

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Organization of western coal
has begun amid U.S. hiring boom

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Labor board: Mine bosses' relatives can't vote in union election in Utah

UMWA: 'Significant victory' in fight for union at Co-Op mine

BY PAT MILLER
AND KATHERINE BENNETT

HUNTINGTON, Utah—More than 50 current and former Co-Op miners, retired members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) and their spouses, and UMWA representatives turned out for a November 21 meeting at the Town Hall here. They came to discuss recent rulings by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) favorable to the miners and the next steps in the fight to establish UMWA representation at Co-Op.

The labor board ruled November 18 that supervisory personnel and relatives of the Kingston family that owns the mine will not be allowed to vote in an upcoming union representation election at Co-Op. Miners will be able to choose between the UMWA, the so-called International Association of United Workers Union that miners say is a company outfit, or no union at all. The tentative date for the election is December 16.

"The campaign to win the union has been long and hard, and the fight is not over," said Juan Salazar, a leader of the Co-Op miners' struggle, who addressed the meeting. "We know the company is not giving up. They are going after us. They are stepping up their attacks against us miners. They are encouraging miners to get jobs at other mines. We have to be vigilant, strong, and firm in the face of this."

"This NLRB ruling is a significant victory," said Bob Guilfoyle, deputy director of organizing for the UMWA's western region. "It shows if we stick together, justice will prevail."



Militant/Terri Moss

Bob Guilfoyle, deputy director of organizing for UMWA's western region, addresses Co-Op miners, union retirees, others at November 21 meeting in Huntington, Utah.

Co-Op managers have said that C.W. Mining, which operates the mine, will appeal the ruling.

The latest NLRB decision comes on the heels of another ruling siding with the miners. On November 2, the labor board said the Co-Op bosses must pay back wages to 47 miners amounting to some \$400,000. In June the NLRB had ruled that the miners were illegally fired from their jobs Sept. 23, 2003, for union activity and ordered C.W.

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Toronto meat packers' strike affects hog trade throughout Ontario

BY JOHN STEELE

TORONTO—Workers at Quality Meat Packers and Toronto Abattoirs (QMP) here have entered the fourth week of their strike, despite an intimidation campaign by the company and threats by the bosses to shut down the plant if the walkout continues. The employers are feeling the squeeze from the strike by the 570 work-

ers, members of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 175, who are pressing to win back some of the 40 percent wage and benefits cut they were forced to accept six years ago.

Picket lines remain up around the clock at the plant's four entrances, keeping production at a standstill, said strikers. Workers used to slaughter and process between 5,000 and 6,000 hogs per day. Management recently laid off most of the office staff.

No negotiations have taken place since workers rejected the company's "final offer" November 13 in a close vote of 200-180.

The strike is having an impact on the profits of the privately owned company, founded in 1931, as well as the hog industry throughout Ontario. According to UFCW plant chairperson Sam Cataeno, a lucrative contract with A&P, a major grocery chain, has been cancelled because of the strike, and that lost contracts with other major companies may follow.

An article in the *Ontario Farmer*, written in the first week of the strike, said hog farmers are being forced to ship live hogs out of Ontario to other Canadian provinces and to the United States, at great expense.

In the same article, Keith Robbins, spokesman for the Ontario Pork Marketing Board,

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Members of UFCW Local 175 on strike against Quality Meat Packers in Toronto on picket line November 1, the first day of the walkout. They are being interviewed by local Portuguese-language television station.

Referendum curtailing rights of Albanians fails in Macedonia

BY BOBBIS MISAILIDES

ATHENS, Greece—A referendum to curtail the national rights of Albanians in Macedonia, which have been won through struggle by this oppressed nationality that makes up a third of the population of 2 million, was defeated November 7. A boycott campaign succeeded in convincing the vast majority of eligible voters to stay away from the polls.

After the failure of the reactionary initiative, the "decentralization law" that had been approved by the republic's parliament in the capital, Skopje, is set to be implemented. The legislation recognizes Albanian as an official language in Macedonia in areas where Albanians comprise over 20 percent of the population and grants limited autonomy to majority Albanian areas.

Three days before the referendum's de-

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Washington hosts military exercise in Caribbean on navy 'interdiction'

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

Washington organized the first Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) exercise in the western hemisphere November 8-18 near the Caribbean island of Hispaniola. Forces from 20 governments were involved—including those of Argentina, Chile, Mexico, and Panama. Operation Chokepoint 2004 tested new "rapid consent procedures" established between the U.S. government and those of Panama, Liberia, and the Marshall Islands, for boarding ships under their flags.

Under the banner of the "war on terrorism," Washington and its imperialist allies use the PSI to assert the right to stop and

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U.S. troops consolidate victory in Fallujah

Assault Baathists south of Baghdad

BY SAM MANUEL

The 15,000 U.S. troops that took over Fallujah November 15 have continued to fight small and isolated pockets of armed groups of Baathists, consolidating their victory.

On November 23, as this issue went to press, about 5,000 U.S., British, and Iraqi troops launched an offensive against similar forces in a swath of territory south of Baghdad referred to by many Iraqis as the "Triangle of Death."

The same day, the *World Tribune* reported that the U.S. military had captured in Al Anbar province of western Iraq, bordering Syria, a top commander of the forces opposing the Iraqi interim government of Prime Minister Iyad Allawi and the U.S. occupation. U.S. military officials said the senior Sunni commander, who was not identified by name, was captured in the town of Haqlaniyah along the Euphrates River.

Similar operations are underway in the northern cities of Mosul and Kirkuk that border Iraqi Kurdistan, in Sunni-dominated

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Bill to restructure U.S. spy agencies scuttled in House

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

A bipartisan bill to change the structure of the various U.S. government spy agencies was stopped dead in its tracks November 20 in the House of Representatives, after key Republicans vehemently opposed its approval. A previous version of the bill had passed in the Senate. A compromise version was on its way to the House, but the Republican majority pulled it, making it unlikely that the bill will be considered before this Congress adjourns for the year.

Its failure—along with recent new appointments to cabinet posts by President George Bush and the resignations of liberal "analysts" in the CIA—are indications of the shifting relationship of forces in the ruling class since the U.S. elections toward the course the Bush administration has charted the last four years and continues to pursue.

The legislation collapsed "as conserva-

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Gov’t violence-baits N.Y. lawyer in ‘terror’ trial

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

NEW YORK—The U.S. government has put violence-baiting at the heart of its effort to convict attorney Lynne Stewart on charges of “providing material support for terrorist activity” in a trial here that has so far lasted five months. Attempting to convict Stewart through guilt by association, the prosecution has tried to link her with Osama bin Laden. Stewart took the stand in her own defense for nine days in early November, answering the charges against her and countering the prosecutor’s presentation of her “world view.”

Stewart, 65, was one of the attorneys from 1994 to 2002 for Sheik Omar Abdel-Rahman, who was convicted on frame-up charges of conspiracy to bomb the World Trade Center in 1993 and attack other city landmarks. Abdel-Rahman was sentenced to life in prison plus 65 years, and is being held at the maximum security prison in Florence, Colorado.

Attorney General John Ashcroft himself announced the charges against Stewart on April 9, 2002, alleging that she had violated the 1996 Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, passed under the Clinton administration. Washington charged her both with “providing material support for terrorist activity” and with aiding a terrorist organization by “conspiring” to help her client. In July 2003 U.S. District Judge John Koeltl threw out the latter charge.

Charged along with Stewart are Mohammed Yousry, an Arabic interpreter, and Ahmed Abdel Sattar, a paralegal to Abdel-Rahman.

The government’s case has hinged on what it calls Stewart’s “world view.” Federal prosecutor Andrew Dembar took Stewart’s remark in her testimony that she supported a “people’s revolution” and did not condemn the use of violence as evidence of violent intent. In its effort to paint her with the brush of “terrorism,” the prosecution presented to the court a written version of a 1998 CNN report that two of Abdel-Rahman’s sons were believed to have joined Osama bin Laden’s forces.

The judge twice instructed the jurors that bin Laden is not charged with Stewart as a co-conspirator in the case.

Stewart pleaded not guilty to all charges. When the case began, Stewart said, she wasn’t sure about going public, but as support for her case developed she came to “relish the fight.” If convicted on all five

counts against her, she faces up to 35 years in prison. She said she was able to speak about the conditions of discrimination and oppression in the United States. She said she took particular pleasure in finding a way to mention the case of Leonard Peltier, the American Indian activist who has been held in U.S. prisons for nearly 30 years on frame-up charges of killing an FBI agent.

“The government opened the door to discussing what I stand for,” Stewart said in a November 15 interview with the *Militant*, “and we kicked it wide open.”

Asked in court about an interview she had given to the *New York Times* in 1995, Stewart said she stood by what she has said publicly about her views.

“I am a revolutionary with a small ‘R’...I do believe that basic change is necessary,” she testified in court.

“I think some of it will be accomplished nonviolently such as the fact that my granddaughter now plays NCAA basketball and maybe can play in Madison Square Garden someday. That revolution happened nonviolently,” she said, referring to the civil rights movement.

“I think to rid ourselves of the entrenched voracious type of capitalism that is in this country that perpetuates sexism and racism, I don’t think that can come nonviolently.”

When she was asked on the witness stand whether she supports “terrorist violence,” she responded, “No, because it’s basically anarchistic. It is not directed against institutions or—it is directed against civilians and therefore it cannot be excused. Those are not legitimate targets.”

Stewart said she has spoken to community organizations and others throughout the United States. The terms of her bail made it necessary for her to request permission to leave the New York area. But as the invitations for Stewart to speak started to pour in, the judge decided it would no longer be necessary for her to seek permission to travel within the continental United States, she said. Her case has won formal backing from the National Lawyers Guild, the Center for Constitutional Rights, and the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, and supporters attend the court daily to show support for her fight.

