can easily get rid of me but they are wrong," said Panduro. "They are doing this to me because I support the UMWA. The bosses are now spreading rumors among workers that I didn't want to work."

Ten miners and a representative of the UMWA gathered at Panduro's house October 7 to discuss the fight for his reinstatement.

They also discussed how to fight a lawsuit that the Kingstons, the company owners, filed September 24 in federal district court in Utah against the UMWA, 17 Co-Op miners, and many supporters of their fight and newspapers that have covered their struggle. The miners said that the UMWA official at the meeting informed them that the union's lawyers are representing the Co-Op miners in this legal battle and will serve as their counsel in court if the case goes to trial.

Miners said that as of the date of their

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After Samarra, U.S., Iraqi forces start sweeps in other Iraqi cities

U.S. military uses air power to wipe out militias in Fallujah

BY SAM MANUEL

In a speech to U.S. troops at Al Asad air base in western Iraq October 10, U.S. secretary of defense Donald Rumsfeld said Washington would most likely begin reducing its forces in Iraq after elections scheduled to take place there in January 2005.

"We're here not to stay but to create an environment where Iraqis can take over their country and to stay as long as necessary and not any longer," he said. "As we build up Iraqi forces we will be able to relieve the stress on our force and see a reduction of coalition forces over some period of time, probably close to the Iraqi elections."

Rumsfeld also said he expected fighting to continue, and in some areas intensify, until the elections. He praised the Iraqi military for its recent success in taking over Samarra along with U.S. troops and putting it under the authority of the Iyad Allawi government.

Such joint operations will expand to another 30 cities and towns where militias opposed to the U.S.-led occupation have been functioning openly, according to the Pentagon report, "U.S. National Strategy for Supporting Iraq."

During that weekend, the U.S. military stepped up air assaults on Baathist and other militias in Fallujah. The raids were carried out with relative impunity and few

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Textile workers strike in Massachusetts



Militant/Sarah Ullman

Members of UNITE HERE picket Duro Textiles mill in Fall River, Massachusetts, October 7. Workers walked out to protest company attempts to impose drastic changes on shift schedules, including allowing bosses to cut hours down to 24 a week at will.

BY SARAH ULLMAN

FALL RIVER, Massachusetts—“When the last ballot was unfolded and we saw there wasn’t a single ‘yes’ vote, we were amazed,” said Ronald Melanson. The vote by workers at Duro Finishing was 176 to 0 to reject the take-back demands of the owner, Duro Textiles LLC, and to strike on October 3 at midnight, when the contract expired. Melanson, a utility man with 30 years at the company, was one of three members of UNITE HERE Local 1226T who counted the ballots at the union hall in nearby North Dartmouth.

The company does dyeing, finishing, printing, and coating of fabrics for apparel, industrial, and military use at four plants in Fall River.

The bosses’ final contract proposal at Duro Finishing, the largest of the plants, would replace the current 40-hour workweek with a 32-hour workweek, which the company may lower to 24 hours one week per month.

This company demand is the number one issue for most of the workers this reporter interviewed on the picket line.

Another key issue is a proposed increase in health-care deductions from workers’ paychecks, from the present \$8.18 per week to 20 percent of the premium cost. The company says this would amount to between \$16 and \$40 per week. Strikers estimate the figure would be \$47 to \$56, depending on plan and coverage. The company is also trying to eliminate some holidays, and get rid of job classifications, making everyone a utility worker. Pay is also in dispute.

“Everything we have we fought for,” Melanson said. “Our bills keep going up, not down. They want to bring us back to the 1970s. I think it’s wrong of them.”

The company has three union-organized plants, Duro Finishing, Duro II, and Duro Textile Printers—all within a few blocks of each other. Each has a separate contract and expiration date.

The striking workers at Duro Finishing, which is the largest of the three at almost 190 workers, have been picketing the other two plants as well to put pressure on the bosses.

Negotiations have not taken place since the strike began. Workers staff picket lines around the clock, seven days a week,

The smallest mill, Duro II, has 24 workers currently. Their contract was settled a few months ago, with the company imposing many of the same concessions they are now demanding of the workers at Duro Finishing.

The contract at Duro Textile Printers, which has a workforce in between the other two in size, will be up at the end of October. Many of those currently working there have joined the informational picket lines set up by Duro Finishing workers outside their workplace.

Casino workers walk out in Atlantic City, New Jersey

BY ABBY TILSNER

ATLANTIC CITY, New Jersey—Over 10,000 members of UNITE HERE Local 54 struck seven casinos October 1. Local 54 represents 17,000 bartenders, cocktail servers, cooks, cleaners, and other workers at all of the city’s 12 casinos. They have been working without a contract since September 15.

Still working are the non-union dealers, slot attendants, and valets and security.

On October 8, about 100 strikers blocked the main access road to Atlantic City for about 20 minutes as the busy Columbus Day weekend traffic began flooding into town. Police arrested about 80 of the strikers and gave them tickets for disorderly conduct and obstructing traffic.

The main issues in the strike are contract duration and subcontracting. The union wants a three-year contract that would expire in 2007, the same time as casinos in Las Vegas, Detroit, Chicago, and riverboat casinos nationwide. The owners are pressing for a five-year contract.

“We’re just here to strengthen the

union,” said striker Eric Tavarez, who works in Bally’s bake shop. “We’re trying to unite to get a contract to be the same with Las Vegas and the riverboat companies.”

Workers are also arguing that leasing casino space to outside firms undermines the union. They are demanding that any future leasing would include Local 54 members. Tropicana is the main target because it currently has four leased outlets and plans to subcontract large parts of the retail and dining district, The Quarter, when it opens its 11 outlets this fall.

Other issues include maintaining medi-

cal benefits, and increasing wages.

“We are here supporting the strike by the union to put pressure on the bosses to keep honoring the clauses that the union enforces so that they do not take away the benefits we have now,” said Jeiky Pimentel.

Atlantic City is a resort city located on Absecon Island, just off the coast of New Jersey. Today nearly 20 percent of its population of 40,500 live below the poverty rate. Five area casinos have already settled with the union. Six of the struck casinos are using replacements to continue operations.

San Francisco hotel workers strike over wages, health care

BY CHESSIE MOLANO

SAN FRANCISCO—Hotel workers here have been fighting for a new contract since August 14. The confrontation turned into a strike September 29 when 1,400 members of UNITE HERE Local 2 walked off the job.

Workers are picketing the Argent, Hilton, Crowne Plaza, and Mark Hopkins in a strike planned to last two weeks to hold back com-

pany attempts to cut health-care benefits, and to push for higher wages.

The hotel bosses have counterattacked by locking out 2,600 employees from the other 10 hotels that were also in contract negotiations, and using temporary agencies to replace union members in an effort to break the strike. The owners said October 5 they will continue the lockout at all 14 hotels after the two-week strike ends.

The 24-hour pickets have been upbeat and feisty, despite harassment from police. Strikers say a number of hotel guests have shown support for the union fight. The *San Francisco Chronicle*, on the other hand, reported that some guests threw urine and ice water on pickets.

Striker Roberto Marquez told *Militant* reporters, “It’s simple. We’re fighting to defend our rights. The reason we have any of these benefits is because of the past. We are fighting for the same thing now as we did then. But we shouldn’t have to be fighting, these things should be a right.”

The San Francisco Multi-Employers Group, which represents the 14 hotel owners, is demanding an increase in the health-insurance premium from the current \$10 per

month to \$273 per month in the fifth year of the new contract. The bosses also aim to double the minimum number of hours worked per month needed to qualify for medical insurance—from about 40 hours to 80 hours per month. This would cut off more than 1,000 hotel workers from health benefits, say union officials.

Workers are also fighting for better pay. The bosses have offered a 20 cents an hour annual raise in a five-year contract to workers who do not receive tips, and 5 cents an hour for those who do. This is a pittance, considering how the cost of living is increasing, the strikers say.

Union members in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C., are also disputing the hotel bosses contract offer, and all are pushing for an expiration date in 2006. This would match the contract date for hotel workers in other cities plus the state of Hawaii. In response, the hotel bosses have filed an unfair labor practice charge against the union with the National Labor Relations Board.

UNITE HERE Local 11 in Southern California held a rally of 1,200 in downtown Los Angeles October 5 to support the strikers in San Francisco.

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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U.S. gov't uses report by arms 'inspector' to buoy rationale for Iraq war

BY SUSAN LAMONT

A report issued October 6 by a CIA official assigned to be Washington's chief weapons "inspector" in Iraq, Charles Duelfer, bolstered the Bush administration's rationale for going to war against Iraq by stating that Baghdad had focused on ending the United Nations sanctions and had plans and capacities to resume its "illicit weapons" programs after the lifting of these sanctions.

The report by the Duelfer-headed Iraqi Survey Group (ISG) also said that former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein had "essentially destroyed" that country's banned weapons programs in 1991, after the end of the first Gulf war, with the last secret factory, a biological weapons plant, reportedly shut down in 1996.

The claim that Baghdad possessed these weapons was one of the pretexts used by Washington to launch the invasion of Iraq last year. The fact that the so-called inspectors sent by Washington and its imperialist allies to Iraq haven't uncovered such weapons has been a central theme of the campaign of Democratic candidate John Kerry, coverage in liberal dailies like the *New York Times*, and echoed by much of the middle-class left. None of these forces dispute the notion that Washington, which possesses the most nuclear weapons and is the only government to have ever used them, would have had the "right" to "disarm" Iraq if such weapons did in fact exist.

Despite its length—918 pages—the report contained little new. Its conclusions repeated most of what was said earlier this year by Duelfer's predecessor, David Kay. Duelfer, a CIA special adviser, has headed the ISG since January. Formed by the occupying powers in mid-2003, the ISG organized more than 1,400 U.S., British, and Australian agents to hunt for Iraqi "weapons of mass destruction."

Kay, interviewed on CNN evening news October 7 on the conclusions of Duelfer's report, restated his support for the Bush administration's course. Asked by CNN's Wolf Blitzer whether another six months of "inspections" before the U.S.-led invasion could have led to a clear conclusion then that no "weapons of mass destruction" existed in Iraq, Kay said no. He asserted that the Hussein regime did everything it could to keep ambiguity going about what kind of weapons it possessed—a point Duelfer also made in his report.

"Saddam's primary goal from 1991 to 2003 was to have UN sanctions lifted, while maintaining security of the regime," the Duelfer report said. After the 1990–91 U.S.-led war on Iraq, the United Nations, at Washington's request, imposed the harshest sanctions ever implemented by that body, including a total economic embargo that devastated the country.

While dismantling Iraq's chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons programs after 1991, Hussein continued to give the impression that Iraq might still have such weapons, mainly as a deterrent to Iran, the ISG report said. Baghdad waged an eight-year war against Iran, following the 1979 revolution in that country that overthrew the U.S.-backed regime of the shah. Right up to the eve of the U.S. invasion in March 2003, Hussein misled his own top advisors and military leaders about whether the government still had such weapons, according to the ISG report.

The report also concluded that the Hussein regime did everything it could to retain the scientific personnel and know-how to reconstitute these weapons programs as soon as feasible.

In addition, the ISG "uncovered Iraqi plans or designs for three long-range ballistic missiles" with ranges from 250 to 620 miles, and for a cruise missile, "although none of these systems progressed to production and only one reportedly passed the design phase," the report stated. Components for such missiles, spare parts for tanks, and night-vision equipment were purchased by the Hussein government from a range of governments, despite the UN sanctions.

The report claimed that the Iraqi government was able to mitigate the effects of

the sanctions through the UN-sponsored "oil for food" program, started in 1996, by raising some \$11 billion through the sale of oil vouchers. These vouchers, which could be resold for a profit, were given to government officials from Indonesia, France, Russia, China, and other countries, along with private companies, including two from the United States. Official denials of these transactions appeared the following day from the governments of many of the cited countries.

The government of France was particularly incensed. "The report does great damage," French ambassador to Washington Jean-David Levitte said, according to the *New York Times*. "There really is a sense of outrage in Paris." The French government especially objected to the naming in the ISG report of French individuals and companies involved in the oil deals, while not disclosing the U.S. companies, citing "privacy laws."

Both Republican and Democratic politicians used the report's conclusions to try to bolster their election campaigns.

The ISG report showed that "delay, defer, wasn't an option," said Vice Presi-

Controversy over Paul Bremer remarks highlights debate among U.S. rulers on training Iraqi military

BY SUSAN LAMONT

Paul Bremer, the U.S. proconsul in Iraq between May 2003 and June of this year, said recently that Washington should have had more troops on the ground in Iraq after the U.S.-led invasion. His remarks generated controversy, which focused once again on the debate within the ruling class on how the occupation of Iraq should have been organized from the beginning.

Republican Newt Gingrich, former Speaker of the House of Representatives, had pointed to this debate in a September 5 appearance on NBC TV's "Meet the Press" with moderator Tim Russert.

"Tim, on your show five or six months ago, I said we made a huge mistake in June of last year by not moving promptly to an interim Iraqi government," Gingrich said. "Had we continued to move as we had planned to an Iraqi interim government and to using the Iraqi regular army in June of last year, we would be in a better shape today."