Stewart is also charged with violation of Special Administrative Measures (SAMs) that Washington has imposed on Abdel-Rahman in its effort to dehumanize and break the cleric. These measures



Attorney Lynne Stewart (right) and her husband Ralph Poynter leave federal court in New York June 22. Stewart is facing frame-up charges of “aiding terrorism” for her work as defense attorney for Sheik Omar Abdel-Rahman, who was convicted on charges of conspiring to organize the 1993 World Trade Center bombing.

include restrictions on his access to mail, telephones, and visitors, and a prohibition on his speaking to the media.

The prosecution is basing much of its case on a press release she issued on Abdel-Rahman’s behalf to an Egyptian journalist in 2000. Testifying in the trial of Mohammed Yousry, former attorney general Ramsey Clark, one of Abdel-Rahman’s attorneys, said he, like Stewart, had issued press statements on his client’s behalf. Clark has not been indicted.

Stewart said she is not guilty of the SAMs charge because, like Clark, she was fulfilling her obligation as an attorney to her client. By getting his message out, she said, she was able to keep his case alive and help expose both his prison conditions and the charges on which he was convicted. She pointed to the ethical rules that lawyers are required to follow to “zealously represent clients” as the basis for her actions, not any effort to promote “terrorism.”

“These SAMs regulations are used in a conscious way to silence political people,” like Abdel-Rahman, said Stewart.

When the trial began June 22 the government opened an attack on freedom of the press by issuing subpoenas to four reporters to testify in the trial. All four—from Reuters, the *New York Times*, and New York *Newsday*—challenged the validity of the government move. The prosecution’s plan was to use the reporters’ coverage of Stewart’s activities as an attorney against her. In July the judge deferred any decision on the subpoenas until later in the trial, and the issue remains open.

Wiretapping of Stewart’s communication with her client is central to the case against her. Early on prosecutors acknowledged, “intercepted calls form the backbone of the government case.” Since October 2001 the Justice Department has been allowed to conduct surveillance of those in custody with their attorneys without judicial oversight.

“Ashcroft thought I’d cave in or wouldn’t get support,” said Stewart. “Instead I’ve been able to speak out across the country, receive media coverage, and meet others who support my case.”

Notorious ‘housing assistance’ center in Bronx, N.Y., to shut down

BY PAUL PEDERSON

Embarrassed by publicity about the inhuman conditions workers faced at the Emergency Assistance Unit (EAU), the New York City government has decided to tear down the building and replace it with a new facility. Located in the Bronx, the EAU—the city’s only intake point for homeless families seeking shelter—is notorious for its humiliating treatment of working people in need of emergency housing. At the same time, the city government has announced further steps to restrict access to assistance for public housing and shelters.

New York mayor Michael Bloomberg announced November 16 that the intake center, which he called “a symbol of

shame,” would be torn down and replaced by a \$30 million facility that is scheduled to be finished in 2008.

The one-story windowless brick building was run down and cramped. Working people who ended up there often found themselves herded into the center’s hallways and waiting areas for many hours along with hundreds of other families before being sent to a so-called overnight shelter—often arriving there at 3:00 or 4:00 a.m. and then being kicked out at 7:00 a.m. The cramped and unsanitary conditions led to the quick spread of illnesses—especially among children—and vermin infestation.

As the number of homeless in the city

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THE MILITANT

Find out about Utah miners’ fight for union

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



Co-Op miner Juan Salazar speaks at Oct. 2 solidarity rally at UMWA hall in Price, Utah.

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Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant’s* views. These are expressed in editorials.

UK farmers protest price cuts from milk distributor

BY PAUL DAVIES

DIDCOT, England—Farmers and their supporters successfully blockaded the ASDA supermarket distribution center here, in Oxfordshire, the night of November 18, to protest recent cuts in the price they receive for milk they sell to distribution companies. The peaceful blockade by 30 farmers and others was organized by Farmers For Action (FFA). For four hours farmers left their vehicles in front of the center's entrance, preventing lorries from picking up produce. The farmers had won an agreement from the police allowing the blockade to continue until 12.30 a.m. It followed similar actions organized in October at ASDA distribution centers in Wigan, Lancashire, and Wakefield, West Yorkshire, as well as Didcot and in Scotland.

"ASDA moved from three milk suppliers to just one, Arla, in September, and that supplier then cut the price farmers received by 0.4 pence a litre," said Bruce Horn, a cattle farmer and Hampshire coordinator for FFA.

"After our October actions Arla reversed the price cut, but only to the 600 farmers whose milk goes to ASDA. The other farmers who supply Arla still get the lower price for their milk. That is why we've come back to blockade this center. Once one supplier imposes a cut, the others start to do so."

Milk Link, a dairy co-operative, also cut its price paid to farmers by 0.5 pence per litre to 17.45 pence [US\$0.25] in October. "This is absolutely disgusting," David Handley, national chairman of the FFA, told *Farmers Weekly*. "For five years we've been fighting processors on this issue and now we've got a co-op that is even worse."

"Farmers with an average sized herd are getting a price for milk that barely covers production costs. For those with small herds it's even less," said another Hampshire farmer attending the blockade, who identified himself as Edward. "On top of the cuts in prices we get for milk, we've also had to face recent increases in the price of cattle food, fertilizer, and fuel. In the past two



Militant/Jonathan Silberman

Farmers blockade ASDA supermarket milk distribution center November 18 in Didcot, Oxfordshire, England, to protest cuts in price of milk they sell to distributors.

years the fertilizer I use has gone up from £120 a ton, to £190 a ton [£1=US\$1.87]. We use about 150 tons a year so the price increase means an extra £10,000 plus on our annual outgoings. Diesel has gone up from 22 to 27 pence a litre."

According to figures published last year by farm business consultants Andersons,

average income for dairy farmers in 2003 was £18,000, or 40 percent of that received in 1995–97. Government statistics show 6,000 farmers and 11,000 laborers left farming in the 12 months up to the 2003 June census. Exploited family farmers in the United Kingdom have faced depression conditions for several years. According to more recent government figures, 13 farmers have been forced out of business every week in Northern Ireland alone this year.

"More and more farmers are being forced into debt," explained Paul Knight, an agricultural contractor participating in the blockade. "When farmers are forced out these days they are not selling their land on to other farmers but burning their stock and city money is buying up the land," added Edward.

Farmers from the southwest were also blockading the ASDA distribution center in Bristol on the same evening. "We're ready to fight, and if necessary this won't be the last blockade," said John Lillywhite, another Hampshire dairy farmer, who had also participated in previous FFA actions last year.

In July, the FFA filed a complaint with the government's Office of Fair Trading against three major UK dairy processors—Dairy Crest, Robert Wiseman Dairies, and Arla—for in effect working as a cartel. "Dairy Crest was the first to cut the milk price. Then Wiseman followed suit about a month later and dropped its price. And now we are hearing that Arla may drop its price," said FFA chairman Handley.

100s of unionists murdered yearly in Colombia

BY SAM MANUEL

Assassinations of trade unionists by rightist death squads linked with Bogotá's army are widespread in Colombia. So far this year 58 union officers and organizers have been killed, according to the National Union School, a research group in Medellín. Last year the number was 94. In 1996 alone 222 unionists were killed.

In preparation for upcoming Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) talks with the Bush administration, Colombia's vice-president, Francisco Santos, met with members of the U.S. Congress and AFL-CIO president John Sweeny. In an interview with the *New York Times*, Santos said he had come to Washington to make the case that the government of president Álvaro Uribe had made progress in curbing the killings of unionists.

Of 2,100 cases involving the murder of unionists since 1991, however, only 19 have been prosecuted successfully. Luis Obdulio Camacho, head of a cement workers' local in Antioquia province, was gunned down in 1998 in front of several witnesses. His son, also a union member, was killed in 1991. "No one saw anything," Obdulio Camacho's widow told the *New York Times*. "That's what's so terrible—the silence." She said she gave up long ago on the government making any arrests in the case.

AFL-CIO officials and some members of the U.S. Congress say they will press to make Bogotá's failure to prosecute those responsible for assassinating unionists an issue at the FTAA talks. They will argue, according to press reports, that Bogotá's failure to protect union leaders gives Colombian businesses an unfair edge in trade over their competitors.

In addition, five lawsuits have been filed in U.S. courts charging that a range of U.S. companies operating in Colombia have used the death squads to get rid of union organizers. Among the companies are Alabama coal producer Drummond and two bottlers associated with Coca-Cola.

According to a November 18 *New York Times* report, the Bush administration argues that the suits interfere with foreign policy and open the companies up to frivolous lawsuits.

In early November a Colombian army major escaped from a military prison where he was serving a 27-year sentence for the attempted assassination of a union leader. Evidence suggests the major was aided in the escape by other army officers in charge at the prison, four of whom have since been relieved of duty.

In September the Colombian Attorney General's office charged three soldiers with having murdered three union activists. The Colombian military had claimed the unionists were guerrillas and had been killed in a firefight with government troops.

Labeling trade unionists as allies of opponents of the government, including guer-

rilla groups, is one of the arguments used by leaders of the death squads linked with the military to rationalize the killing. In an interview with the *Times* from a ranch in northern Colombia, Rodrigo Tovar, a leader of one of these rightist groups, was adamant about this course of action. "We have always acted against the guerillas, armed or not armed," Tovar said. "Our war has been against the subversives, against communist guerrillas, however they are dressed." Tovar, a wealthy landowner and businessman, said the unions had been "a disaster in Colombia for business" and that they had been "the ones who sabotage, who hurt companies."

The U.S. government has sent \$3.3 billion to Bogotá since 2000 under Plan Colombia, initiated by the Clinton White House. President George Bush expanded on Plan Colombia with the 2002 Andean Regional Initiative under the pretext of fighting the "war on terrorism" and the narcotics trade.