Gingrich praised the way the invasion was carried out by the U.S. military, which, under the guidance of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, moved to Baghdad with lightning speed and with smaller and more agile military units than the first Gulf War, taking full advantage of modern weapons technology. His comments alluded to the fact that those in the Bush administration who argued for moving quickly to establish a new Iraqi regime and train a new Iraqi army, while keeping the U.S. forces there in the backdrop, took a back seat for a while to those like Secretary of State Colin Powell who advocated reliance on the U.S. occupation regime—headed by Bremer—to run the country in the first year.

"We paid a big price for not stopping [looting in Iraq right after the U.S. invasion] because it established an atmosphere of lawlessness," Bremer said October 4, speaking to an insurance conference in West Virginia. "We never had enough troops on the ground." At the same time, Bremer restated his support for Bush's decision to invade Iraq. "I am more than ever convinced that regime change was the right thing to do," he said.

Bremer was quick to underscore his support for Bush's current strategy. "I believe that we currently have sufficient troop levels in Iraq," he said in an October 4 e-mail statement, adding that winning the war in Iraq is an "integral part of fighting this war on terror" and that he "strongly supports" Bush's reelection.

An editorial in the October 6 *Wall Street Journal*, titled "The Viceroy's Apologia," took Bremer to task for his statement on troop levels. The editorial asserted that



Iraqi National Guard soldier kicks alleged militiaman in Samarra October 4. Takeover of Iraqi city was first such successful joint operation between U.S. and Iraqi troops. Operation marked progress in efforts by U.S. imperialist forces to train Iraqi military.

dent Richard Cheney during an October 7 campaign meeting in Miami. "As soon as the sanctions were lifted he had every intention of going back," to his weapons program, Cheney said. "The suggestion is clearly there by Mr. Duelfer that Saddam had used the [oil for food] program in such a way that he had bought off foreign governments and was building support among them to take the sanctions down."

Kerry, speaking to reporters in Colorado, said the same day that the ISG report proved his position that Bush acted prematurely in

invading Iraq and overthrowing Hussein.

Kerry also cited statements the same week by Paul Bremer that more U.S. troops on the ground in Iraq after the invasion would have been useful. Bremer, who headed the Coalition Provisional Authority, was Washington's civilian "administrator" in Iraq for 14 months, until June 2004. "Ambassador Bremer finally said what [Democratic vice-presidential candidate] John Edwards and I have been saying for months," Kerry said. Bremer quickly rebutted these statements (see adjoining article.)

Bremer never asked for more troops until two months before his departure from Iraq in June, after the interim government was sworn in.

"We heard about his request at the time, but didn't think much about it after we learned that theater commander General John Abizaid was consulted and argued that it was better policy to train Iraqi forces to fill any void," the *Journal* editors continued. "Judging by our ultimate goal of Iraqi independence, and the success that mixed Iraqi and U.S. battalions had retaking Samarra over the weekend, General Abizaid was right." In July 2003, Abizaid replaced Gen. Thomas Franks as head of the U.S. Central Command, which oversees Washington's operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In an Op-Ed column in the October 8 *New York Times* Bremer made it clear that the majority in the ruling class is now

convinced that the installation of an Iraqi administration with a trained military under its control should have been a higher priority. "The administration, the military, and I all agreed that the coalition's top priority was a broad, sustained effort to train Iraqis to take more responsibility for their own security," he said.

Bremer pooh-poohed the attempts by Democratic presidential nominee John Kerry to use his statements to bolster the Democratic election campaign. "Mr. Kerry is free to quote my comments about Iraq," Bremer said. "But for the sake of honesty he should also point out that I have repeatedly said... that President Bush made a correct and courageous decision to liberate Iraq from Saddam Hussein's brutality, and that the president is correct to see the war in Iraq as a central front in the war on terrorism."

U.S. air assault on Iraqi cities

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protests around the world.

During Rumsfeld's visit, members of the Mahdi militia loyal to Muqtada al-Sadr, whose forces fought fiercely with U.S. troops in Najaf earlier this year, also began turning in their weapons in Sadr City, outside Baghdad, after a deal with U.S. commanders and the Iraqi interim government.

At the same time, U.S. forces launched air strikes in Fallujah, in the so-called Sunni triangle, and U.S. and Iraqi troops began establishing control of nearby Ramadi. Iraqi army units swept through seven mosques in Ramadi on their own, according to BBC News.

One of the goals of the Pentagon plan is the gradual reduction in the number of U.S. troops in Iraq in brigade-size increments of roughly 5,000 troops. Washington currently has 138,000 deployed there. The Pentagon aims to train, equip, and deploy Iraqi troops to hold cities like Samarra after they are taken by U.S. and Iraqi forces.

On October 3, after three days of fighting, about 3,000 U.S. troops along with 2,000 Iraqi army and national guard soldiers overwhelmed militias in the city, meeting little resistance. Samarra is part of Sunni triangle, which also includes Fallujah and Ramadi—the sites of fierce and bloody fighting in April—and the northern Babil province. Forces loyal to the former Baathist regime of Saddam Hussein have had a strong base in this area.

As many as 1,200 U.S. troops will remain in Samarra to back up 600 Iraqi provincial police officers and an elite police battalion.

U.S. Maj. Gen. John Batiste, commander of the Army division that led the attack in Samarra, said he was not sure how many insurgents remain in the town. According to a report by the Knight Ridder news service, Batiste cited the ineffectual resistance and the estimated 255 militiamen killed or captured, which he said was a low figure, as evidence that many insurgents may have fled the city or gone into hiding.

Batiste praised the performance of Iraqi troops in Samarra who he credited with single-handedly removing militiamen from the city's Golden Mosque, a site revered by Shia Muslims. "Iraqi forces performed extremely well and we are very proud of them," Batiste said.

On October 6, U.S. forces opened up a second similar sweep into the provincial towns of Mahmoudiyah, Youssifiyah, and Latifiyah south of Baghdad. U.S. troops sealed off roads leading to the cities, reported Al Jazeera TV.

By October 12, a similar sweep of Ramadi was also under way, where Iraqi troops were playing a major role like in Samarra.

In praising the Iraqi military, Rumsfeld said October 10, "They performed bravely in Najaf and Samarra." He also said that 700 Iraqi policemen and national guardsmen have been killed since the beginning of the year. "They're not hiding in their barracks," he said, but are fighting against Baathists and other militias.

Washington had hoped to smash the Baathist army during the March 2003 invasion by opening up a northern front through

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Interimperialist competition behind Airbus-Boeing spat

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

U.S. government officials filed a complaint October 6 with the World Trade Organization (WTO) charging that the European consortium Airbus had received \$15 billion in subsidies. In addition to the WTO grievance, Washington also renounced its 1992 agreement with the European Union that allowed governments to provide favorable loans to aircraft manufacturers for up to 33 percent of the cost of making a new model, a practice that had been prohibited by the WTO for other transactions. The European Commission responded immediately by filing a countercharge, declaring that Boeing had received about \$23 billion in U.S. government subsidies.

The new flare up of the dispute between Boeing and Airbus—the two giants that control virtually the entire world market in manufacturing of commercial aircraft—reflects the sharpening competition between imperialist powers.

Two years ago the WTO ruled that the EU could impose punitive tariffs on up to \$4 billion worth of U.S. imports in retaliation for tax breaks that major U.S. corporations get, which amount to an export subsidy. The EU has not enforced the measure completely, although EU punitive tariffs on U.S. imports

reached 12 percent in October. Several governments in the EU indicated that they may retain these sanctions in response to Washington's WTO complaint, according to the *Financial Times*.

While the brawl over subsidies has been brewing for decades, what's at stake is the U.S. aircraft industry losing its supremacy in the manufacturing of large commercial aircraft. "In recent years Boeing has lost its historic dominance of the industry to Airbus," which "for the first time last year sold more planes than Boeing and is in a position to repeat that this year," noted an article in the *Wall Street Journal*.

Today Boeing's share of the market has eroded to 48 percent from about 73 percent in 1993. According to *Business Week*, Airbus has grabbed at least half of all commercial aircraft deliveries and 60 percent of global orders today. Boeing's bosses have sought to shore up their sagging profit margins with massive layoffs of thousands of workers and demands for concessions that have included cuts in health coverage.

U.S. government officials said their move was made out of concern that the governments of France, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Spain would provide loans to Airbus to allow the company to build a



A peice of the Airbus 380 jumbo jet, and the Boeing 7E7 (inset). State financing of the two planes is at center of dispute between Washington and EU governments.

rival to the 7E7 jetliner, which Boeing is developing. U.S. officials noted that Airbus chief executive Noel Forgeard said the company "was prepared to launch a direct competitor to the 7E7" and might seek aid under the terms of the 1992 agreement, the *Financial Times* reported.

"This is about fair competition and a level playing field," declared Robert Zoellick, U.S. trade representative. "The EU and Airbus appear to want to buy more time for more subsidies for more planes."

In a sharp retort, EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy stated, "It's high time to put an end to massive illegal U.S. subsidies to Boeing, which damage Airbus, in particular those for Boeing's new 7E7 program."

Government officials in Europe allege

that the Bush administration's decision on the WTO charge was driven by election-year politics—the need to respond to demagogic accusations by his Democratic challenger John Kerry that the president has failed to enforce trade agreements to the detriment of the U.S. economy.

According to EU officials, Boeing has received \$23 billion in government subsidies since 1992, mainly through research and development contracts from government agencies, with preferential access to military and aeronautical research programs. The company has reaped super-profits from over-priced military procurement contracts. One EU account cites a report by the Wall Street investment firm Morgan Stanley stating the normal profit margin for sales of Boeing's B-767 refueling aircraft was 6 percent. The Pentagon, however, planned to offer the company a profit of up to 15 percent.

EU officials are also challenging the Washington State government, which has offered Boeing about \$3 billion in tax breaks related to the production of the new 7E7 jet. Tokyo has also earmarked \$1.6 billion in subsidies for the aircraft. According to the *Financial Times*, Japan's All Nippon Airways was the launch customer for the mid-sized 7E7 Dreamliner passenger jet, ordering 50 aircraft worth \$6 billion.

As competition intensified in recent years between the two aircraft manufacturers, Boeing's 7E7 jet has become a key project in the struggle with its archrival. The U.S.-based company estimates some 2,000-3,000 orders can be filled by the production of the plane over the next 20 years.

Meanwhile, Airbus, a consortium of European aerospace companies formed in 1970 and based in France, has steadily eroded Boeing's dominance in the large civil aircraft market. By 1992, the company had captured 30 percent of the world market, largely due to generous subsidies from EU governments.

The Paris-based EADS, the chief company in the Airbus consortium, announced October 6 that it had purchased the U.S. military electronics company Racal Instruments, Inc. for some \$130 million. The company had set up its military manufacturing subsidiary in Virginia two days earlier and announced that it had won a \$75 million contract to supply 55 patrol helicopters to the Homeland Security Department. EADS has also established partnerships with U.S. military contractors Northrop Grumman Corp and Lockheed Martin Corp. Executives at EADS said the acquisition of Racal Instruments would aid in grabbing a larger share of the U.S. market for the manufacture of military hardware, the world's largest.

Miners demand Co-Op reinstate UMWA stalwart

Continued from front page

meeting they did not know of a single defendant who had been served with legal papers related to this lawsuit. They pointed to this—and the fact the bosses have less than a slim chance of winning this case in court—as an indication that the Kingstons are using the lawsuit simply to harass UMWA backers and stretch out everything hoping they can fire more militants in the process and press the NLRB to delay setting a date for a union vote.

According to several attorneys, plaintiffs in civil suits like this have 120 days from the date of filing to serve the defendants with legal papers, which provides the Co-Op bosses with three months to try to delay things and wrap workers in red tape, miners said.

The more than 120 defendants cited in the suit, which include the *Militant*, are charged with "defamation." The UMWA is also charged with "unlawful labor practices."

The struggle to get Panduro's job back, the miners said, includes filing unfair labor practice charges with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) against the company. Before the NLRB can consider the complaint, however, they said that the workers have to exhaust a grievance procedure with the International Association of United Workers Union (IAUWU). The miners describe the IAUWU as a company union but the labor board recognizes it as legitimate. The IAUWU is a co-signer, along with the bosses, in the Kingston lawsuit against the UMWA and its backers.

On September 27, while working on a graveyard shift, Panduro was told by foreman Cyril Jackson to bolt a newly mined area of the coal seam, a job that involves securing the rock in the roof of a mine with 4-6 foot bolts. Panduro, who was operating a scoop cleaning loose coal from the section of the mine that was being worked, informed Jackson that the next shift coming in an hour and a half later could do it. The boss came back 20 minutes later and yelled at him to bolt or "I'll take you out of the mine," Panduro said.

Panduro told Jackson that he was sick and couldn't bolt. When you bolt you get wet, and the water is cold, miners explained. The boss still drove him out of the mine.

The next day, three bosses called Panduro into a meeting and handed him a disciplinary note, a three-day suspension with intent to dismiss, which Panduro signed under protest. Panduro has maintained he never refused any orders from his boss. He had worked seven straight, 12-hour shifts and several bosses at the mine knew he had been

sick with a cold and bronchitis.