On October 9 Congress decided to double the cap on Washington's military presence

in Colombia to back Bogotá's war against opponents of the country's right-wing regime, including the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). The number of U.S. soldiers who could be stationed in Colombia was raised from 400 to 800. In addition, the number of "private contractors" the Pentagon is allowed to hire for military operations in the country was raised from 400 to 600. The U.S. military buildup in the region is being carried out in anticipation of sharper resistance by workers and farmers to the economic catastrophe that is gripping Latin America.

Demonstrations against the Uribe government took place October 12 in major Colombian cities. About 300,000 unionists, farmers, and others rallied in Bogotá, Barranquilla, Bucaramanga, Cali, Cartagena, and Medellín. The labor-organized actions protested Uribe's brutal "war on terrorism," his efforts to change the constitution to allow him to run for reelection, and rising unemployment.

Anti-Albanian referendum defeated in Macedonia

Continued from front page

feat, Washington recognized the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) by its constitutional name—the Republic of Macedonia. It was a reward to Skopje by the Bush administration for joining the U.S.-led "coalition of the willing" in Iraq. The move angered the ruling class in Greece, reflecting interimperialist frictions in the region.

Albanians overwhelmingly boycotted the November 7 vote.

"I feel like this ballot box—empty," Neshat Bajrami, 28, who was staffing an empty polling station in one Albanian village, told Reuters. Bajrami had been a member of the National Liberation Army that led an eight-month-long armed struggle in 2001 to press for recognition of the rights of Albanians. Macedonians couldn't "say one thing and then take it back," he added, referring to implementation of the "decentralization law."

The referendum called for withdrawal of this law. Official results showed that only 26 percent of the country's 1.7 million eligible voters went to the polls, too few for the initiative to pass. At least 50 percent of voters needed to have turned out, and over half of them had to have backed the initiative in order for it to be approved.

The decentralization law grants more local autonomy to the republic's oppressed Albanian minority. It calls for redrawing local boundaries and cutting the number of municipalities from 123 to 84. It allows Albanians to make decisions concerning schools, health, and jobs in the 16 municipalities they will control. It also makes Albanian the second official language in the new areas where Albanians top 20 percent of residents, including Skopje, where street

signs will be in Albanian as well as in the Macedonian language.

The referendum was put for a vote after opposition parties, including the World Macedonian Congress, collected 180,000 required signatures on a petition. Both Washington and representatives of the European Union backed the Macedonian government's call for a boycott.

The decentralization law is a key feature of the agreement brokered by imperialist powers in August 2001 between the Macedonian government and Albanian rebels. Some 6,000 NATO troops—made up of soldiers from the United States, France, Germany, Italy, Britain, Greece and other countries—intervened after the Macedonian military, backed and assisted by imperialist powers, failed to crush an insurgency by Albanians demanding recognition of their language and other national rights. The revolt was part of a broader fight in the region by Albanians in Kosova, Macedonia, and Greece against the discrimination and oppressive conditions they face. Seeing the inability of the Macedonian regime to force the Albanian population into submission and fearing further instability in the region, NATO officials promoted the accord. Under the agreement, the Albanian guerillas turned in their weapons and joined a coalition government with the Macedonian Social Democratic Party.

The governing coalition remains the same today. The accord granted concessions to the fighting Albanians, some of which are to be implemented under the "decentralization law."

Many Albanians in the region were buoyed by the defeat of the referendum and saw it as an advance in the fight for

their rights. Middle-class layers and pro-capitalist politicians, however, tried to attribute the result to the benevolence of "western" imperialism. By boycotting the referendum, "The people have demonstrated they are willing to live in a multiethnic state promoting European values," said Emira Mehmeti, representing the Democratic Party of Albanians (DPA), which has been part of the governing coalition.

EU officials said the result will make it more likely that Macedonia may be accepted into the European Union, which its government applied to join in March.

Washington's recognition of FYROM as the Republic of Macedonia on November 4 was the first major foreign policy measure announced by Washington following the reelection of President George Bush two days earlier. Macedonia's troops have been part of the U.S.-led occupation forces in Iraq and its government backs Washington's "war on terrorism."

"Today is a great day for Macedonia and all Macedonians wherever they are," said the republic's president Branko Crvenkovski on national television. In a message to Athens, he said that "the Republic of Macedonia is strongly determined to continue to build friendly and good neighborly relations."

The Greek government protested Washington's move claiming that the use of the name Macedonia by the government in Skopje implies territorial claims on the northern Greek province of the same name. Athens's EU partners continue to recognize this republic of the formerly federated Yugoslavia only as FYROM. "Apart from our protest," said Greek foreign minister Petros Molyviatis, after meeting with U.S. ambassador

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Utah miners' struggle

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Mining to reinstate the workers.

B. Allan Benson, NLRB Region 27 director based in Denver, Colorado, issued the latest ruling. "I find that the employees of C.W. Mining Company's Co-Op Mine, who are related by blood or marriage to past or present members of the Davis County Cooperative Society, Inc. (the Kingston family), are excluded from the appropriate unit for the purposes of collective bargaining," Benson said in the decision. "There are approximately 64 eligible employees in the unit found to be appropriate."

According to the NLRB documents, the UMWA presented convincing evidence that Davis Co-Op employees should be excluded from the voting because "they owe a strong allegiance to that organization and its leaders exercise control over members, as well as the employer ... and lack the same economic interests as other employees and that they participate in an alternative economic system."

The NLRB noted that, based on the company's records, there were approximately 220 full- and part-time employees at Co-Op. It ruled that 156, or 71 percent, had ties to the Kingston family.

"These were people who never applied for employment," Co-Op miner Bill Estrada told the press. "The Kingston family owners just brought them in to stack a union election against the miners."

"This is a tremendous victory for the Co-Op miners," said Cecil Roberts, UMWA international president, according to a November 19 union press release. "The mine's owners saw that the displaced miners were prepared to fight for their rights, and that many of them wanted the UMWA to be their representative. The owners responded to the workers' desire for UMWA representation by trying to pad the bargaining unit with what clearly would have been Kingston family sympathizers. Now the NLRB has ruled—and quite correctly, I might add—that these family members and relatives should not be allowed to vote. The UMWA looks forward to the opportunity to help these miners gain the wages, benefits, and dignity and respect they are owed—and have earned."

Co-Op mine managers said they will appeal the labor board's latest decision. "We feel the NLRB's ruling is discriminatory against a large portion of workers who deserve to participate," Co-Op mine manager Charles Reynolds told the *Salt Lake Tribune*.

The mine owners have until December 2 to file their request for review with the National Labor Relations Board in Washington, D.C.

Company harassment intensifies

With the Co-Op mine bosses losing ground, harassment and intimidation by management of UMWA supporters is

accelerating on the job, say a number of miners.

Celso Panduro, a leader of the 10-month-long strike at Co-Op who was recently fired from his job at the mine, gave a report at the November 21 meeting. "I was fired because I support the UMWA," he said. "They took advantage of the fact that I was sick and claimed I refused an order to do a job. This was a drastic move, and I've had a series of meetings with the company."

"At the first meeting, eight bosses testified against me. At the final meeting, which took place last week, they told me they would give me two weeks' pay if I would forget the whole thing. I refused and told them I'll keep fighting to get my job back."

"They're going to try to do this to other miners, but it's important that we fight to make them think twice before they try firing anyone else, and to win my job back." A petition was circulated at the meeting to be presented to the company stating that Panduro was unjustly fired and demanding he be reinstated.

Alyson Kennedy, another leader of the union campaign at Co-Op, described escalating harassment against her and other members of her crew. This intimidation campaign has stepped up since the recent NLRB rulings, the miner said.

"When I went into work the night after the Huntington Town Hall meeting, my boss, Cyril Jackson, again threatened me with termination if I couldn't meet the 'company standard' of building a stopping by myself in four hours," she told the press. "In most mines, stoppings, which control ventilation in the mine, are built by two miners working together."

"Jackson told me: 'If you can't meet company standards this week, we'll replace you,' meaning I would be fired."

Kennedy described a meeting after the shift where she and two other members of her crew, Jesus Leyva and Bill Estrada, went to talk to Jackson in the foreman's office to protest the harassment. "While we were talking to Jackson, the surface foreman, Kevin Petersen, walked past us and in a belligerent voice said, 'Don't you guys wash your boots, you're getting this floor dirty.' Then Petersen shoved me, nearly knocking me to the concrete floor."

March in solidarity with Snokist strikers

Continued from back page

health benefits, no more cutbacks, wage increases, and the reinstatement of all the strikers. Workers won union recognition at the plant in 2002.

Snokist, a fruit canning and distributing company owned by growers, said it has eliminated a number of jobs since the walkout. The cannery workers rejected the bosses' last offer after the company



Militant/Terri Moss

Co-Op miners (from left) Juan Salazar, Bill Estrada, and Celso Panduro speak with fellow workers, UMWA retirees, others at November 21 meeting in Huntington, Utah.

This physical assault raises to a new level the harassment increasingly being meted out by the Kingston bosses, according to Kennedy. "Citing 'poor work performance,' the bosses are trying to disguise the victimization of those of us in the mine advocating the UMWA, which is our real crime," says Kennedy.

Such harassment is in direct violation of the NLRB ruling forcing the company to take back all the miners who were fired unjustly in September 2003. That settlement, signed by C.W. Mining, states: "We [Co-Op mine owners] will not discharge, give oral or written warnings, to suspend or otherwise discriminate against you because you engage in concerted activity protected by Section 7 of the Act or other activity on behalf of the United Mine Workers of America." The law referred to here is the National Labor Relations Act.

Leaders of the Co-Op union organizing effort are pulling together workers whenever there are victimizations to confront the bosses and push back the harassment.

The Co-Op miners say the day-to-day struggles at the mine and standing up to the bosses are key to preparing for the union representation election.

A committee was set up at the November 21 meeting to help organize visits to every worker eligible to vote at the Co-Op mine to talk about what the bosses are

announcement, and continued the strike.