Panduro has worked at Co-Op for six years performing different jobs. In the last two and a half years he has operated the roof bolter making \$8 an hour. Panduro says he has always had a good work record and had never faced any disciplinary action against him before.

Panduro already had an informal meeting with the company on September 30 as part of the IAUWU grievance procedure, which favors the company, workers say. At first, Panduro was even denied an interpreter of his choice, as he only speaks Spanish. After the company decided to allow Panduro to be accompanied by Bill Estrada—another UMWA supporter at the mine—as his interpreter, the company also brought along its own translator.

Estrada said the meeting was just a show, where eight bosses, one after another, accused Panduro of insubordination. The IAUWU representative, Chris Grundvig, hardly spoke a word on Panduro's defense, said Estrada. "We told them that the only reason why they are firing Celso is because of his UMWA activities," Estrada continued. "This disciplinary action is extreme."

The IAUWU then scheduled another meeting with the company on October 8, a formal proceeding, according to their "contract." Grundvig of the IAUWU lined up a local businessman as a "neutral" interpreter, refusing to have Estrada translate for Panduro. When Panduro and Estrada showed up for that meeting, the "neutral" interpreter was greeting the bosses by their first names. When pressed, the "interpreter" said he has had a business relationship with the Co-Op bosses for 20 years. Panduro refused to go ahead with the meeting, insisting that Estrada was his translator. The company postponed the meeting, workers said.

The night before, the miners had met at Panduro's house and discussed that his firing is aimed at all the UMWA backers. The miners reaffirmed their support for Panduro and vowed to fight the dismissal and not make it easy for the company.

The Kingstons locked out the 75 miners at Co-Op on Sept. 22, 2003, after the bosses had gotten wind of the UMWA organizing effort and the workers protested the firing of one UMWA backer and disciplinary actions against others aimed at stopping their unionizing efforts. The miners turned the lockout into a strike and picketed the mine for nine and a half months, effectively limiting production. During that time, they also won widespread support from the labor movement and other groups in the West, as well as the rest of the United States and

other countries.

In May, the NLRB ruled the miners had been fired illegally, acting on a complaint the UMWA had filed on the miners' behalf, and asked the company to give them their jobs back. The labor board also said that a union election must be held in the mine since a large majority of the miners had signed a petition asking for representation by the UMWA.

After an unconditional offer to return, a number of strikers were back at Co-Op on July 12. The NLRB then held a hearing 10 days later to determine which of the employees of C.W. Mining, also known as the Co-Op mine, will be able to vote in a union election. The IAUWU and the company claim that about 100 people, most of them Kingston family members or relatives, including managerial and office personnel, should be able to vote. The UMWA and the Co-Op miners have argued that these Kingston family members and relatives were brought in to stack up the cards against the UMWA and they are loyal to the bosses, so they should not have a right to vote. The labor board has yet to set a date for the union vote or a ruling on who will be eligible to take part.

The miners are asking that letters of protest be sent to the NLRB backing the UMWA's position and demanding that the board set a date for the union election. Such letters should be sent to NLRB Region 27, attention B. Allan Benson, director, 600 17th Street, 7th floor—North Tower, Denver, CO 80202-5433. Tel: (303) 844-3551; Fax: (303) 844-6249.

Messages of support and financial donations for the Co-Op miners' struggle can be sent to UMWA District 22 at 525 East 100 South, Price, UT 84501; Tel: (435) 637-2037; Fax: (435) 637-9456.

Unionists strike in Puerto Rico

BY DIEGO NEGRAO
AND RON RICHARDS

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico—After working without a contract for more than a year, 4,300 members of the Independent and Authentic Union (UIA) of the Water and Sewer Authority (AAA) went on strike here October 4 to resist concessions demanded by the management of the state-run utility.

The government authority is demanding the union turn over control of the workers' health insurance to a private outfit and cut the number of full-time union representatives and their time spent on union business.

The workers, who have not had a raise in three years, are demanding a wage increase and opposing other AAA demands.

This is the first strike by the water workers since a weeks-long walkout in 1974.

Two days after the union walkout students at the Río Piedras campus of the University of Puerto Rico staged a 24-hour strike to protest the suspension of a professor for actions in opposition to U.S. military recruitment offices on the island. Students on two other campuses carried out similar protest strikes. A number of striking students visited

Continued on page 10

Iowa sets pace during sub drive target week

At the end of week 6 of the 10-week international drive to win about 3,000 new readers to the *Militant* and its Spanish-language sister publication, *Perspectiva Mundial*, a total of 1,305 people have signed up for subscriptions to the *Militant* and 260 to the *PM*. The campaign overall remains behind pace by 75 *Militant* and 70 *PM* subscriptions.

In the cities where partisans of the *Militant* organized special campaigning teams during the October 2–10 target week, they made good strides. Socialist campaigners in Des Moines set an example, inviting and hosting others from several Midwest cities to join them in a special regional sales effort, which was combined with campaigning for the socialist ticket in the November elections. Here’s a report from that Midwest team.



BY KEVIN DWIRE
AND EDWIN FRUIT

DES MOINES, Iowa—Supporters of the Socialist Workers Party 2004 campaign from four states took part in a regional campaigning and sales team in this area October 9–11.

Militant/Perspectiva Mundial Fall Subscription Drive Aug. 28–Nov. 7, 2004: Week 6 of 10					
Country	Militant			PM	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold
SWEDEN	30	25	83%	5	2
ICELAND	30	23	77%	2	0
NEW ZEALAND					
Auckland	45	26	58%	1	1
Christchurch	35	19	54%	1	0
N.Z. total	80	45	56%	2	0
UNITED STATES					
Craig, CO	50	46	92%	20	4
Houston	75	61	81%	20	4
Seattle	50	37	74%	10	5
Price, UT	50	33	66%	20	12
Detroit	40	26	65%	10	7
Birmingham	40	25	63%	8	3
Des Moines	65	40	62%	25	16
New York	180	107	59%	70	27
Omaha	55	30	55%	45	14
Newark	90	49	54%	25	14
Twin Cities	105	55	52%	40	16
Atlanta	80	39	49%	20	5
Chicago	100	44	44%	40	19
Los Angeles	150	66	44%	50	28
Cleveland	40	17	43%	10	4
Boston	100	42	42%	40	8
Philadelphia	95	39	41%	10	0
Washington	115	46	40%	21	4
Tampa	40	15	38%	10	6
Pittsburgh	65	23	35%	4	1
San Francisco	125	42	34%	35	8
NE Pennsylvania	55	16	29%	15	9
Miami	100	25	25%	50	0
U.S. total	1865	923	49%	598	214
AUSTRALIA	55	25	45%	8	3
CANADA					
Montreal	32	16	50%	12	2
Toronto	85	36	42%	18	4
CANADA total	117	52	44%	30	6
UNITED KINGDOM					
Edinburgh	25	12	48%	2	0
London	50	21	42%	12	4
UK total	75	33	44%	14	4
14-day campaign*	-	179	-	-	31
Int'l totals	2220	1305	57%	676	260
Goal/Should be	2300	1380	60%	550	330
*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			PM	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold
NEW ZEALAND					
MWU	2	1	50%		
NDU	2	1	50%		
Total	4	2	50%		
SWEDEN					
Livs	2	1	50%	1	0
UNITED STATES					
UNITE HERE	50	22	44%	40	14
UFCW	135	56	41%	150	55
UMWA	30	11	37%	15	5
Total	215	89	41%	205	74
AUSTRALIA					
AMIEU	8	3	38%		
CANADA					
UFCW	6	3	50%	3	2
UNITE HERE	2	0	0%	1	0
Total	8	3	38%	4	2
ICELAND					
Hlíf	2	1	50%		
Efling	2	0	0%		
Total	4	1	25%		

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. Hlíf—Union of Unskilled Workers in Hafnarfjörður. Efling—Union of Unskilled Workers in Reykjavík.

Volunteers from Minnesota, Nebraska, Illinois, and from this city fanned out across central Iowa to the cities of Perry, Marshalltown, Ottumwa, and Des Moines to reach packing house workers and others with the campaign of Róger Calero for president, Arrin Hawkins for vice president, and Edwin Fruit for U.S. Senate. They also celebrated the grand opening of the new *Militant* Labor Forum hall and the Iowa 2004 Socialist Workers Campaign center in Des Moines with a public meeting and social.

Iowans signed up for 9 *Militant* subscriptions and 15 subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial*. They also bought 26 copies of the *Militant*, and 5 copies of *PM*. Workers at meatpacking plants in the region snapped up 11 of the subscriptions.

Campaign supporters going door-to-door found a good response when they pointed to the socialist campaign theme of the pressing need for working people to organize unions to resist the bosses’ offensive against our living and working conditions. Many workers explained how this offensive is affecting them.

During door-to-door campaigning in Perry, for example, a woman who works for Sears Credit agreed with what campaigners were saying about the grind facing working people on wages, health-care benefits, and other conditions. She is working to pay for her medical insurance, she said, which costs \$220 a month, and she still has inadequate coverage.

A single mother, also in Perry, who works for the non-union Hy-Vee grocery chain, said she is living paycheck to paycheck on the low wages they pay the workers there.

Workers at the Swift hog slaughterhouse in Marshalltown, organized by United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 1149, said the company keeps increasing the line speed and number of hogs killed each shift. “Last week we set a new record, 8,535 in eight hours,” said one kill floor worker sarcastically. “And they want more and more.”

Another Swift worker, who used to work at the Qual-



Militant/Nick Castle
Dennis Richter (left), Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate in California, campaigning October 11 at City College in Los Angeles.

ity Pork Products plant in Austin, Minnesota, held up his swollen hands as testament to the increasing productivity drive of the bosses.

A worker from the load-out area of the Tyson plant in Perry, also organized by UFCW Local 1149, said that after Tyson bought the plant from IBP the workload was intensified, which includes longer hours. Other workers at Perry said Tyson is combining jobs, with some workers now doing the work of three.

These packinghouse workers and others said that their unions are not responding to these attacks and wanted to talk about how to strengthen them to fight against the worsening conditions on the job. A Honduran family that works at the Excel plant in Ottumwa asked what book to read to help them work with others to strengthen the UFCW there. They picked up a *PM* subscription and purchased a copy of *Rebelión Teamster* (Teamster Rebellion) by Farrell Dobbs, who tells the firsthand story of the union battles and organizing efforts by militant truck drivers in Minnesota in the 1930s who set an example and inspired similar struggles by workers throughout the Midwest (see ad on page 7).

Kevin Dwire is a meat packer in Des Moines. Edwin Fruit is a member of UFCW Local 1149 in Perry and is the Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate in Iowa.

In 2nd debate, both Bush and Kerry press for winning ‘war on terror,’ attacking social programs

BY SAM MANUEL

In their second debate, as in their first, Republican presidential nominee George Bush and his Democratic opponent John Kerry sparred over tactical differences on how to “win the war in Iraq.” They also bickered over how to advance the assault of the wealthy rulers on social programs like Social Security and Medicare, under the cover of “saving them.”

The debate was held October 8 at the University of St. Louis. Bush and Kerry fielded questions pre-selected by the moderator from an audience who said they had not yet decided on a candidate.

Both candidates used the report by the so-called Iraq Survey Group on “weapons of mass destruction” in Iraq (see article on page 3) to bolster their arguments, the president more forcefully than Kerry.

Bush called Kerry’s charge that the UN inspectors were not allowed enough time to do their jobs “naïve and dangerous.” The report by CIA adviser Charles Duelfer showed that Saddam Hussein “was deceiving the inspectors,” Bush said.

News commentaries following the debate called it a “draw” with most noting that Bush was more assertive in the second debate, pressing at several points for rebuttals to Kerry even speaking over the moderator, Charles Gibson of ABC News, a few times.

“Tell Tony Blair we’re going it alone. Tell [Italian president] Silvio Berlusconi. Tell Alexander Kwasniewski of Poland we’re going alone,” Bush said after interrupting Gibson to respond to Kerry’s charge that his administration failed to involve Washington’s imperialist allies in any meaningful way in the war against Iraq.

Kerry reiterated that Bush had made a “catastrophic” error in judgment by invading Iraq and supposedly taking the focus off the real fight against “terrorism”—Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda. Bush rejoined that the “war on terrorism” is a global conflict that requires firm resolve. “It’s a fundamental misunderstanding to say that the war on terror is only Osama bin Laden,” Bush said, arguing that the conflict spans over 60 countries.

Another charge that Kerry made in the debate and in other campaign speeches is that the Bush administration had not trained enough Iraqi troops fast enough. “My opponent says he has a plan. It sounds familiar because it’s called the Bush plan,” the president chided Kerry. “We’re going to train troops, and we’ll have 125,000 trained by

the end of December.”

Bush emphatically rejected any notion of restoring the military draft. Some liberal politicians, most notably Democratic Congressman Charles Rangel, have demagogically argued for reinstituting the draft to make military service “equitable” in Iraq and elsewhere. Filmmaker Michael Moore has been campaigning for the Democrats around the country promoting the myth that if re-elected the Bush administration will bring back the draft. “An all-volunteer army is best-suited to fight the new wars of the 21st century,” said Bush. The president said the U.S. military must be “lighter, and quicker” highlighting the “transformation of the U.S. military” being led by the Department of Defense.