Production and maintenance workers joined WCIW two years ago after Snokist terminated all health-care benefits, fired production workers, and rehired some of them at \$2 to \$3 an hour less than before. The bosses have also been employing temporary workers through the Barrett Business Services Inc., a job agency known here as BBSI.

John Parks, secretary-treasurer of Teamsters Local 760, which organizes the 230 workers at the Del Monte plant, told the *Militant* it was a "big victory" when the National Labor Relations Board ruled workers placed at Grandview Foods, a frozen-fruit processing plant, by BBSI were also employees of Grandview Foods. Production and maintenance workers there voted 97-4 to join the Teamsters. Parks reported the Teamsters now have a written agreement from Grandview Foods that at the end of carrot season the company will stop using the temp agency. BBSI is supplying Snokist with scabs during the strike.

Six members of the Chicano Student Movement of Aztlán (MEChA) chapter at Eisenhower High School in nearby Yakima joined the march and helped to lead the chants. Monserrat Mendoza, a sophomore and president of the chapter, told the *Militant* after the demonstration, "I thought it was great that there were signs in English and in Spanish, and that the march showed that it's not just Mexicans who are involved."

Mendoza said her group came to support the Snokist strikers because "our program calls for us to move against those forces that deny us freedom and justice. Snokist is denying them a contract, health and retirement benefits." Mendoza also said it was important for students and other youth to support the strike today because what Snokist is doing now, "the next day it could happen to one of us. It's important to see that

doing on the job and solidify support for the union. UMWA representatives and Co-Op miners encouraged union retirees and other miners who are bilingual to be part of this committee. UMWA retirees have been key backers of the union-organizing struggle at Co-Op from the very beginning. Several of them signed up at the meeting to be part of the organizing committee.

The Co-Op miners are also continuing to reach out. Mike Dalpaiz, UMWA international executive board member for the union's 22nd district, also addressed the meeting. He invited everyone to attend the 20th anniversary commemoration of the Wilberg mine disaster, near Orangeville, Utah, where 27 miners were killed in an explosion that occurred while the mine owners were pushing for a one-day production record. A commemorative meeting will be held that day, December 19, at the Emery County High School at 4 p.m. It will be followed by a lunch and a march to the monument for the 27 miners.

The news of the Co-Op miners' victory were prominently covered in both major dailies in Utah—the *Salt Lake Tribune* and the *Deseret Morning News*. An Associated Press dispatch on the NLRB ruling was also picked up by the Wyoming *Casper Star Tribune*. Wyoming is the number one coal producing state in the country with very few union mines.

this could affect us in the future."

At the end of the rally, Mendoza exchanged numbers with organizers of the strike to continue the solidarity work. She said she will work to get more students from Eisenhower to the picket line in the future.

"We have only one common enemy and that's the employers," Mike Pieti, executive secretary of the WCIW, told the concluding rally. "They try to pit workers against each other and try to get us to resort to violence. We won't do that."

Other speakers at the rally included longtime farmworker and packinghouse worker organizers Tomás Villanueva, Guadalupe Gamboa, Gerardo Ríos, and Anna Guzman. All encouraged the strikers to continue their fight against Snokist. "You will never be alone while you fight to enjoy a fair and just contract," Villanueva said.

After the rally, people lined up for barbecue at a big grill brought over by the Teamsters and listened to music from a Yakima mariachi band. Teamsters and other supporters of the strikers also brought turkeys for Thanksgiving dinners. As the end of the shift at the plant grew closer, people began picking up picket signs saying, "Let's walk."

One of the Snokist strikers organizes financial and other support for the temporary workers who refused to cross the picket line. A number of these workers picket regularly with WCIW members.

WCIW organizer Rogelio Montes said the Western Council has been reaching out for solidarity. According to Montes, the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) in Seattle told the WCIW that the owners of a shipping company are angry because longshore workers had refused to load a shipment of Snokist cherries to Australia.

As this issue goes to press, Snokist has refused to resume negotiations with the union.

Toronto meat packers' strike

Continued from front page

said, "It's the worse possible time" for a strike, because it will increase exports to the United States. This costs the board an extra \$20 a hog because of the new 13.25 percent duty imposed by Washington. The *Ontario Farmer* reports that all of Ontario's packing plants are operating at full capacity or near it. That means the board has to find out-of-province buyers for the more than 25,000 hogs a week QMP normally slaughters. This is 22 percent of Ontario's total weekly production of about 115,000 hogs.

The Ontario Pork Board said in a November 18 bulletin that "this week, 18,000 to 20,000 are being processed in the United States, approximately 10,000–12,000 extra hogs will be processed in Quebec, and Maple Leaf Pork is planning a Saturday slaughter."

Statements by QMP president David Schwartz indicate the impact of the strike on the company. "We were shocked that the membership rejected our offer in spite of the fact that their negotiating team unanimously recommended acceptance," said Schwartz on the second day of the strike. Following the rejection of the "final offer" on November 13, Schwartz complained, "Our offer was better than agreements with other industry competitors. We feel it was extremely fair, therefore the outcome

of the vote is very discouraging."

In a November 15 "message to producers" Schwartz said, "We recognize that this latest setback puts incredible stress on producers, on the industry, as well as on the workers and the company."

Meanwhile, the bosses continue their campaign of intimidation against workers, trying to convince the unionists that the plant will shut down if they don't accept the company's offer. During the third week of the strike, bosses loaded up two flatbed trucks with one line and a number of machines. They left them in the company yard for a day then moved them out.

Many strikers saw through this maneuver. "The line they took out was from the ham room and hardly used," said a QMP mechanic with 27 years seniority who asked that his name not be used. "They're making room for new machinery and cooling space."

Six years ago, QMP workers failed to prevent a 40 percent cut in wages and benefits after a two-month strike. They are now demanding a wage increase above the company's last offer of Can\$1.15 to Can\$1.75 (US\$1 = Can\$1.19) hourly raise over three years.

John Steele is a member of UFCW Local 175 on strike against Quality Meat Pack-

2,225 ‘Militant’ subs in hand; on to make the 2,300 goal!

BY PAUL PEDERSON

As this issue goes to press, subscriptions to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* are still coming in, as participants in a three-month-long circulation campaign use every last available minute to win new readers to the socialist publications.

So far, 2,225 people have signed up to receive the *Militant* each week and 505 readers have been won to its Spanish-language sister publication. That leaves 75 subscriptions to meet the international target on the *Militant* and 45 for *PM*.

Because this issue goes to press one day early due to the Thanksgiving holiday in the United States, the final results of the effort will be printed next week. Here are a few of the highlights of the final stretch.

Socialists working in the coal mines in the United States have gone over their *Militant* subscription goal, selling 32 subs on the job, at union meetings, and in the course of union-building activity.

“The victory scored by the Co-Op miners was an important impetus for us in the last week of the campaign,” said Tony Lane, a miner in southwestern Pennsylvania (see front-page article). “About nine of my co-workers

subscribe to the paper, and they’ve been following this fight closely. One miner, who signed up for a subscription at the start of the drive, decided to renew when he learned about the victory at a union meeting last week. At the same meeting, another miner signed up for the first time.”

Lane pointed to the fact that nationally the bulk of the new readers among miners is in Price, Utah, where 14 subscriptions were sold. “This shows the impact of the Co-Op struggle as well as the new openings for unionization in the western coalfields, which the *Militant* has followed closely,” he said.

Opportunities to sell books on revolutionary working-class politics, like those advertised on page 7, net new subscribers, too. In South Florida, the Pathfinder booth at the November 12–14 Miami bookfair was a pole of attraction, with 216 Pathfinder books and pamphlets sold.

“When I was in school I wasn’t aware of the world,” Rosario Matos-Vila, a young woman from Kansas City, told a campaigner at the booth. “Now I have a lot of questions and I want to understand what is going on.” Matos-Vila was one of 15 people who walked away from that book stand with a *Militant* subscription.

In many U.S. cities, *Militant* supporters plan to use



Militant/Eric Simpson

Barbara Bowman (center) talks to visitors at the Pathfinder booth at the Miami bookfair November 12. Fifteen people subscribed to the *Militant* and 216 Pathfinder titles were sold at the fair.

the Thanksgiving weekend—the busiest holiday shopping weekend of the year—to get some literature tables out and collect the final round of subscriptions to make the international goal.

“We’ve gone over our goal in Newark,” said Amy Husk, from Newark, New Jersey. “But we’ve been doing regular sales in downtown Newark, so we want to take advantage of the fact that a lot of people will be out shopping this weekend to set up a table downtown. Every time we go out, we meet people run across during the election campaign. Many are happy to see us still out on the streets after the elections.”

2,700 books on revolutionary politics sold in October

BY DOUG NELSON

In the final month leading up to the U.S. elections, campaigners for the Socialist Workers Party candidates across the country sold 1,983 books and pamphlets on Marxism and revolutionary working-class politics published by Pathfinder Press. They distributed books through street tables, on campuses, at bookfairs, in front of factory gates, and at political events—including weekly *Militant* Labor Forums where socialist candidates frequently spoke.

Since mid-August, socialist workers, young socialists, and others have made use of Pathfinder’s Super Saver Sale (see ad on page 7) to distribute socialist literature as part of the campaign. The sale, which features two-dozen steeply discounted titles in English, Spanish, and French, goes through November 30.

In addition to books sold in the United States, communists in Australia, Canada, Iceland, New Zealand, Sweden, and the United Kingdom sold 692 Pathfinder books and pamphlets in October. The worldwide total is 2,675. This makes October the best month for such book sales by socialist campaigners since Pathfinder’s last big sale in April when 2,500 books were sold in the United States alone at the activities building up to and during the April 25 march in Washington, D.C., to defend a woman’s right to choose.