Kerry said he opposes the draft but would add 40,000 active duty forces to the military. He gave no details on how that would be accomplished. The Pentagon is already in the process of adding 30,000 new troops.

Kerry gave a contorted answer to a question about government funding for abortion. He said as president he could not “legislate his article of faith” as a Catholic upon others. “I can talk about making other choices and about abstinence... You can take that position and not be pro-abortion.”

“Trying to decipher that,” quipped Bush, saying, “My answer is we’re not going to spend federal, taxpayers’ money on abortion.” Conceding majority support for the right to choose abortion in the United States Bush said that he, “signed the ban on partial-birth abortion” as a way to reduce abortions. “My opponent voted against the ban,” Bush charged, referring to a procedure for late-term abortions. “I’m against the partial birth abortion,” Kerry shot back explaining he would have supported the ban had it contained an exception for the health and life of the mother.

Both candidates claimed to have plans to provide affordable health-care coverage. Bush recapped his plan to establish individual “health savings accounts.” This proposal, along with individual “retirement savings accounts,” are at the heart of the rulers’ preparation for further assaults on Social Security.

Kerry said he has a plan to provide health care to more Americans but gave no details. He has been silent on the heart of Bush’s proposals, saying only he will not cut benefits for current Social Security recipients, which is also the president’s position.

Debate at New Paltz

Continued from front page
ertarians justify that system, or say it isn't working right and needs to be reformed.

"Our starting point is the interests of working people around the world," Koppel said. "Two billion people have no access to electricity. We support the efforts of semi-colonial countries to acquire and develop the energy sources they need for economic and social advances, including through the use of nuclear power. We point to the need and ability of workers to organize unions to resist the bosses' offensive on our wages and working conditions."

The Libertarian party candidate, Donald Silberger, is an associate professor of mathematics at the SUNY campus. He said his central demand is to end the government's "war on drugs." Silberger warned against governments that "send out an army of officials to steal our property and put us in prison." His campaign flyer calls for "limited government, lower taxes, [and] opposition to endless wars, foreign and domestic."

After the opening statements, organizers of the debate presented a list of nine prepared questions to the candidates. No direct participation was solicited from the audience. Members of the audience were asked to write down their questions and hand them to the moderator.

"Should the United States have invaded Iraq?" was the first question.

The U.S. invasion was an imperialist war against the interests of workers and farmers both in Iraq and the United States, answered Koppel. He called for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq, Afghanistan, Yugoslavia, Korea, Haiti, Colombia, and Guantánamo, Cuba. "The war and occupation of Iraq is bipartisan," said the SWP candidate. "In the presidential debates Kerry says he will wage a more effective war. This is not a policy option. There will be no peace as long as capitalism and imperialism—the root of the problem—exists."

The Libertarian candidate said there are U.S. forces in 135 countries and that they "should all come home." But he disagreed with Koppel, saying, "It is not capitalism

that must be overpowered, but Empire. We need defense, not offense."

McReynolds said he too was for "the unconditional and immediate U.S. withdrawal" from Iraq. But, he added, "The SWP does not grasp the irrational character of war in the 20th century. World War I, World War II, Vietnam made no economic sense." He concluded that capitalism is only one factor in understanding the cause of war.

Koppel responded that imperialist competition for markets and resources is the source of imperialist wars. "This is not irrational or incomprehensible," he said. "In the first and second world wars Washington was fighting to become the dominant power. For example, the war in the Pacific

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Militant/Salm Kolis

Martín Koppel (center), Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate in New York, debates Donald Silberger (left) of the Libertarian Party, and David McReynolds (right) of the Green Party, October 11 at the State University of New York in New Paltz.

SWP presidential candidate visits Omaha

Continued from front page
this meat packer described and similar experiences he has gone through point out that working people can never base what they do on what the employers claim. "Anytime the boss cries poverty and we listen to that, we deserve what we get," he said. "If a company can't give decent wages and benefits it doesn't deserve to be in business. That should be our answer to the boss."

As the working class gets stronger and gets its own political party, Calero said, it can fight to take control of the entire process of production, nationalize the factories, mines, mills, and banks, and run society not for the profits of the few but for the benefit of the large majority.

Calero told the meat packers that the socialist campaign starts with the world. "Washington and its imperialist allies have divided the world's markets and resources among themselves and are competing on how to redivide this wealth produced by our brothers and sisters in oppressed nations," he said. "Imperialist domination means underdevelopment, which drives millions of workers like us to emigrate to the United States and other imperialist countries. From Paraguay to Mexico and Turkey, workers and farmers need economic development."

Later in the day, Calero spoke at a campaign rally at Creighton University.

"From the Indian subcontinent to huge parts of Africa to Central Asia, more than 2 billion people—one-third of humanity—lack any access to modern forms of energy," Calero said. "They are forced to use straw, wood, or other primitive means for cooking or heating. After sunset they are in the dark. That's why we support the efforts of semi-colonial countries to expand electrification by any means necessary, including nuclear power. Without electrification there can be no economic development. Economic development is necessary to close divisions between city and countryside and to forge unity among working people so they can fight effectively for their interests."

But under the banner of "nuclear non-proliferation," the only power on earth that has ever used nuclear weapons against humanity—Washington—and its imperialist allies are trying to prevent countries like Brazil, India, Iran, and north Korea from developing their capacity to generate enough electricity by developing a nuclear industry, he noted. The imperialists accuse these states of violating international treaties because they are trying to enrich uranium. This is the case right now with Brazil and Iran. But uranium

enrichment is necessary to generate electricity through nuclear power. The governments of France, the United States, and many others have been doing this for decades, he pointed out. "That's why we oppose and expose the drive by Washington and its allies to prevent oppressed nations from developing the sources of energy they need."

Eighteen students and workers attended the campaign event on campus and engaged the presidential candidate in a lively exchange.

"Workers won't change in a significant way how effective we are in fighting the bosses without the transformation of the trade unions into fighting instruments of the working class. There is a modest but important number of class-conscious workers today who are resisting the employers' attacks under the existing leadership of the labor movement, which promotes the illusion that workers and bosses have common interests, rather than irreconcilable interests. These struggles point toward the future."

Calero pointed to the Co-Op miners' fight for a union in Utah as one such example (see front-page article).

"How do you propose to gain support for transforming the unions?" asked Joe Azer, an international relations student. "Will it happen from the top down or from the bottom up?"

"As workers begin to resist in the factories and other workplaces, they come up against obstacles," Calero said in response. "They begin to learn things. For instance, government agencies like the National Labor Relations Board are not neutral. They serve the interests of the bosses. Workers learn quickly that the cops and courts are on the side of the employers too. In the course of these struggles, an increasing number of workers will also begin to understand the necessity to fight not only for economic demands. Workers need to have our own political voice, our own political party, a labor party based on the trade unions, a party of the toiling masses that can lead working people to take state power out of the hands of the bosses and begin the struggle for a socialist society."

Several of the seven meatpackers attending the campus meeting had helped to make Calero's plant gate campaigning a success. They had distributed about 100 quarter-page flyers in the company lunchroom and locker rooms saying, "Calero will be campaigning outside the plant as we leave work on Thursday. Stop by and meet him before you go to your car." Three kill floor workers joined the campaign team to encourage their co-workers to step outside the company's gate to meet and talk with Calero. Scores of campaign brochures were passed out as workers mixed it up with Calero and Rottach.

Throughout the afternoon, individuals and groups of up to five or six workers gathered around Calero to learn about the SWP campaign.

Omaha's main daily paper, the *World-Herald*, reported on Calero's campaign stop in Nebraska. "Calero and his party overcame a high hurdle this summer by just making the November ballot," the article noted. "This will be the first time a Socialist candidate has done so in Nebraska as volunteers collected the signatures of 5,000 residents needed to make the ballot."

The campus newspapers at Creighton University and the University of Nebraska at Omaha also conducted interviews with Calero and published articles on his visit.

Calero meets with students, meat packers in Twin Cities

BY JACOB PERASSO

ST. PAUL, Minnesota—"We are not simply for an 'independent' third party—there are many such parties, all pro-capitalist—but for a working-class alternative to the ruling rich and a working-class course of action independent of the bosses," said Socialist Workers Party presidential candidate Róger Calero to an audience of about 30 at the University of Minnesota here October 6.

Students and others joined in the discussion at the event, which included Bill Schmitt, SWP candidate for Congress in Minnesota's 4th District. Schmitt explained the need to extend solidarity to workers in struggle like those in Buffalo Lake, Minnesota, who work at Minnesota Beef and recently won a hard-fought union election.

Earlier that day, Calero spoke to an audience of similar size at Minneapolis Com-

munity and Technical College (MCTC). "A lot of people have a distorted idea of what socialism is, but after the meeting some stuck around and wanted to talk," noted Dean Satter, a student at MCTC. "I decided to go for what I believe in," said another new campaigner, Stephanie, in explaining why she decided to build both meetings and campaign for the SWP ticket rather than work for the election of another capitalist politician.

The afternoon of October 5, Calero was invited to a house meeting with workers at Dakota Premium Foods. Calero worked for the company in the past and participated in a groundbreaking union-organizing drive there.

Adan, a worker from Minnesota Beef who has helped to lead the fight for dignity and better conditions at that meat packing plant, also made the two-hour trip after work from Buffalo Lake to South St. Paul for the meeting.

Adan explained that workers at the slaughterhouse in Buffalo Lake organized a campaign over the past months to shift the vote to victory in the election a couple of weeks ago. He said the conditions, line speed, and demands of the bosses led to a one-day strike in the boning departments several months earlier.

In the discussion, Calero described the struggle by the Co-Op miners in Utah and their union, the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) to win union representation at the coal mine (see front-page article). Calero talked about the effectiveness of these workers reaching out for broad support from the labor movement and other organizations using the existing union structures.

Before leaving town on the morning of October 7, Calero campaigned at the Dakota Premium Foods plant gate. He and other supporters of the socialist election campaign, including Schmitt, passed out dozens of campaign brochures and sought support of workers entering for the day shift.

SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY 2004 CAMPAIGN SCHEDULE

Arrin Hawkins, Vice President

Oct. 16–17	Philadelphia
Oct. 19–20	Newark
Oct. 21	New York
Oct. 22–24	Iceland
Oct. 26	Denver
Oct. 27	Craig, CO
Oct. 28	Twin Cities
Oct. 29–30	Toronto
Oct. 31–Nov. 2	New York

Martín Koppel, U.S. Senate, N.Y.

Oct. 15	—Visit to picket line of striking water workers in San Juan, Puerto Rico
Oct. 16	—Visit to Vieques, Puerto Rico. 6 p.m. joining picket line in front of U.S. Federal Prison in San Juan
Oct. 18	—Speaking at University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras campus in San Juan

Róger Calero, President

Oct. 16	Birmingham
Oct. 17	Mississippi
Oct. 19–20	Los Angeles
Oct. 21–22	San Francisco
Oct. 23–24	Seattle
Oct. 25	Salt Lake
Oct. 26	Houston
Oct. 27	Chicago
Oct. 28–29	New York
Oct. 30	Hazleton, PA
Oct. 31	New York
Nov. 1	Boston
Nov. 2	Wash., D.C.

Oct. 22—Speaking in N.Y.: "Why Working People Should Support Puerto Rican Independence."

Oct. 23–24—Campaigning in Buffalo, New York

Oct. 25—Classroom meetings at Borough of Manhattan Community College

Socialist Workers 2004 Campaign
tel. (305) 756-4436

email: SWP2004campaign@bellsouth.net

Socialists campaign in Texas, Louisiana

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

HOUSTON—Campaigning at the Houston Heights street fair October 3, Socialist Workers Party vice-presidential candidate Arrin Hawkins was well received by many working people and students who stopped by to shake her hand and talk.

“Wow, I’m so happy to see the socialist campaign,” said Israel Sosa, a student at the University of Houston downtown campus. “I didn’t know the socialist movement was so strong. I’m glad to see people promoting these ideas.”

“What we stand and fight for is indeed powerful,” responded Hawkins.

Nine individuals attending the fair purchased subscriptions to the campaign newspaper, the *Militant*, as a result of discussions held with Hawkins and the party’s candidates for U.S. Congress in Texas—Anthony Dutrow in the 7th District and Jacquie Henderson in the 18th District.

That evening 21 people attended a campaign meeting featuring Hawkins at the SWP campaign center here.

Given the offensive by the bosses to shore up their declining profit rates by imposing speed-up, lengthening the workday and workweek, and driving wages down, Hawkins said, the socialist campaign platform focuses on the need for workers to organize unions, or strengthen those they have, to fight the bosses offensive. The employers, of course, resist the organization of unions in their factories, mines, mills, transportation centers, or warehouses, the socialist candidate said. But there is no special crackdown right now on the right to organize unions by the National Labor Relations Board or other govern-

ment bodies, she continued. In fact, most capitalist candidates will give lip service to “the right to organize a union.” What’s important, however, is the need and ability of workers to organize in face of the current leadership of the labor movement that ties the unions to the ruling class and its parties, especially the Democrats, and promotes collaboration with the bosses rather than uncompromising struggle in the interests of the workers, she said.