These sales had an impact on total Pathfinder sales for October, which came to about \$17,700. This was still short of the target as part of the communist movements’ goal to increase Pathfinder sales by 10 percent in the last six months of 2004 compared to the first half of the year. The reason for the shortfall is that net Pathfinder orders by bookstores, campuses, and libraries were the lowest of the year.

Sales for the first six months this year averaged \$18,700 per month, for a total of \$112,200. Distributors worldwide adopted a campaign to increase this to \$123,400 the last six months of 2004. In the four months between July and October, \$76,640 was sold. That leaves \$46,760 for the last two months of the year toward the target. Sales for November and December must average \$23,380 each month to meet the goal.

Supporters of the SWP in the United States and Communist Leagues in other countries are working with party leaderships in their area to maximize orders from book-

stores, campuses, and libraries for November and December. At a special meeting of SWP supporters in New York November 14, Gale Shanghold who directs the effort in the area, said, “The next four weeks are crucial if we’re going to make the goal by the end of December.” At the meeting, supporters made assignments and set deadlines to follow up with customers and get book placements before the holidays.

Socialists from Chicago; Cleveland; Detroit; New York; Craig, Colorado; Price, Utah; Pittsburgh; and London sold more than double their first six months’ average sales in October. In two of the cities—Chicago and Cleveland—they nearly tripled these sales.

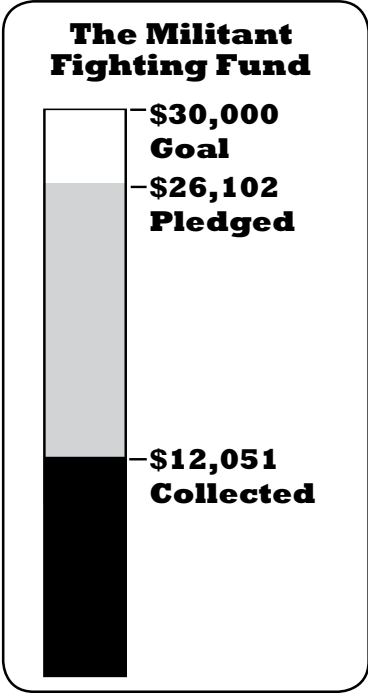
Carole Lesnick from Cleveland said the relatively high October sales there were “a direct result of the increased campaigning we did for the SWP candidates nationally and locally. We reached out broadly and sold subscriptions to the *Militant*, built *Militant* Labor Forums, and got a number of people to stop by the Socialist Workers campaign headquarters. One of the things we did was set up a table outside a movie theater showing the film *Motorcycle Diaries* about Che Guevara’s travel through Latin America as a youth. The next time we went, we got permission to set up the table inside the theater and sold \$100 in books along with subscriptions to the *Militant*.”

In other cities—from Tampa, Florida, to Chicago—socialists have had similar successes with book sales outside movie theaters showing *Motorcycle Diaries*.

There are initial encouraging signs for November sales. Socialist campaigners, for example, staffed a Pathfinder booth at the Miami bookfair November 12–14. They sold 216 books for a total of \$1,600. The fair, a longstanding cultural and literary event in southern Florida, featured over 300 authors at reading presentations and a street fair with over 200 booths. The three best sellers from the Pathfinder booth, reported Ruth Robbinet, were the *Communist Manifesto* (16), *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning* (15), and *Capitalism’s World Disorder* (12). “We sold out of *Capitalism’s World Disorder* on Saturday afternoon, half way through the fair,” said Barbara Bowman, one of the volunteers staffing the booth.

Militant/Perspectiva Mundial Fall Subscription Drive Subs received as of November 23					
Country	Militant Goal	Sold	%	PM Goal	Sold
SWEDEN	30	36	120%	5	5
UNITED KINGDOM					
Edinburgh	25	30	120%	2	0
London	50	58	116%	12	9
UK total	75	88	117%	14	9
AUSTRALIA	55	56	102%	8	4
ICELAND	30	30	100%	2	0
NEW ZEALAND					
Auckland	45	46	102%	1	1
Christchurch	35	30	86%	1	1
N.Z. total	80	76	95%	2	2
CANADA					
Montreal	32	37	116%	12	8
Toronto	75	62	83%	18	6
CANADA total	107	99	93%	30	14
UNITED STATES					
Newark	90	106	118%	25	21
Atlanta	80	89	111%	20	17
Houston	80	89	111%	20	16
Detroit	40	44	110%	10	10
Des Moines	65	69	106%	25	28
New York	180	185	103%	60	49
Birmingham	40	41	103%	8	8
Price, UT	50	51	102%	20	14
Seattle	55	56	102%	12	15
Craig, CO	65	66	102%	20	12
Chicago	100	101	101%	40	40
Cleveland	40	40	100%	10	5
Tampa	40	37	93%	10	11
Boston	100	92	92%	40	25
Pittsburgh	65	59	91%	4	2
Washington	115	86	75%	21	18
Los Angeles	150	112	75%	50	52
Omaha	55	41	75%	45	18
Twin Cities	105	76	72%	40	31
Miami	100	66	66%	50	12
Philadelphia	95	60	63%	10	1
San Francisco	125	66	53%	35	20
NE Pennsylvania	55	29	53%	15	15
U.S. total	1890	1661	88%	590	440
14-day campaign*	-	179	-	-	31
Int'l totals	2267	2225	97%	651	505
Goal/Should be	2300	2300	100%	550	550
*14 days of campaigning in New York Aug. 21–Sept. 3 at protests and events leading up to and during the Republican convention					
IN THE UNIONS					
	Militant Goal	Sold	%	PM Goal	Sold
AUSTRALIA					
AMIEU	8	10	125%		
UNITED STATES					
UMWA	30	32	107%	12	7
UNITE	50	42	84%	40	30
UFCW	135	97	72%	150	104
Total	215	171	80%	202	127
CANADA					
UFCW	6	5	83%	3	2
UNITE	2	1	50%	1	1
Total	8	6	75%	4	3
NEW ZEALAND					
NDU	2	2	100%		
MWU	2	1	50%		
Total	4	3	75%		
SWEDEN					
Livs	2	1	50%	1	0
ICELAND					
Hlíf	2	1	50%		
Efling	2	1	50%		
Total	4	2	50%		

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.



Help ‘Militant’ defeat harassment suit

BY SAM MANUEL

With three weeks remaining, just over \$12,000 has been collected toward the *Militant* Fighting Fund. The \$30,000 fund was launched October 31 to defend the *Militant* against a harassment lawsuit filed against it by the owners of the Co-Op mine in Utah (see front-page article). So far, 246 individuals have pledged \$26,102. That leaves just under \$4,000 in additional pledges needed by the December 15 deadline.

Partisans of the *Militant* in New York set a goal on November 22 to raise \$9,000. This means securing \$1,700 in new pledges, above those initially made since the fund was launched. They set a good example to emulate everywhere.

Defendants in the Kingston nui-

sance lawsuit include the *Militant* newspaper, its editor, its web administrator, and 20 of its reporters who have written articles on the Co-Op struggle. In all, 120 organizations and individuals—including the United Mine Workers of America, 17 current and former Co-Op miners, the Catholic Church in Utah, and Utah’s two main dailies—are named in the suit and accused of “unlawful labor practices” and “defamation.” The fund will cover the costs of securing attorneys, and initial legal fees and costs to wage a public defense.

Contributions should be sent to the *Militant* at 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, N.Y. 10018. Please write checks or money orders to The *Militant* and earmark them “*Militant* Fighting Fund.”

U.S. forces mop up in Fallujah

Continued from front page

sections of Baghdad, and in a number of cities in the Sunni Triangle in central Iraq that includes Fallujah. The U.S. military is fighting the war it did not finish during last year's invasion with the aim of smashing the best units of the former army of the Baathist regime of Saddam Hussein. These units dissolved but kept their weaponry and have been leading the attacks on civilian and military targets in Iraq for the last 18 months.

Crack units attacked Fallujah

Meanwhile, military commanders and many U.S. politicians and pundits have been praising the crack units that took over Fallujah, which the Pentagon is not about to pull out until it has consolidated its victory. They are also publicizing their findings in the city that point to the fact that Fallujah was the center of Baathist resistance.

Lt. Gen. John Sattler, commander of the First Marine Expeditionary Force in Fallujah, said the offensive had "broken the back of the insurgency," according to the November 19 *Washington Post*. He said the U.S. military objective is to continually disperse the Baathists, forcing them to operate in new areas where they will increasingly need to rely on less experienced people. "They'll bring in rookies, more junior people that will, in fact, make mistakes," Sattler said.

In a November 19 Pentagon press briefing, Lt. Gen. Lance Smith, deputy commander of the U.S. Central Command, said the evidence U.S. forces are finding in house-to-house searches in Fallujah shows the city was a haven for "former-regime elements." He said retaking the city has deprived the Baathists and their supporters of an important command center.

Smith said, for example, that in 10 days one Marine unit had found 91 weapons caches and 93 IED's, or roadside bombs, as they are known, in just one sector of Fallujah. That compares, he said, to 130 weapons caches and 348 IED's found in all of Iraq in the entire month of October. Smith said large factories for making the roadside bombs have been found and that Marines would be returning to areas where house-to-house searches were conducted to take a second look and be "sure we are capturing all the information that's available."

About 25 suspected Baathists were killed in a firefight at one of the houses the Marines returned to. The U.S. military said the house appears to have been a headquarters of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, a Jordanian who is the leader of Tawhid and Jihad. The group has taken responsibility for numerous bombings against U.S. and Iraqi troops and kidnappings and beheadings of hostages.

An article in the November 19 *Washington Post* said U.S. troops found documents in the house, including letters from al-Zarqawi with instructions to his lieutenants, medical supplies, and boxes of ammunition. A black-and-white mural painted on the wall was similar to banners that appeared in videos showing the beheading of foreign hostages. The U.S. military says it is finding improvised jails in houses throughout the city.