In response to a question about how the party views immigrant workers, Hawkins stated, “These workers are not victims but part of leading changes and struggles of the working class here.” She pointed to the example of coal miners in Huntington, Utah, many of them originally from Mexico, who are leading a fight to be represented by the United Mine Workers of America together with U.S.-born workers. “This is a class question,” she said. “We say immigrants and native-born need to fight shoulder to shoulder. We can’t let the bosses divide us based on where workers were born.”

The following morning, Hawkins, together with Henderson and Dutrow, distributed campaign flyers to workers going into a local meatpacking plant.

Hawkins then spoke before a class of some 30 students at the Thurgood Marshall Law School of Texas Southern University, and was interviewed by the local Pacifica radio station KPFT.

The day before arriving in Houston, Hawkins made a campaign stop in New Orleans, Louisiana, to thank all those who helped in putting the SWP presidential



Militant/Brian Williams

Arrin Hawkins, Socialist Workers Party candidate for vice president, campaigning October 3 at the Houston Heights street fair in Houston.

ticket on the ballot in that state. She spoke at a public meeting held on the Tulane University campus and then attended a barbecue at a nearby dorm that houses a number of international students. Among those who came down from their rooms to meet Hawkins were students from the Congo, Tanzania, and India.

The *Tulane Hullabaloo* published an article on the visit by Hawkins in its October 8 issue. The SWP, the article said, “denounces the campaigns of both President Bush and Senator Kerry, citing their capitalist outlook as ‘twin parties of imperialist war, economic depression and racist oppression.’”

“Hawkins focused on the plight of working people. ‘There is growing disparity, a widening gap between those who have and those who are struggling to make it day to day,’ she said.

“Citing what she referred to as the

‘grinding assault against workers,’ Hawkins pushed for Socialist ideas, stressing the need for a federally funded program for universal, lifetime health care.

“‘There is no respect for the lives of working people who don’t have access to health care coverage,’ she said.

“Speaking about international issues, Hawkins encouraged immediate withdrawal from Iraq and several other countries, particularly those in Latin America.”

Later that evening Hawkins and other campaign supporters participated in a vigil to protest the killing by cops of Joseph Williams, a 22-year old who is Black. Williams, a musician who played the trombone, was gunned down August 3 by New Orleans police. The family and supporters in the community hold weekly vigils each Saturday night at the site where young man was killed to demand that the cops who shot him be prosecuted.

Calero stumps in Tampa

BY KARL BUTTS

TAMPA, Florida—SWP presidential candidate Róger Calero spoke at a campaign meeting here October 9.

Prior to the event, Calero campaigned along with Karl Butts, SWP candidate for U.S. Congress in Florida’s 11th District, and three campaign supporters in front of a Mexican restaurant and general store in the nearby farming community of Plant City. Most of the construction and farm workers, overwhelmingly Latino, were surprised to find the socialist candidates campaigning there because they said they don’t have the right to vote.

Calero said the socialist campaign’s focus—championing the need of workers to organize unions to defend ourselves from the bosses attacks, and supporting the right of oppressed nations to economic development that requires a struggle against imperialist domination—is directed at all working people, not only those who can vote.

In his opening remarks at the public meeting, Calero thanked local campaign supporters for their help in getting the SWP national ticket on the ballot in Florida and other states, as well as their financial support, and making it possible for him to come to Tampa. He noted that 70,000 people signed petitions this summer as part of the successful effort to get the socialist ticket on the ballot in 13 states and the District of Columbia, many of them doing so because they liked the party’s election campaign platform. Calero focused his remarks on outlining the SWP platform.

A reporter from WMNF radio, a local Pacifica affiliate, attended the meeting and interviewed Calero and a number of the 17 people present. Participants contributed \$350 to help finance the 2004 SWP campaign.

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Socialist debates Greens, Libertarians

Continued from page 6

in World War II was over which imperialist power—Washington or Tokyo—was going to control and exploit China.”

Opposing views on whether capitalism is the root cause of the problems working people face came up again over the question of the USA Patriot Act and the death penalty. McReynolds and Silberger called for repeal of the Patriot Act because of its attacks on civil liberties, and for the abolition of the death penalty. Koppel said these measures are part of the employers’ offensive against workers’ rights to drive up their profits. “The death penalty is a weapon of terror by the capitalists against working people and it should be abolished,” said Koppel.

McReynolds disagreed with the SWP candidate. “The death penalty is not a class issue; it’s a human issue,” he said, receiving some applause.

After Koppel spoke out against the Democrats and Republicans as the twin parties of capitalism and exploitation, McReynolds countered, “You’re criticizing the wrong people, none of us here is for Kerry or Bush.” The Green Party leader then said if he lived in New Jersey he would vote for Róger Calero, SWP candidate for president, and that in New York he is voting for Ralph Nader for president “because Kerry will win in New York.”

“I am also a socialist,” McReynolds said.

“Nader and the Green Party are also pro-capitalist,” said Koppel. “Nader criticizes ‘corporate abuse’ and proposes liberal reforms to make capitalism more ‘humane.’ The SWP campaign proposes a revolutionary course by working people to overturn capitalist rule and join the struggle for socialism.”

Koppel also took issue with the self-designation by McReynolds as a socialist. In the debate between the same three candidates at Hofstra University, Koppel said, “My opponent is a social democrat, not a socialist. For decades, social democracy has had a record of upholding capitalist rule and imperialism. These kind of ‘socialists,’ these kind of statements, give a bad name to socialism.” Schumer is a capitalist politician to the right of Ariel Sharon, Koppel noted. McReynolds and the Greens give Schumer and his party, the Democrats, backhanded support by their approach of only running where the Democrats are assured a victory.

“I am not a social democrat,” McReynolds retorted at Hofstra. “I am a democratic socialist.” He pointed to imperialist Sweden as a positive example of “socialism.”

At New Paltz, the Libertarian candidate dismissed the idea of “class struggle” between workers and bosses. “I don’t see any capitalists. I don’t see any workers—it’s a myth. We shouldn’t kill the goose that lays the golden eggs,” he said.

Koppel pointed to Cuba as a country where working people made a revolution and took power out of the hands of the capitalists and opened the fight for socialism in

the Americas. “The U.S. government has maintained an economic embargo against Cuba for more than 40 years in order to undermine and eventually destroy the example of a society based on human needs, not profits for the few,” he said.

“The SWP simplifies the world,” McReynolds responded. “For the first 20 years of the embargo its purpose was to crush Cuba. But now it has become a reflection of voting patterns in Florida. Without the Cuban vote in Miami, there would be no embargo.”

Silberger said, “If the U.S. wanted to crush Cuba, it would be a walk in the park. There’s no point to an invasion, that’s why one hasn’t occurred.”

“The foreign policy of the mightiest imperialist power on earth isn’t dictated by a few wealthy Cuban businessmen in Miami,” Koppel replied. “The rulers of this country have tried everything to overturn the Cuban Revolution, but they have failed,” the socialist candidate continued. “The Cuban people and their leadership cannot be bought, intimidated, or defeated.” He said it isn’t Cuba’s economic weight, but its political example, that Washington fears. “Cuba has sent 15,000 doctors to Venezuela to go to working-class and rural neighborhoods, where there is the most need but where other doctors won’t go,” said the SWP candidate. As with its selfless aid to other countries oppressed by imperialism, he said, “Cuba is setting an example of internationalist solidarity.”

During the day prior to the debate, and a week earlier, socialists campaigned at the

SUNY New Paltz campus. Six students subscribed to the *Militant* through these activities. In addition, students bought more than two dozen books and pamphlets like those featured on the preceding page, and hundreds took campaign literature.

That week, Koppel was also joined by Dorothy Kolis, SWP candidate for U.S. Congress in New York’s 16th C.D., and other supporters of the SWP ticket in campaigning at the SUNY Albany campus as well as at other schools in New York City. On October 12, Koppel, Willie Cotton, SWP candidate for U.S. Congress in the 15th C.D., and Kolis met with workers during lunch break at a coffee shop at the Hunts Point Meat Market in the Bronx. Two meat packers signed up to subscribe to the *Militant* following the discussion with the socialist candidates.



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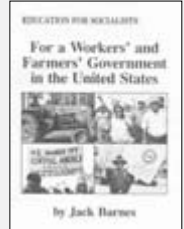
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BY NANCY ROSENSTOCK

NEWARK, New Jersey—Socialist Workers Party candidates for Congress in New Jersey are taking advantage of opportunities to participate in campus debates and radio call-in shows. Ved Dookhun, SWP candidate in the 10th Congressional District, and Angela Lariscy in the 13th C.D., are on the ballot as the result of successful petitioning campaigns.

Dookhun spoke September 29 at Georgian Court University in Lakewood, New Jersey, on a panel with Sean Gertner, an attorney representing the Republican Party, and New Jersey state senator Ellen Karcher

for the Democrats. About 70 students and faculty members attended the event.

Addressing the question of conditions in the schools, Gertner said that President George Bush’s “No Child Left Behind” program was a step forward for “quality education.” The Democrat said the greatest need is for after-school programs because “children are at most risk to get in trouble from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.”

“No education can be considered meaningful until it is a lifelong endeavor,” said Dookhun. He noted that under capitalism the schools are organized to teach the majority they must be obedient to the boss, while convincing a small layer they have

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Read it and rebel—Rotavirus is one of the world's biggest killers of children. Now, more than 30 years after the intestinal bug



Harry Ring

was identified, U.S. pharmaceutical companies are close to winning approval for vaccinations that could save hundreds of thousands of lives in the developing world.

[But] that's not where the com-

panies will be selling the drugs. They will be on the market only in the United States and Latin America, where rotavirus diarrhea is relatively scarce. The countries most in need will have to find a way to pay for a vaccine—*Los Angeles Times*.

Students not inoculated?—

The Department of the Treasury renewed a license for Southern Illinois University researchers to travel to Cuba, but this does not apply to students.

Imperialism: Murder Inc.

—According to a recent wire service report, up to 10,000 people are dying each month in

Sudan. Washington hypocritically charges internal genocide. The World Health Organization attributes most of the fatalities to dysentery. Many of the victims are children.

Who's us, knucklehead?—

“Domestic bliss through mechanical marvels?: Experts predict robots will clean, care for us and make us happy”—Headline, *USA Today*.

Another ‘people’s govern-

ment’—“Hundreds of orphans, mentally handicapped children and children in care, were used in secret experiments to test vac-

cines in the 1950s and 1960s. Local health authorities in this country and the Irish Republic allegedly used large numbers of children in trials of unproved medicines.”—*Times*, London.

Trying to convince her?—

Serving as a juror, Roberta Wood walked out of a London trial. Brought back, she explained she had lost faith in the justice system. The judge fined her some \$550 dollars.

Seems like union time—The

upscale Niketown store in Chicago is the target of a discrimination suit by African American workers who are, in a big majority, lim-

ited to low-wage jobs in the stock room. Only a handful have better paying sales jobs.

Many work 40 hours and more but are classified as temps and denied medical coverage, paid vacations and other benefits. Black workers have repeatedly been accused of theft and, unlike the whites, subjected to searches when going home.

And no hub stop—The Space

Transport Corp fired a rocket into space but it exploded. The chairperson said it was caused by a bubble in solid fuel. The company will continue to build a cheap, reusable rocket that can take tourists to the edge of outer space.

Commission OKs talks on Turkey joining EU— in 10 years, maybe

BY SAM MANUEL

A European Union commission that oversees expansion of the 25-member bloc recommended to the EU parliament October 6 that the body begin negotiations on the Turkish government's bid for EU membership. The commission's recommendation, however, is a qualified yes to Ankara's request. It contains no date to begin negotiations and proposes a range of conditions that Ankara must meet. “We are giving them credit, if you like, but that credit is not a blank check,” said Romano Prodi, the EU's outgoing president. The EU parliament is supposed to vote on the recommendation December 17.

According to the *International Herald Tribune*, one of the conditions in the proposal is that Ankara must continue to make progress in implementing a package of legal “reforms” to meet EU-prescribed guidelines. Negotiations on Turkey's membership, expected to last 10–15 years, would be broken off if Ankara stalled on these reforms at any point.

Gunter Verheugen, the commission's chair, said the “legal framework in Turkey met our expectations, but implementation still leaves much to be desired. The legal framework does correspond to a democratic state of law but practice does not.”

Verheugen's remark echoed those made recently by prominent capitalist politicians across Europe who oppose membership for Turkey. These include Denmark's prime minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen and French prime minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin who have used overt anti-Muslim prejudice to rationalize keeping Turkey out. Some have pointed to Turkey's population of nearly 70 million, second only to Germany in Europe, and its largely agricultural, un-

derdeveloped economy as the reasons for rejecting Ankara's application.

The way was cleared for the conditional approval of the start of talks on Ankara's membership when the Turkish parliament voted in a special session to amend its penal code, dropping a provision proposed by a faction of the ruling party that would have criminalized adultery. Ankara has also abolished the death penalty and eased restrictions on Kurds, an oppressed nationality in Turkey, on the right to use their language and express their culture.