In one house, which was reportedly owned by a former Iraqi army officer who was killed in the fighting, Marines found a room containing a make-shift jail with three cells, according to the November 19 *Atlanta Journal Constitution*. One of two emaciated Iraqi survivors in the cells said his captives shot his brother in the head and cut off his cousin's feet. In other cases witnesses said people were shot when they refused to fight alongside their captors who had been outnumbered and were retreating from the assaulting Marines.

Deadliest month for U.S. troops

According to Sattler, 51 U.S. soldiers were killed and 425 wounded in the assault on Fallujah. Nearly 100 U.S. troops have been killed across Iraq in November, making it the second-deadliest month since the March 2003 invasion. The only higher figure was in April, during an aborted attempt to take over Fallujah

A November 19 *Wall Street Journal* article hailed the performance of U.S. troops

in the latest assault on Fallujah as the "best since World War II." It said the successes of the all-volunteer military since the end of the draft in 1973, "assures that no draft will return this side of Armageddon."

The performance of the U.S. military in Fallujah also drew praise from an unusual quarter—the *New York Times*, which has focused its news coverage and opinion columns in recent months on criticisms of the Bush administration course in Iraq. The November 21 issue of the daily carried a report by correspondent Dexter Filkins embedded with a Marine unit during the assault on Fallujah. He described in gripping detail the accomplishments and loss of lives in the Bravo Company over eight days of fighting.

"Despite their youth," he said, "the Marines seemed to tower over their peers outside the military in maturity and guts. Many of Bravo Company's best Marines, its most proficient killers, were 19 and 20 years old.... Bravo Company's three lieutenants were 23 and 24 years old."

That same day, *Times* columnist Thomas Friedman heaped similar praise on the U.S. troops that took over Fallujah. "It was a Noah's Ark of Americans: African-Americans and whites, Hispanic Americans and Asians, and men and women I am sure of every faith," he said. "The fact that we can take for granted the trust among so many different ethnic groups...is the miracle of America." By contrast, Friedman said each unit of their Iraqi allies consists of individuals from the same tribe "and are constantly clashing."

Eight Iraqi troops were killed and 40 wounded in the assault on Fallujah. About 25 civilians have been treated by military doctors, according to Sattler, who said he knew of no civilian deaths. The International Red Cross estimated that as many as 800 civilians were killed. The U.S. military said it killed as many as 1,600 Baathists and their supporters and captured 1,052 individuals—all but 20 of them Iraqis.

Lack of outcry at U.S. offensive

The lack of outcry against the current U.S. offensive stands in stark contrast to protests in April when U.S. Marines laid

siege to Fallujah. Then Shiites in Sadr City, a stronghold of Muqtada al-Sadr's militia, held demonstrations and organized a march of thousands in an attempt to deliver food and medicine. So far, al-Sadr has only said that he will not participate in elections as long as Iraqi cities are under attack. At the mosque that houses al-Sadr's headquarters clerics give sermons at Friday prayers against the U.S. attack on Fallujah but have stopped short of proposing any actions.

Many residents of Sadr City expressed the widespread hatred across Iraq against the Baathists, who overwhelmingly came from the Sunni minority, enjoyed vast privileges under the Hussein regime, and ruled with naked brutality. "The Israelis are better than the people in Fallujah," Moham-mad Ali, a Shiite, told the *New York Times*. "A dog is more loyal than them."

Attacks on Baathists in Mosul

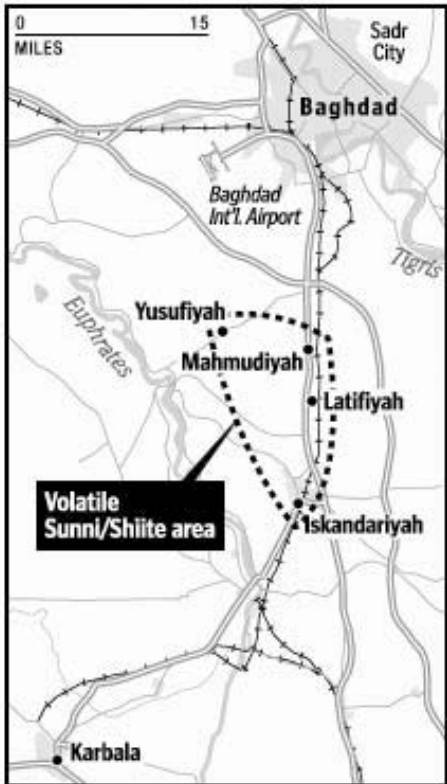
Preparations are being made for a military offensive to wipe out Baathist strongholds in Mosul. According to Al-Jazeera TV, some 1,200 U.S. troops and 1,600 U.S.-trained Iraqi troops have been assembled in the city along with air support. In the first stage thousands of former members of the Kurdish *peshmerga* armed militias joined U.S. forces in retaking Iraqi police stations that had been captured by Baathists in an attempt to aid their brothers in Fallujah. Now U.S. and Iraqi troops plan to "cleanse the city" of the Baathists, according to Iraqi Major Gen. Rashid Flaih.

The U.S. military said it also discovered a large weapons cache in a village near Mosul, according to the Associated Press. It included an anti-craft gun with 15,000 rounds of ammunitions, 4,600 hand grenades, 144 grenade launchers, 25 surface-to-air missiles and small number of rockets, mortars, and artillery rounds.

Meanwhile, U.S. troops continued to call in airstrikes against armed groups of Baathists in fighting in Ramadi and Baqubah, using 500-pound bombs in the latter.

Sunni mosque raided in Baghdad

There was heavy street fighting, initiated by Baathists, against U.S. and Iraqi



About 5,000 U.S., British, and Iraqi troops have launched assault against Baathists in "Triangle of Death" marked above.

troops the day after a November 19 raid on the revered Sunni Muslim Abu Hanifa mosque. Simultaneous clashes broke out in at least five Baghdad neighborhoods, according to AP.

Iraqi troops, backed by U.S. soldiers, attacked the mosque in Baghdad just after Friday prayers. Four worshipers were killed in the attack. Muayed Adhami, the prayer leader, was among 40 arrested. The Abu Hanifa mosque is the most prominent building in the central square of the Adhamiya neighborhood of Baghdad. Saddam Hussein was seen being cheered by crowds there just before he went into hiding. The mosque was the center of one of the last firefights in the battle to take Baghdad in 2003.

U.S. troops arrested leading officials of the Iraqi Islamic Party in Baghdad and Baqubah. It is the largest Sunni-led political party and recently quit the interim government in protest over the assault on Fallujah. A group of 47 parties led by Sunnis and a handful of Shiite-led parties said

Continued on Page 9

Marxist books sell briskly at local book fair in Tehran

BY MA'MUD SHIRVANI

Books on the struggle for women's rights, writings on the Cuban Revolution, and Marxist classics were popular at the Jahade Daneshgahi (University Jihad) book fair held in Tehran recently. The fair, an annual event in Iran, took place at Tehran University October 9–14. About 35–40 publishing houses took part, one-third of them based in other countries.

Students at the fair purchased 160 titles distributed by Pathfinder—in English, Spanish, French, and Farsi, one of the languages of Iran. On the first day, two international students purchased two titles in Spanish: *Episodes of the Congo Revolutionary War* by Ernesto Che Guevara and *Nueva Internacional* no.1, the issue of the magazine of Marxist politics and theory featuring "Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq." Four copies of the latter title were sold in various languages overall.

A young Iranian living in Spain came by the Pathfinder stand. He was very surprised. First, because of the range of Spanish titles. Secondly, because of the subjects of the books. He purchased the following in Spanish: *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions*; *Che Guevara: Economics and Politics in the Transition to Socialism*; *In Defense of Marxism: The Social and Political Contradictions of the Soviet Union on the Eve of World War II*; and numbers 1–4 of the journal *Nueva Internacional*.

Two young women, architecture students who are studying Spanish, purchased *Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle* by Thomas Sankara, the central leader of the revolution in Burkina Faso, West Africa, in both Spanish and Farsi. They also bought two copies of the Farsi translation of *Socialism and Man in Cuba* by Che Guevara. Another student bought *Nueva Internacional* No. 2, featuring "Che

Guevara, Cuba, and the Road to Socialism"; *Episodes of the Congo Revolutionary War*; and *The Marxist Theory of Alienation*. A law student who was studying French said he believed Iranian laws were modeled on the French pattern and wanted to be able to read law books in French. He picked up two titles in French, *The Revolution Betrayed: What is the Soviet Union and Where Is It Going?* and *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*.

Another student with a degree in English purchased *Israel's War against the Palestinian People*. She came back a couple of days later and bought *What Working People Should Know about the Dangers of Nuclear Power and Genocide against the Indians*. Another woman, who was studying in a newly established major called "Problems and Rights of Women," bought *Women and the Nicaraguan Revolution*.

An English-language student purchased *The Long View of History and Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle*. She also bought the Farsi translations of these two titles. Similarly, another student bought *Puerto Rico: Independence Is a Necessity* and its Farsi translation.

A student interested in the Russian revolution picked up *History of the Russian Revolution* and *My Life* by Leon Trotsky, as well as *Questions of National Policy and Proletarian Internationalism* by V.I. Lenin.

A student looking for philosophy books purchased *The Communist Manifesto*; *The Last Year of Malcolm X: The Evolution of a Revolutionary*; *Humanism and Socialism*; and *Pragmatism versus Marxism*. Two students bought *An Introduction to Marxist Economic Theory*.

An international communications student looking for books on Africa for his thesis decided to buy *Nelson Mandela Speaks* and *New International* no 5, featuring "The Coming Revolution in South Africa," plus

three Farsi titles, *How Far We Slaves Have Come!*, by Nelson Mandela and Fidel Castro; *Malcolm X Talks to Young People*; and Sankara's pamphlet on the fight for women's equality and the African freedom struggle.