Another condition in the EU commission recommendation is to restrict migration by Turkish workers seeking jobs in western Europe. Capitalist politicians opposed to Turkey's membership in the EU have also raised fears that EU countries will be flooded with unskilled cheap labor. The per capita GDP in Turkey, reported the *Tribune*, is 29 percent of the average in the EU.

Turkey's access to agricultural subsidies would also be restricted, but no details were reported. In 2002, for example, the subsidy for the 10 new EU member countries, mostly from Eastern Europe, was only 25 percent of that allotted to existing members. This subsidy is supposed to be raised incrementally toward parity in 2013.

These subsidies, also known as the Common Agricultural Policy, primarily benefit large capitalist farmers. They allow agribusiness to dump cheap farm goods onto the markets of semicolonial countries, destroying the livelihoods of local peasants. The admittance of Turkey would also aggravate conflicts between the current EU members on how these subsidies are allocated.

Turkey's foreign minister Abdullah Gul called the recommendation from the EU



Farmer drives horse-drawn plough in a vineyard in Cappadocia, central Turkey. Paris and other imperialist governments in Europe oppose taking Turkey—a semicolonial and largely agricultural country—into the EU, stoking overt anti-Muslim prejudice.

commission “a historic decision for Turkey and Europe.” Turkey's prime minister, Recep Tyyp Erdogan, said the report was “balanced” but added that “the same criteria and methods” should be applied to Turkey's membership bid as has been done with other applicants.

The Turkish ruling class has been trying to gain entry into the EU for the better part of four decades. Erdogan's Justice and Development Party has made it a top priority since coming to office in 2002. They

are counting on the opening of talks on joining the EU to ease the pressure from imperialist banks and creditors pressing for payment on the country's \$208 billion foreign debt.

Many capitalist politicians expressed dismay at the commission's recommendation. “The future of the European Union as a peaceful community is at stake,” said Hans-Gert Pöttering, a conservative affiliated with the European People's Party.

On September 23, French premier Raffarin had said regarding Ankara's bid: “Do we really want the river of Islam to enter the riverbed of secularism?” And French EU parliament member Jacques Toubon exclaimed that Turkey “is not consistent with our concept of the European project.”

French president Jacques Chirac has threatened to hold a national referendum on Turkey's membership request regardless of whether the EU parliament decides to open talks. Recent polls across Europe show widespread opposition to admitting Turkey into the EU, especially in France where a majority are against.

Chirac and German chancellor Gerhard Schröder officially favor Turkey's membership in the EU. But they and other imperialist governments in Europe have been silent in the face of anti-Muslim agitation by their subordinates against Turkey.

London, along with Washington, has campaigned forcefully for Turkey's membership in the EU. Prime minister Anthony Blair said Turkey is a key NATO ally and vowed to usher the country into the EU as soon as possible. UK foreign secretary Jack Straw added that Turkey has approved the reforms it was asked for and the “EU must now deliver its side of the bargain.”

The British daily *Telegraph* said in a October 7 editorial that opposing EU membership for Turkey would allow Washington to make further gains vis-à-vis its European rivals in the Middle East. “And if the EU can make Islamists adopt democratic values, then it will have shown that its ‘soft power’ is as important as America's ‘hard power’ in undermining the political base of Islamist terrorists,” said the *Telegraph*.

U.S. planes strike Sadr City, Fallujah with impunity

Continued from page 3

Turkey simultaneously with the southern invasion from Kuwait. This became impossible, however, when Ankara backtracked from its initial pledge to allow U.S. troops to use its soil for such an operation. Saddam Hussein's army quickly dissolved. Its remnants have played a central role in the groups that have carried out armed attacks on civilian and military targets since last year. This is what the current U.S.-led offensive is aiming to wipe out.

Washington and the Iraqi interim government led by Prime Minister Iyad Al-lawli are aiming to accomplish this goal not just through force but also by cutting deals with opponents after weakening them militarily.

Under the terms of the agreement with the Mahdi militia, for example, its members will be paid \$50 each for each weapon handed in over a five-day period. In addition, the interim regime pledged to allocate \$500 million for the reconstruction of Sadr City, a largely working-class area with 2 million inhabitants.

The accord also provides for amnesty for members of the militia who have not been involved in any criminal acts. Muqtada al-Sadr and his top aids would also be allowed to participate in the elections. This agreement registers further progress by Washington and its allies in Iraq in their effort to stabilize the country before the upcoming elections.

The deal was struck after relentless military assaults on the Mahdi militia in Sadr City throughout September that dealt devastating blows to the group. According to the *New York Times*, U.S. forces used fighter jets and AC-130 gunships to fire missiles and cannon from the air on militia positions there. U.S. Col. Robert Abrams told the *Times* that his troops kill daily between 10 Mahdi militiamen “on a slow day,” and 100 militiamen, “on a busy day.” He added that there have been many busy days.

According to the BBC, the interim government is now engaged in negotiations toward striking a similar deal with opponents in Fallujah, while the U.S. air force is carrying out similar assaults there.

Rumsfeld stopped in Iraq on his way to a NATO meeting in Romania. According to the Associated Press, he also had a stop-over to take a look at a Romanian military base that Washington is interested in renting and using as part of relocating many of its forces out of Germany and elsewhere in western Europe and toward the east.

The base was used by 3,500 U.S. troops as a staging area for airlifts into northern Iraq in the

opening days of the war in 2003. It was also used as an Air Force hub during the U.S. war against Afghanistan. “It's all about location, location, location,” said a senior official traveling with Rumsfeld reported Reuters. The prospective base sits on the Black Sea, within easy striking distance of Afghanistan and Iraq.



Prospective new U.S. military base, which Rumsfeld just visited, on Romania's Black Sea coast.

Turkey in EU? In 15 years, maybe

A European Union commission gave a qualified nod to beginning talks with Turkey’s government on Ankara’s decades-old bid to join the EU. If the recommendation is approved by the EU parliament in December, negotiations may begin. That is, if Turkey implements all the “reforms” to its penal code prescribed by the EU. And talks, which could break off at any time, as EU officials go out of their way to point out, will go on for 5, 10, or even 15 years. Then Turkey could join—maybe.

Opposition to Turkey’s entry is strongest in France, *the* champion of “Old Europe,” but not limited there.

French prime minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin has warned against “the river of Islam” being allowed into Europe.

Some capitalist politicians are blunt about the reasons for their revulsion at the idea of Turkey becoming the 26th EU member. As French finance minister, Nicolas Sarkozy, who is laying the groundwork for succeeding President Jacques Chirac in the next elections, has said, “civilized” Europe can’t let the multitudes of underdeveloped Turkey, with a majority rural population, enter the EU and, with a weighty vote given its population, vie for the farm subsidies under the so-called Common Agricultural Policy. After all, these subsidies are meant to help agribusiness in Europe dump food products into the markets of semicolonial countries, just like Turkey, to bolster the profits of capitalist farmers by driving local peasants and others out of business, and siphoning off the wealth working people there produce into the coffers of imperialist banks through debt slavery.

Washington and London, on the other hand, have been campaigning for Turkey’s admittance into the EU to advance their own, and often competing, predatory interests. U.S. imperialism would be glad to weaken the European Union, which has been led by Paris and Berlin in an attempt to form a bloc that can more effectively compete with Washington—the number one military and economic power—over control of the world’s markets and resources. Although a member of the EU, London has clung to its “special relationship” with Washington since World War II—a relationship of dependence that comes from the decline of British imperialism.

Here, it’s appropriate to correct assertions we made related to this point in the editorial in the October 5 *Militant*. After highlighting Washington and London’s support for Ankara’s entry into the EU, that editorial said, “In doing so, the Anglo-American alliance continues to make headway in solidifying a ‘New Europe’ against their competitors in the French-German bloc in the EU who more and more seem to tolerate overt anti-Muslim prejudice.”

There are several errors in this sentence. What U.S. secretary of defense Donald Rumsfeld first described as “New Europe” is fluid, not a new alliance Washington is after that is getting more and more solid. The U.S. rulers have made it clear they will no longer pursue permanent alliances that impose constraints on the White House, and its alliances will shift from task to task. The differences between the allies Washington assembled in the assaults on Afghanistan and Iraq are a case in point.

In addition, this emerging and shifting “New Europe” is defined by Washington, not by “Anglo-American” goals. The U.S. rulers are making headway against their rivals in Europe by pushing Ankara’s membership in the EU, not against some “French-German bloc,” but against those in Paris and other imperialist governments in Europe who promote and tolerate overt anti-Muslim prejudice to keep out semicolonial Turkey with its nearly 70 million people. Bush administration officials push this line partly by arguing that Islam is “one of the great religions in the world” that has been tarnished by small groups of “terrorists.”

Finally, the October 5 editorial referred to the so-called Bush Doctrine—striking preemptively at “terrorist” groups and the states that “harbor them” to advance the strategic interests of American imperialism—as getting a hearing or “traction internationally,” without explaining which classes support it, and for what reasons. The Bush administration points to support for its “war on terror” by the governments of Turkey, Indonesia, and other majority Muslim countries as proof that what it calls democracy and Islam are compatible. Bourgeois regimes that align themselves with Washington along this course do so to defend their class interests, or even their survival in a number of cases.

These conflicts point to one fact above all. The greatest contradiction in world politics is the internationalization of both capital and labor, on the one hand, and, on the other, the growing conflicts among the most powerfully armed nation-states—including members of the EU that often enter into acrimonious disputes with each other—as a result of their competition for profits. This is a contradiction inherent in the capitalist system, which has become much more explosive in the imperialist epoch. The latest flare-up in the Airbus-Boeing tussle over control of the aircraft market is one illustration of this point.

We might look at the wars that have been fought in recent years and initially think that all these seem to be conflicts between imperialist powers and colonial countries, as in the 1991 Gulf War or the current war in Iraq. If we look a little more carefully, however, if we think about what’s at the heart of the dispute over Turkey, we can also see the mounting social tensions in world politics that lead to growing nationalist demagoguery and rightist movements in the imperialist countries. We can see the class polarization that can and has fueled the war party—the nonpartisan bourgeois war party—in all the centers of finance capital. And we can recognize the threat of interimperialist armed conflicts and wars that can set humanity on the path toward a third world conflagration.

Before the capitalists can lead humanity to such a catastrophe, however, working people will get their chance to take state power and replace the rule of the warmakers with a government of workers and farmers, overturn capitalism, and join the worldwide struggle for socialism. The course advocated by the Socialist Workers Party candidates in the 2004 U.S. elections offers a realistic perspective toward this goal. That’s why you should vote socialist and campaign for the working-class alternative in November.

UN body to inspect Brazil’s nuclear power plants

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

The government of Brazil has tentatively agreed to United Nations inspections of its Resende uranium enrichment plant, the Associated Press reported October 6 under pressure by the UN’s International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Washington is using the IAEA to pressure Brasilia to curtail its plans to increase production of nuclear fuel to expand the country’s electrification. The agreement was announced in early October while U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell was visiting Brazil.

Under the accord, Brasilia would permit “inspectors” to see some parts of the centrifuges needed for its uranium enrichment processing, while keeping other parts hidden from view. Brazil had up to now refused IAEA entry into the plant to protect its technological innovations.

IAEA spokesperson Melissa Fleming said there had been “some progress” in getting Brasilia to come to terms,

and that the agency would “discuss [inspection] practicalities on the ground” during a visit later this month.

During his visit to Brazil, Powell downplayed differences between the two governments. “I don’t think Brazil can be talked about in the same vein or put in the same category as Iran or North Korea,” he said, referring to two of the key targets for Washington—the world’s largest nuclear power—in its campaign for so-called nuclear non-proliferation. “The United States understands that Brazil has no interest in a nuclear weapon,” he said. “They have a nuclear program. We understand that.”

In November 2003 Brazil launched “Electricity for All,” a program aimed at providing power to 2 million rural households that lack access to electrical power. There are two nuclear power plants in Brazil now, and the government is considering building a third. Resende will supply centrifuges for the other nuclear facilities.

Israel uses Taba bombings to boost ‘antiterror’ drive

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

Two days after suicide bombings in the Egyptian resort town of Taba, Tel Aviv killed five more Palestinians October 9 in its drive to build a “buffer zone” in northern Gaza. The Israeli offensive, deploying 200 tanks and armored vehicles, has already killed 86 Palestinians in 11 days, according to Reuters. Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon said after the Taba bombings that “terrorism” would be fought “with every means possible without restraint.”

The three bombings in Taba took at least 33 lives and wounded about 150 others. The majority were Israelis, in addition to Egyptians, Russians, and Italians. Taba lies on Egyptian territory in the Sinai Peninsula, near the Israeli border. Tel Aviv had captured Sinai in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war and then returned it to Egypt in the 1979 agreement under which Cairo became the first Arab government to recognize the state of Israel. Taba is a popular vacation spot for Israelis. Media reports indicated that about 10,000 tourists were in the area at the time of the bombings.