A total of 65 copies of Pathfinder books and pamphlets in English, Spanish, and French were sold, encompassing 55 different titles. The number books sold in Spanish, 18, was significantly higher than usual.

Ninety-five Pathfinder titles translated into Farsi were sold as well, including 16 of the Pathfinder titles that have been translated into Farsi by the Tehran publishing house Talaye Porsoo. A young man bought *Malcolm X Talks to Young People* and Sankara's *We are the Heirs of the World's Revolutions*. He came back the next day to express his appreciation for the effort to translate and publish such valuable books in the native tongue. He bought a few more Farsi titles: *Socialism and Man in Cuba*, *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning*, *Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle*, and *Making History*.

A young woman who is a reporter for a magazine purchased *Feminism and the Marxist Movement* and *Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle*. She said she intended to introduce the books to the public in an article.

Two young students picked up *Socialism on Trial* and mistakenly thought the book was against socialism. After learning the book is a record of the trial of leaders of the Teamsters union and of the Socialist Workers Party in the United States, framed up and jailed under the Smith "Gag" Act in the 1940s for their opposition to imperialist war, they decided to buy it. <Cat 39>

The most popular Farsi title was *Socialism and Man in Cuba*, which sold 20 copies; followed by *Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle*, 17 copies; and *Feminism and the Marxist Movement*, 13 copies.

SWP vice-presidential candidate visits London and Stockholm

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON—"The company would never allow a union here," said a worker at Respirer, a protective clothing plant in Redhill, about 20 miles south of London.

The worker was responding to comments Arrin Hawkins had made there November 17, to about a dozen of the 40 workers on the shop floor during their lunch break. Hawkins, the Socialist Workers Party vice-presidential candidate in the U.S. elections, visited this area after a post-election campaign stop in Scotland. In her presentation, Hawkins said that her campaign championed the need of workers to build unions and strengthen those that already exist to fight the bosses' drive to increase their profits by cutting wages and worsening working conditions. These remarks at Respirer, and in an earlier visit with about 10 workers at a shift change at the Hygrade sausage plant in London, stimulated quite a bit of discussion. Both plants are nonunion.

"Workers here won't stick together," said another worker at Respirer.

"The bosses will always seek to block union organization," Hawkins replied. "They play on our fears and insecurities. Workers build up their self-confidence by fighting together. From there not only is union organization necessary but the exercise of union power becomes possible."

She described the 14-month-long fight of coal miners in Utah, in the western United States, to organize a union and the current strike by meat packers in Toronto, Canada, as examples of this labor resistance that's bringing workers together.

Hawkins also spent half a day at the nearby Oxted school. She had been invited by students and teachers to speak about the U.S. elections at two classes on politics. Students then took the initiative to schedule a lunchtime meeting to continue the class discussions and invite others who had not been in the politics classes. Sixteen students attended the lunchtime event and participated in a wide-ranging discussion.

Lauren Sullivan, 17, who attended both a class and the lunchtime event appreciated Hawkins's comments on the need to support the efforts of semicolonial countries to develop their energy capacities in order to achieve economic development. But she quizzed the socialist candidate about the environmental consequences.

"In Britain and the U.S., we have to defend the right of the oppressed nations to develop the sources of energy they need, including nuclear power, in face of the threats from the imperialist governments, like they're threatening Iran," Hawkins said. "That's an issue of defending their sovereignty."

Her campaign, Hawkins said, has exposed the hypocritical drive by Washington, London, and other imperialist governments to prevent—under the banner of "nonproliferation"—countries like Iran and north Korea from developing nuclear energy.

"Then there's the issue of developing safe and clean energy sources. This is something that the capitalists are not concerned about," Hawkins continued. "Whether it's coal, oil, or nuclear. But working people are keenly interested in this. That's why protecting the environment won't be resolved by trying to improve, to reform, to tame, capitalism. It's completely bound up with the revolutionary struggle for a government of workers and farmers."

Hawkins said that questions like the struggle for a clean environment and against unemployment and imperialist war would be part of the 16th World Festival of Youth and Students scheduled to take place in Caracas, Venezuela, August 5-13 of next year. She urged students to take part. Six students signed up for more information about the festival. Three signed up for

subscriptions to the *Militant*. Altogether, six *Militant* subscriptions were sold at tour events.

Hawkins's visit began with a Militant Labour Forum in London, which 40 people attended. Among them were six people who were attending their first forum. Participants contributed £500 (US\$930) to cover the tour costs.

After her visit here, Hawkins flew to Stockholm for a similar tour in Sweden.

v

BY BJÖRN TIRSÉN

STOCKHOLM, Sweden—"Our campaign continues when the capitalist parties' election campaigns stops. It's a 365-day-a-year task to introduce workers and young people to the communist movement," said Arrin Hawkins in her opening remarks at a November 20 public meeting at the Militant Labor Forum hall here. Hawkins spent four days in Sweden, after a visit to the UK, as part of an international tour to present the Socialist Workers Party campaign in the United States.

"You spoke about miners in the Co-Op mine in Utah fighting for a union. What kind of support do they get from unions and other workers?" asked a worker attending the meeting.

"I just met a meat packer living in Gothenburg, who had led an effort to get a letter from his plant written in three languages and sent to the miners," Hawkins responded. "I also know that this letter of solidarity was well received by the miners in Utah." She also described similar support from other countries and widespread backing for this struggle by unions in the United States, especially in the West—from Operating Engineers, to Longshoremen, and PACE (paper and energy workers union) locals.

"Who pays for your campaign?" a student asked at Farsta Gymnasium, a high school where Hawkins gave presentations at four classes November 19.



Militant/Juan Figueroa

Arrin Hawkins (behind table), Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. vice president, at Stockhold University, in Stockholm, Sweden, November 18. Hawkins was concluding a post-election campaign tour in Europe.

"Unlike the parties of big business, and other capitalist parties too, the communist movement does not get or expect any contributions from the state," Hawkins replied. "We depend entirely on voluntary contributions from workers paychecks as well as from youth, farmers, and others who give because they support what we stand and fight for."

This was also true at the November 20 public meeting, where about 18 people, mostly youth, donated more than 500 kronor (\$72) to help cover the travel expenses of the SWP candidate.

"I think we're becoming more and more Americanized here in Sweden and I think it's a problem," said a teacher at Farsta, reflecting a view commonly expressed by the left in this country.

"Americanism is not the problem," Hawkins said in response. "The problem is called capitalism, and Sweden is an imperialist capitalist country just like the U.S., only weaker."

On November 18, at Huddinge Gymnasium, another high school where Hawkins took part in campaigning, a young woman from the Iranian part of Azerbaijan listened with great interest as Hawkins told

the story about how representatives of Pathfinder Press got a hold of the unique photos in *To See The Dawn: Baku, 1920 First Congress of the Peoples of the East* at an old museum in Baku, in the portion of Azerbaijan that was a part of the Soviet Union. The young woman was a member of an Azerbaijani organization fighting for a united, independent Azerbaijan. She later signed up on the mailing list of the Militant Labor Forum and said she wanted to attend a class on the book *Socialism on Trial* by SWP leader James P. Cannon organized by the Communist League.

During her visit, Hawkins was also interviewed by the Pakistani paper *Workers' Struggle*. The interviewer who lived in Sweden said that his party in Pakistan had recently translated *Socialism on Trial* into Urdu.

At the November 20 public meeting three young people in their teens and early 20s said they wanted to participate in the *Socialism on Trial* classes. A sale of steeply discounted Pathfinder books was very popular. Many people attending the meeting left with big stacks of books.

Juan Figueroa contributed to this article.

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Why Greek rulers refuse to recognize Macedonia

The big-business media try to give the impression that the recent defeat of a reactionary referendum in the Republic of Macedonia, which was part of the formerly federated Yugoslavia, came about because of the benevolence of Washington and imperialist powers in the European Union (see front-page article). Nothing could be further from the truth. Any advances for the rights of Albanians in Macedonia and the broader Balkan region have come about as a result of the gains of the 1945 Yugoslav revolution that still linger on—despite massive imperialist interventions and the murderous wars launched by rival gangs of the Stalinist bureaucracy that ruled Yugoslavia—and recent struggles of Albanians in that republic. In addition, the dispute between the U.S. and Greek governments over Macedonia's name will seem confusing to most readers who follow the capitalist media. For these reasons we reprint below an excerpt on Macedonia from the book *The Truth About Yugoslavia* that sheds some light on these questions. The articles below, which first appeared in the *Militant*, are copyright © 1993 by Pathfinder Press and are reprinted by permission.

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

Readers B.M. and G.K. comment in the letters section this week on *Militant* articles about demands for independence by the Yugoslav republic of Macedonia and the Greek government's opposition to it.

The government of the republic of Macedonia raised the demand for independence following the de facto breakup of Yugoslavia through the ongoing conflict there.

The conflict is a result of decades of bureaucratic rule by the Stalinist regime in Yugoslavia. A deep-going and popular revolution coming out of World War II began to break down the divisions between the peoples of Yugoslavia—whether Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, Albanians, Montenegrins, Macedonians, or others. These divisions were fostered by imperialism and the native capitalists.

Steps through struggle to further the unity of working people were blocked by the Stalinist regime. As a result of the growing social and economic crisis over the past decade, ruling layers in the various regions have been pressing to enhance their own position and access to resources through force and violence.

While great numbers of people in different parts of Yugoslavia have been drawn into the fighting, voices continue to be heard against the war. Thousands of Belgrade students, for example, demonstrated in early March 1992 demanding Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic's resignation for his role in spurring the civil war.

The bureaucratic rulers of the republic of Macedonia have the same narrow goals as their Serb or Croatian counterparts. The attitude of communists toward demands for independence depends on whether a fight for such demands advances the interests of working people in a particular country. What is needed to advance working-class interests is a fight aimed at uniting workers in different parts of Yugoslavia, Greece, Bulgaria, and throughout the region.