Palestinian Authority president Yasir Arafat condemned the Taba bombings and sent a letter to Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak expressing his “solidarity with the families

of the victims.” Another PA official told the media that “the continuation of Israel’s occupation and aggressions against the Palestinian people fuel the world’s anger.”

Hamas and Islamic Jihad, Palestinian groups that carry out suicide attacks against Israeli targets, denied responsibility for the bombings. “We emphasize that all Palestinian factions are focused on the enemy in the Palestinian arena,” said a Hamas spokesperson, reiterating that the group limits its attacks to Israel and the Occupied Territories.

Three previously unknown organizations have claimed responsibility for the Taba attacks. U.S. officials have put the blame on al-Qaeda.

“The Israelis will try to use these bombings to lump all Palestinian factions with groups like al Qaeda,” Isam Younis, director of the Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, told the *New York Times* the day after the bombing. Although Israeli government officials have not tried to pin the blame on any specific group, they have speculated that al-Qaeda or affiliated organizations may have carried out the bombings at the Egyptian resort. Sharon and Mubarak agreed to increase cooperation between the two governments to “fight terrorism.”

Puerto Rico strike

Continued from Page 4

UIA picket lines to show solidarity.

At the picket lines at the AAA operations center near San Juan, which employs 300 workers, union members are picketing on 8-hour shifts. In preparation for a long strike they have put up tarps for protection from the sun and rain, and have installed portable bathrooms, kitchens, domino tables, and televisions.

Pickets estimated that about five managers were operating the plant.

The health insurance plan for the water workers has been paid for by the company but administered by the union. After a government audit claimed the union has mismanaged the funds, the bosses stopped payments to the union-run plan and contracted the Triple-S private health insurance company to replace it. Strikers explained that Triple-S has a history of offering generous coverage to attract new customers and then reducing benefits down the road. Many workers voiced the opinion that union control of the health insurance plan makes it harder for management to raise the deductibles in the future.

Leading up to and during the strike, the big-business press, the colonial government, and U.S. police agencies have run a violence-baiting campaign against the union, accusing the union leadership of corruption and the membership of sabotage and other illegal acts.

On August 26 FBI agents visited the offices of the UIA and told the unionists that blocking the airport today, as they did during a 1998 general strike, would be considered a terrorist act.

In 1998, when the Puerto Rican government announced the planned sale of the state-owned telephone company to GTE, now Verizon, union members staged a 40-day strike. The high point of that walkout was a two-day general strike across the island that involved hundreds of thousands of people and shut down most commerce and public offices.

During the general strike, access to the international airport was blocked for several hours by thousands of unionists who converged from both directions on the intersection that provides access to the facility. UIA members were a large component of the protesters who parked their cars on the expressway and got out to picket.

On October 6 officials of the FBI made further threats against the UIA, insinuating that unionists were planning to sabotage the country’s water supply. “During the past days it has been brought to the FBI’s attention the occurrence of two alleged criminal acts at the Aqueduct and Sewer Authority’s facilities,” FBI agent Luis Fraticelli said in a written statement. “It should be left clear that whatever criminal act and/or conspiracy to interrupt and/or destroy the infrastructure of the potable water service is a federal violation that will be processed criminally.”

That day, students at the Río Piedras campus of the University of Puerto Rico (UPR) held a 24-hour strike in defense of a professor who was suspended by the administration for protesting the presence of the U.S. military on campus.

Héctor Rosario, a mathematics professor from the Mayagüez campus of UPR, was suspended on September 2 for six months without pay for participating in protests against the presence on the campus of the U.S. military’s Reserve Officer Training Corps recruitment offices.

“We sent letters and made phone calls to university administration and they refused to respond,” said Ernesto Chévere, a student who participated in the strike. “When we got no response, that’s when Professor Rosario decided to go on a hunger strike.” Rosario began the hunger strike September 27 in front of the Capitol building in San Juan.

On October 6 students at UPR Río Piedras held a protest led by the student organization *Iniciativa Anti-militarista* (Anti-Military Initiative). Flyers announcing the protest said the action would demand “The demilitarization of the Puerto Rican university campuses, and would show solidarity with professor Héctor Rosario.”

The protest began at the campus theater, which has been closed down for the past five years, and made its way down to the amphitheater in the College of General Studies, where the university president, Antonio García Padilla, and other administration officials were holding a ceremony. As the protestors got close, the president ran to the nearest parking lot where his chauffeur was already waiting with his car. The students quickly followed Padilla to the parking lot and surrounded the car.

There the students demanded that Padilla have a dialogue with Rosario. After more than a half hour with no reply to their demands, the students decided to go on strike at 1:00 p.m. that day if there were still no response. Finally, the students allowed Padilla’s car to go.

At the designated time, about 100 students went through the classroom hallways with drums chanting “¡Únete, únete, a la huelga únete!” “¡No hay clases! ¡Padilla irresponsable!” (Join in the strike! There are no classes! Padilla is irresponsible!). The protesters began shutting down classes across the campus. The crowd swelled to 1,000 within two hours. Word came that students at the Mayagüez and Humacao UPR campuses had taken similar actions.

The campus was shut down all day October 7. At 5:00 p.m. the students picketing the university drove down to a picket line of the water workers near the campus to show their solidarity with the UIA strikers. Classes resumed the next day with a plan to hold a student meeting the following Monday, October 11, to decide whether to resume the strike.

At the mass meeting flyers opposing a continuation of the strike were passed out. They echoed claims in the media that another strike would affect students’ academic progress and the prestige of the university—“They could cancel the semester,” the opponents of the strike warned. A majority of students voted not to resume the strike.



Militant/Sam Manuel

SWP candidates Arrin Hawkins for vice president (right) and John Hawkins for D.C. City Council at-large (center) at September 28 farmers rally in Washington, D.C.

SWP vice-presidential candidate meets farmers, unionists in D.C.

BY JOHN HAWKINS

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Socialist Workers Party vice-presidential candidate Arrin Hawkins campaigned here September 28–29, talking to workers at area plants and joining farmers and their supporters in a rally to protest decades-old anti-Black discrimination by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and other government agencies.

She was joined by local SWP candidates John Hawkins for city council at-large, and Lea Sherman for D.C. Delegate to the House of Representatives at a September 28 rally of dozens of farmers.

One Georgia farmer described to Arrin Hawkins the two-decade-long fight

he has been waging against discrimination at the hands of local USDA agents. Hawkins said the socialist campaign platform calls for stopping farm foreclosures, and for government-funded, cheap credit and price supports to cover working farmers’ production costs. “Such demands by the labor movement are essential to build an alliance of workers and exploited producers on the land to fight for our common interests,” she said.

In the course of the day this farmer and many others took campaign literature and eight subscribed to the campaign newspaper, the *Militant*.

The next day Hawkins campaigned at two meatpacking plants where supporters of the SWP campaign introduced her to their co-workers. At A.M. Briggs, where workers were scheduled to vote on a contract proposal the next day, union members listened keenly when Hawkins explained that the top priority in the socialist platform is the need of workers to strengthen their unions, or organize a union if they don’t have one, to fight the companies’ attacks on wages and working conditions.

Later that day Hawkins spoke with hotel workers, members of UNITE HERE Local 25, as they emerged from a meeting where they heard a report on contract negotiations. The contract, which covers 3,800 workers at 14 major D.C. hotels, expired September 15. The unionists had just learned that San Francisco’s unionized hotel workers had gone on strike, and wanted to discuss its impact on their struggle.

At a campaign table outside the meeting held at Asbury Church, workers responded warmly to the campaign sign supporting workers fighting to organize unions. Dozens stopped to talk with Hawkins and the other socialist campaign supporters and picked up campaign literature. The socialist candidate pointed out the need to mobilize union power and extend solidarity to the strikers in San Francisco. Several unionists bought books and pamphlets that are part of Pathfinder’s Supersaver Sale (see ad on page 7).

During her tour, Hawkins was also interviewed by the *Washington Afro-American*, a weekly newspaper oriented to the Black community.

Socialist Workers Party candidates campaign in New Jersey

Continued from Page 8

which is a precondition to economic development. Responding to comments by the capitalist candidates, Dookhun also explained why socialists call for the unconditional withdrawal of U.S. and other imperialist troops from Iraq, as well as Afghanistan, the Balkans, Korea, and Guantánamo Bay, Cuba.

Dookhun urged those in the audience to get involved in his campaign and vote for the SWP ticket.

Frantz Meronvil of Radio Verité held a live interview with Angela Lariscy October 3 in an hour-and-a-half feature on the Sunday afternoon show “Double Conscience.” Radio Verité orients to the Haitian community, and broadcasts in Creole, French, and English in New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut. The show included questions from both the moderator and listeners.

Meronvil asked Lariscy if she thought the bottom line is that people must choose the “lesser evil” in the elections. “Weren’t things better under the previous Democratic presidency?” he asked.

Lariscy described the antilabor offensive of the Clinton administration that included cutting welfare, signing the Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, and aiding the bosses’ attacks on wages and working conditions. Both the Democrats and Republicans, and smaller parties like the Greens, Lariscy said, are parties of capitalism, the system which is responsible for all the problems working people face—from declining wages to longer hours on the job, to rising rents and imperialist wars. The two-party system and the “lesser evilism” argument have been used for generations to fool workers and farmers into thinking

we have a choice between the parties of the ruling rich. She said the choice in November that is in workers’ interests is the socialist ticket.

One of the 11 calls into the radio station came from a man asking “What can Haitian people expect if you are elected and what can you do about the problems we face now?”

“I respect your opinion,” said another caller, “but we need a real change for Haiti. The Republican Party is responsible for

90 percent of the problems in Haiti. With Kerry, we will have more peace.”

The problem is the capitalist system, not Bush or Kerry or other individual capitalist politicians, Lariscy replied. If elected, she said, she would use her office to mobilize working people to use union power to defend their interests, and build a revolutionary party to lead the struggle to replace the current capitalist regime with a workers and farmers government. “U.S. imperialism and both of its parties are responsible

for the fact that semicolonial countries are power-poor,” she said. The lack of energy supplies is behind the extreme deforestation of Haiti that has resulted in ruinous flooding that took thousands of lives.

“I call for immediate U.S. aid to Haiti now with no strings attached in face of the disaster from the recent hurricane,” she added, “and withdrawal of U.S. and UN troops, cancellation of Haiti’s foreign debt, and an end to deportations of Haitian refugees.”

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

FLORIDA

Tampa

Support Union Organizing! Organize unions where there are none. Strengthen unions where they exist. Speaker: Bill Arth, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from Georgia. Sat., Oct. 23, 7 p.m. La Place Shopping Center, 1441 E. Fletcher Ave. at 15th St. #421 (Second floor, entrance in rear of shopping center.) Donation requested. Tel: (813) 910-8507.

Miami

How Social Security was won and how it will be defended Fri., Oct. 22, 7:30 p.m. 8365 NE 2nd Ave., #206. Tel: (305) 756-4436

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Imperialism’s global war on terrorism: the connection between the war at home and the war abroad. Speaker: Angel

Lariscy, SWP candidate for U.S. Congress in the 13th C.D. Fri, Oct. 15, 8 p.m. 168 Bloomfield Avenue, 2nd Floor. Donation \$5. Tel: (973) 481-0077.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Organize unions! Use union power! Solidarity—All with one; One with all Speaker: Ved Dookhun, SWP candidate for Congress in New Jersey’s 10th C.D. Fri., Oct. 15. Dinner, 7 p.m.; program, 8 p.m.

Why working people should support independence for Puerto Rico

Speaker: Martín Koppel, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate from New York who recently returned from solidarity visit to Puerto Rico. Fri., Oct. 22. Dinner, 7 p.m.; program, 8 p.m.

Both programs at 307 W. 36 St., 10th floor (use north elevators). Donation: \$5 for dinner, \$5 for program. Tel: (212) 629-6649.

PENNSYLVANIA

Hazleton

Celebrate the reopening of the Socialist Workers Campaign Center. Speaker: Tim Mailhot, SWP candidate for Congress in the 11th District. Sat. Oct. 16. Reception, 6 p.m.; program; 7 p.m. 69 North Wyoming. Tel: (570) 454-8320.

Pittsburgh

How working people won Social Security, and why its under attack today Speaker: Ron Short, Young Socialists and Socialist Workers Party. Sat., Oct. 23, 7:30 p.m. 5907 Penn Ave. Suite 255. Donation requested. Tel: (412) 365-1090.

UTAH

Price

How workers and farmers can defend ourselves from capitalism’s growing crisis. Speaker: Terri Moss, SWP 2004 campaign. Fri., Oct. 22, 7:30 p.m. 11 West Main, Room 103. Suggested donation \$5. Tel: (435) 613-1091.

—LETTERS—

Productive, service workers

I have a question about the difference between “productive” workers and “unproductive” workers (e.g. commercial, public workers). Bourgeois economists often point to the lesser percentage of industrial (productive) workers in Europe and the United States as a proof that the working class there is getting smaller.

Are only those workers that produce surplus value “productive”? Can you comment on this point?

*Ernesto Oleinik
Stockholm, Sweden*

Fighting deportation

Greetings to the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and the Socialist Workers Party.

On June 23 the immigration authorities transferred me to the Monmouth County Correctional

Institution at Freehold, New Jersey. The conditions here are very bad.

The prison authorities lock us up in our dormitories for two or three days at a time, letting us out only to shower and pick up our food, which we have to eat in our rooms. They’ve taken away yard recreation. Before, they used to let us out every day; now they do so once a week. They don’t want to give us nail clippers or items for cutting our hair. They deny us access to church. The food is of poor quality and insufficient quantity. There is no filtered water. Visits last only 15 minutes, no more.

On August 16 I was moved to a new dormitory where we have only 1 shower for 30 persons, 4 telephones, 1 TV. There’s no yard, no gym.

This jail does not give out underwear; I’m referring to stockings, underpants, and undershirts. Other county jails give out one pair of

each as a minimum. An 18-year old youth from Costa Rica who was arrested outside Philadelphia was going around with nothing on underneath. We had to obtain some used clothing for him. They also give out shoes or boots that are used, and there are therefore many cases of infection.

The prison authorities have ignored my requests to see the doctor. In July I put in the first request, and just yesterday they called me. I saw a nurse, not the doctor. Immigration does not want to pay bills for doctors and medicines after the first month in this prison, so the detainee has to pay himself. Up to this moment they haven’t charged me. But they are charging me for the visit yesterday.

There’s a person here with a terminal illness who needs pills every day. Yet they give him only a five-day supply, and then the next five days he doesn’t get anything.

The poor guy has lost weight and looks very haggard. The immigration people do this to “break us” psychologically and emotionally.

They have restrictions on our use of the library (Law Library), so that the immigration prisoners cannot make copies and find legal cases in our favor. For two months they haven’t wanted to take us there, no matter how much we complain.

I keep fighting day after day for my freedom against this gigantic machinery of the immigration authorities. I already went through this in 2000. So I know how to struggle against all these things.

And I know that in the end I will be free and emerge victorious.

*Moisés R. Mory,
Freehold, New Jersey*

[Moisés Mory, a steelworker and president of United Steelworkers of America Local 13742, was arrested by immigration authorities at his

home in West New York, New Jersey, on May 7, 2004. A permanent resident who has lived in the U.S. for several decades, Mory faces a deportation order based on a 1987 felony conviction. He is currently being held with other immigrant detainees at a maximum security prison in Freehold, New Jersey. In 1999–2000 Mory spent a year in jail in an earlier attempt by the Immigration and Naturalization Service to deport him. The letter has been translated from Spanish.—Mike Taber, Newark, New Jersey]

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.

Australia’s conservative gov’t reelected

BY RON POULSEN

SYDNEY, Australia—The conservative coalition led by Liberal Prime Minister John Howard won reelection here October 9 for a fourth term.

In an election marked by \$60 billion (US\$43 billion) in targeted spending promises by the government and a scare campaign about the prospect of rising interest rates under Labor, the conservatives increased their majority in the House of Representatives. They gained an extra 2 percent of votes over the 2001 federal elections, largely in the so-called mortgage belt of big cities. Buoyed by years of economic growth and government surpluses, the Liberals presented themselves as a force for stability on the economy and “national security.”

The Howard administration has pledged to keep Australian forces in Iraq as part of the U.S.-led coalition until the “job is done.”

The government recently upped the ante over its threats of regional “antiterrorist” intervention in the wake of the bombing of the Australian embassy in Jakarta a month before the federal elections. Howard pledged to launch “pre-emptive strikes” against sources of “terrorist” threats to Australian targets. The Liberal Party won 71 seats, up from 68, and the National Party captured 12 seats, for a total of 83 for the incumbents in the 150-member national parliament. The main opposition, the Australian Labor Party (ALP), won 58 seats, down from 65. Independent candidates won 3, the Country Liberal Party 1, with 5 seats remaining undecided.

The conservative coalition appears likely to get a majority in the Senate. Final results will be announced October 22, due to a complex voting system, but the government already has won 38 of the 76 seats.

Meanwhile, the pro-capitalist Green Party increased its vote to more than 7 percent nationally. On October 3, the week before the polls, many thousands protested in large cities around the country at “End the Lies” rallies. These issued calls to “Kick Howard out” and for “Troops out of Iraq.” Nationalist and pacifist slogans, often pro-Green, and caricatures of Howard “government deceit” over the Iraq invasion and for the expulsion of asylum-seekers were common.

The government sent 2,000 troops to join the U.S.-led invasion last year and still has 900 military personnel in and around Iraq. Labor leaders had criticized Howard for going to war without United Nations approval. But with elections imminent, the ALP leadership backed off an earlier call by newly elected party head Mark Latham to bring Australian troops “home by Christmas.”

Labor, a social-democratic party that retains its historic ties to the trade unions, has often formed federal governments in the past that have advanced the interests of Australian imperialism. All state and territory governments are currently run by the ALP.

A convergence has emerged in recent months between the coalition and the ALP, as part of a steady shift to the right in bourgeois politics on supporting the Australian rulers’ part in the occupation of Iraq and their strengthened alliance with Washington in the “global war on terrorism.”

Rearmament programs

This year, the Liberals launched a A\$50 billion (US\$35 billion) rearmament program for the Australian Defence Forces (ADF) with the backing of the Labor Party. During the election campaign, both the Liberals and Labor pledged to increase Australian military spending by 3 percent per year over the next decade.

In the last weeks of the election campaign, the rival parties vied to prove who would form the strongest administration for Australia’s rulers to advance their imperialist intervention in the region and new police powers at home.

In the wake of a September 9 suicide bombing outside the Australian Embassy in Jakarta, a Canberra white paper was issued on “terrorism” in the region. “Intelligence sources” tied the separatist struggle by



AP/Wally Santana

Australian troops in Baghdad. ‘Antiterror’ drive helped conservatives win reelection.

Muslim people in the southern Philippines to “terrorist training.”

On September 19, posing as the rulers’ strongest option for keeping “Australia safe,” Howard publicly renewed his pledge to carry out pre-emptive strikes in neighboring countries against “terrorists.”

The following day, the prime minister announced plans for greater intervention in the region, with “counter-terrorism flying squads” to be sent to “high priority” Southeast Asian countries in what Howard called the “arc of instability.” The 10-member rapid response squads, some to be permanently based in host countries, would be drawn from the Australian federal police.

Howard insisted that “Indonesia would be the main focus of the new anti-terrorism offensive.” An article in the *Australian* cited “terrorist training grounds” in southern Thailand and the southern Philippines, especially the bases of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front on the island of Mindanao, as targets for Canberra’s intervention.

When Howard first announced Canberra’s “right” to stage pre-emptive strikes last year, Malaysia’s then prime minister, Mahathir Mohamad, reacted sharply, accusing the Australian government of racism and acting as a U.S. lackey. This time, the reac-

tion among capitalist governments of the region was muted. ALP leaders criticized Howard’s stance as likely to “undermine co-operation in the war against terror.” In response, Howard professed the need for “collaboration” with governments of semi-colonial countries in Southeast Asia saying “none of it is directed against our friends in the region.” Howard reiterated his pledge, however, that Canberra would act without consent of other governments if there was “no other alternative.”

Labor boosts rulers’ ‘antiterror’ drive

The Labor Party’s attempt to pose as a better protector of Australia’s “national security” has boosted the Australian rulers’ “antiterrorism” offensive.

Latham and his “defense” spokesman, Kim Beazley, pledged an extra A\$500 million to strengthen Australia’s military September 20. They were surrounded by armored vehicles at an army base in what Latham called the “garrison city” of Townsville, north Queensland. The ALP officials also pledged to double the size of the Ready Reaction Force, based in Townsville, to 3,000 troops. They proposed relocation of a paratroop battalion from Sydney, creation of a new light infantry battalion, and

Workers strike ‘Green’ Soapworks in Scotland

BY PAMELA HOLMES

QUEENSLIE, Glasgow, Scotland—“In the four years we’ve had a union, managers have not cooperated. We have no inside facilities, even stewards have to meet workers outside to discuss issues and grievances,” said John White, Transport and General Workers Union (TGWU) shop steward, on the picket line at the Soapworks factory here.

Following four two-day strikes, the workers stepped up their campaign, striking for a full week September 28 to October 5 in an effort to get the bosses to negotiate with the union. On September 19, BBC Scotland said that the company’s managing director Jan Zadruzynski stated that “Soapworks believes this dispute should be resolved through negotiation.”

White told this *Militant* reporter on October 4, however, that the only meetings so far have been at the initiative of the union, with nothing favorable offered by the company. At a mass meeting toward the end of the week-long strike, workers decided to push ahead, approving another two-day strike for October 13-14.

In 1999 workers, many of whom have worked at the plant for 13 years plus, agreed to a five-year wage freeze to avoid threatened redundancies (layoffs). The company’s refusal to apply a 3 percent wage increase offer to shift allowances triggered the strike decision by the 62 union members.

There are 64 production workers. The company operates a pattern of two or three shifts and shift allowances (additional wages for afternoon or night shifts) are a significant

part of the pay packet—between 12 percent and 18 percent higher wages. The current hourly rate is £6.20p (\$10.23).

“Now we are only asking what is our due,” said White.

More than two-thirds of the strikers have staffed the picket lines regardless of weather, organized in shifts. Teams of strikers have been going into the center of Glasgow to leaflet the Body Shop outlet on Sauchiehall Street to get out word of the strike and put pressure on the company. Soapworks is owned by the Body Shop, which makes marketing capital out of selling “ethical beauty products.”

The workers report a positive response to their leafleting, showing a hand pump soap and calling on Soapworks, supplier to the Body Shop, to “Stop squeezing your workers.” One woman said she would “e-mail Anita Roddick immediately to say how disgusted she was about how she treated her workers.” Roddick is a Green Party campaigner and founder, director, and major share holder of the Body Shop.

On the day this reporter visited the picket line, some strikers were visiting other factories in the neighborhood to tell the workers about the strike and ask them to display the union leaflet.

Many lorry (truck) drivers are respecting the picket line, although pickets reported that not many were turning up during the week-long strike. Contributions to the strike fund have been received from local authority refuse workers and the Fire Brigades Union, among others, amounting to about £3,000.

The company is offering 3 percent on

provision of more air and sea mobility for the army.

The troop increases would enable Canberra to deploy a brigade of 3,000 to one “trouble spot” and a reinforced battalion of 1,000 to another, Beazley said. This would “enhance Australia’s capacity for independent military operation in the region, with the ADF able to move joint forces quickly, with superior firepower.”

Canberra has announced plans to fit its F-18 Hornet fighters and Orion long-range patrol planes with cruise missiles, and to purchase new destroyers equipped with Aegis air-warfare systems, which would expand the ADF’s air and sea superiority in the region.

On September 19, Latham called for setting up a force of 50 armed sea marshals to board “suspect” ships before they berthed. This adds to Labor’s call for the formation of a coast guard separate from the navy, run by the Australian federal police. The ALP proposed a new force with high-speed patrol boats armed with cannons and some larger ocean-going cutters carrying helicopter gunships. Labor’s plan envisaged the main base in Darwin, in the Northern Territory, to release the Australian navy for intervention if “political trouble” flared in Indonesia or north Korea. The ALP also used the election campaign to call for a new department of homeland security, modeled on that in the United States. It would take over security functions of the Immigration, Customs, and Attorney General’s departments.

An editorial in the September 21 *Sydney Morning Herald*, “Regional terrorism, regional response,” noted that Washington’s proposal for the U.S. Navy to patrol the strategically vital Malacca Straits was recently “vetoed by Jakarta and Kuala Lumpur.” It said that the Australian government “must now push for new measures, including better intelligence co-operation, better police co-operation, and tighter border controls.”

The liberal capitalist daily said, “Australia and its South-East Asian neighbours know any successful counter-terrorism strategy must cast its net region wide.” It said the government’s “proposed rapid response ‘flying squads,’ two of which would be based in Asia, and Labor’s coastguard plan, with its potential for joint interdiction exercises in regional waters, recognise this reality.”

the hourly rate this year and 2.5 percent for each of the next two years. They have also offered an extra 1.5 percent in the next two years if workers agree to unspecified production targets. Workers on the picket line explained the work pace is already hectic and they don’t see how increased targets could be met.

Soapworks was opened in 1988 to make soap for the Body Shop. Its website boasts, “We pride ourselves on treating our employees fairly as they are an integral part of the business... Soapworks operate a relaxed but efficient atmosphere, ensuring that our staff are happy in their job and are being looked after is an important issue to the management.”

Workers say that until the late 1990s, wages and conditions compared favorably with others in the area. At this time, the Body Shop lost ground to competitors and “caring capitalism” was no longer on the agenda. The company sold factories, cut jobs, and froze wages at Soapworks.

The Body Shop now owns about 500 stores in 50 countries, and also runs a network of international franchised outlets. In May, the company posted a 40 percent jump in profits and announced a £100 million (\$165 million) expansion plan. Profits for 2003 were £29 million (\$48 million).

Workers said that messages of support with their strike can be sent to tgwu@tgwu.org.uk—and should be marked “Soapworks dispute.”

Caroline Bellamy contributed to this article.