A necessary part of such a fight for unity is the struggle against the oppression of any nationality, including the suppression of languages, culture, or religions.

Before World War II, under the rule of King Alexander I, a Serb, Macedonians were forbidden by law to publish books or newspapers in their native language. This was reversed by the Yugoslav revolution, which championed the demands of oppressed nationalities. Following the overturn of capitalist rule in Yugoslavia, the Macedonian language was recognized and in fact it is now written and standardized, contrary to what G.K. asserts. It is a dialect

of the Slavic language spoken in Bulgaria. Working people in the republic of Macedonia fought to preserve their language and to be allowed to use it.

Progressive measures were taken during the initial stages of the Yugoslav revolution to develop the economy of underdeveloped Macedonia. As a result, while industrial output in the more advanced regions of Croatia, Slovenia, and Serbia increased nine or tenfold from 1939 to 1970, in Macedonia the increase was more than thirtyfold.

It was the example of this revolution that the Greek bourgeoisie and other capitalist classes in the region feared. B.M. correctly points out that a blow was dealt to Greek imperialism's plans to conquer Macedonia at the end of World War II.

Hatred for the Yugoslav revolution and what it accomplished comes through even today in arguments raised by spokespeople of the Greek ruling class to justify their opposition to recognition of Macedonia.

For example, in an open letter to the European Community, former Greek minister of culture Melina Mercouri and five other well-known personalities in Greece stated: "You of course are aware of the effort begun earlier and systematized after 1944 with the creation, in the framework of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia, of the so-called state of 'Macedonia.' Its single goal, then and now, was the questioning of the borders of Greece, within which is included Greek Macedonia... with a homogeneous Greek population."

Recent demonstrations in Thessaloniki and in New York, sponsored by the Greek government, raised the slogan "Macedonia was, is, and will remain Greek." This is similar to such slogans as "America for the Americans" or "France first" advanced by incipient fascist currents in the United States, France, and other imperialist countries.

As G.K. points out, there are oppressed nationalities in northern Greece, and indeed throughout the country, including hundreds of thousands of undocumented immigrant workers, many of them from the Balkans. One of these is the Macedonian nationality, comprising about 2 percent of the population of Greece. As B.M. notes [see below], many are treated by the state as "agents of Skopje" (the capital of Macedonia) for attempting to use their language or their culture.

Communists and other fighters in Greece have in the past been charged with "treason"

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Map of the Republic of Macedonia

because they championed demands against the national oppression of Macedonians. One of them was Pantelis Pouliopoulos, national secretary of the Communist Party (KKE), until he was expelled in 1927 for his opposition to the counterrevolutionary course of Stalin. He was jailed twice by the Greek government for his proletarian stance on the Macedonian question—in 1924 and in 1928.



Since the column above appeared in the *Militant* in April 1992, the conservative government of Constantinos Mitsotákis [in Greece] has stepped up its international campaign against recognition of the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia. The social democratic opposition and most trade union officials in Greece have given their full backing to the effort.

On December 9, 1992, more than one million people participated in a rally in Athens to back the government's campaign. "Macedonia has been Greek for 3,000 years" shouted many in the crowd. The absurdity of this slogan becomes apparent when one considers that during this time span millions of people of different nationalities, speaking a spectrum of languages, and living under various social systems, have inhabited the area comprising what is today the republic of Macedonia and northern Greece.

Athens, however, has used such slogans to whip up nationalist sentiments and win backing among working people for its goals. In the course of this campaign the Greek government has carried out sweeping attacks on democratic rights....

The Greek government has continued its nationalist campaign on Macedonia. But recently, under pressure from Washington, Bonn, and Paris, it was forced to accept a compromise. On April 8, 1993, the United Nations Security Council approved UN membership for Macedonia under the name "Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia."

BY BOBBIS MISAILIDES

THESSALONIKI, Greece—A World News Briefs article in the *Militant* noted that the Greek government protested the declaration of independence by the Yugoslav republic of Macedonia, fearing that this "might give rise to demands for rights among the ethnic Macedonian minority in Greece."

The fact is that this oppressed minority has been raising their national demands in Greece for decades. Much like the Kurds, the Macedonians were divided by imperialism and the local capitalists within the borders of what became Bulgaria, Greece, and Yugoslavia. In World War II, Greek imperialism aimed to conquer Macedonia but a deadly blow to this plan was the armed struggle of the Macedonians, which culminated in the formation of their republic as part of the Yugoslav federation in 1945.

With the crushing of the Greek revolution in 1949 and the subsequent sealing of the border, almost every Macedonian family in the province of Florina to this day has relatives on the other side who are not allowed to come to Greece. They are subjected to terror by the police in Greece, who see anyone who speaks Macedonian, who sings their traditional songs, or dances their traditional dances as "an agent of Skopje."

The Greek government has been whipping up nationalist chauvinism to convince working people to look for the wrong enemy. This reactionary campaign, supported by all major political parties, the union bureaucracy, women's and youth organizations, and the church, resulted in a march of one million in Thessaloniki at the beginning of March 1992 around the slogan "Macedonia is Greek."

Class-conscious workers face the task of explaining the imperialist aims of Greek capitalism and, while supporting the just demands of the Macedonians, they must demand: Open the borders to the republic of Macedonia now!

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Election Post Mortems—
“Those who tend to Americans’
mental health are worried about



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the emotional state of the losing side. Beyond the tears shed... they see anger, uncertainty, paralysis and downright denial.”—One in a number of psychiatrists quizzed by the *Los Angeles Times*.

Where the need is sorest—
The Philippine government has declared it will stamp passports of Filipinos “Not valid for travel to Iraq.” The action came after a Filipino working in Iraq was taken hostage by insurgents and then released. According to *Arab News*, Filipino workers protested the travel ban. They declared they would rather take the risk in Iraq than die of starvation at home. The paper added that workers from other poor countries are attracted to jobs at U.S. bases for \$800 a month. Assuming many hours, that works out to less than \$5 an hour.

The ‘open mind’ folks—A

judge in Atlanta, Georgia, was due to hand down a decision in a case filed by the American Civil Liberties Union. The ACLU challenged a violation of the separation of church and state caused by school officials who permitted creationists to paste stickers into biology textbooks on the science of evolution. The “neutral” stickers admonish that evolution is “a theory, not a fact” and should be approached with “an open mind.”

Did they say ‘stoned’?—The news headline read: “Air Force report calls for \$7.5 million to study psychic teleportation.” An Air Force Research Lab officer

explains: “If we can’t turn over stones, we don’t know if we have missed something.”

The economy? Hey, no problem!—Des Moines, Iowa—“Food pantries across the state said the number of people seeking help not only with food but rent, clothing and utility bills have increased. The rush started last summer and included an unusually high number of first-timers. Of the 3,000 families that sought food at eight Des Moines-area pantries last month, 556 were new.”—*USA Today*.

See, things are still pretty good—Roman Coppola, son

of Hollywood director Francis Coppola, was top bidder at a Los Angeles wine auction. He paid \$49,450 for two bottles of 1941 Inglenook Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley wine—the highest price ever racked up for a California wine.

No weeping there—“Tens of thousands of demonstrators marched through Rome in support of a strike by teachers that closed many schools across [Italy]. Education unions say Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi is planning a two percent cut in school personnel, which would cost about 14,000 jobs.”—November 16 news item.

N.Y. housing unit to close

Continued from Page 2

increased over the past several years—to the current official number of 9,000 families—the inhuman conditions in the EAU had become an embarrassment for the city administration.

The new facility will be larger, with shelter space included to eliminate the late-night busing. But the measures the city has announced along with this new center are aimed at placing the burden of skyrocketing rents, unemployment, and other conditions more squarely on the backs of working people.

“For 20 years, the Emergency Assistance Unit has come to represent confusion and pain for vulnerable families applying for temporary emergency housing,” Bloomberg said. “We are ushering in a new day—a day where families in need are treated with the utmost respect and where our efforts are guided by rational policies.”

As part of Bloomberg’s “new day,” the city decided October 19 to bar homeless families from access to long-term federal housing grants. In the past, homeless families used to be the first in line for such grants, which have been the primary way for thousands of working people to escape from the city’s 200-plus homeless shelters and into more stable housing.

The city government is also planning to replace long-term housing assistance with a one-time five-year housing subsidy. This would offer up to \$925-a-month rental subsidy to a single parent with two children, and then gradually decrease the amount each year, eliminating the housing

assistance after five years. The city has stopped offering the long-term vouchers altogether, complaining that they have run out of them.

Much of the reporting in the big-business press presented the surge in homelessness as being caused by those seeking the long-term subsidy, inferring that this was a scam.

“Ever since word leaked out that the homeless get first dibs on Section 8 housing vouchers, families have thronged the city’s Emergency Assistance Unit in the Bronx,” the New York *Daily News* complained. “For anyone willing to stomach the indignities of the shelter system, there was a pot of gold—of sorts—at the end of the journey: a government-backed lifetime housing subsidy.”

In fact, the surge in homelessness—a more than 60 percent increase since 2001—has nothing to do with the word leaking out about a “pot of gold.” The jump coincided with the final cut-off of the federal Aid to Families with Dependent Children five years after the Clinton administration ended “welfare as we know it.”

Some have pointed to the similarities between the Clinton-engineered assault on federal Social Security and the New York City government’s new housing assistance plan. “This is the first proposal for a major new housing program in New York that includes a time limit, similar to the one that has attached to cash public assistance since welfare reform passed in 1996,” wrote one columnist in the *City Journal*, a quarterly magazine published



Militant/Paul Pederson

Workers wait in August for word on housing outside N.Y. Emergency Assistance Unit.

in New York. “The section 8 pot of gold is now empty.... The time has come to make good life decisions, including paying the rent rather than depending on Uncle Sam to do it.”

This falsely presents the Section 8 voucher as a free lunch. The vouchers simply capped rent to a percentage of your income—usually 30 percent. In New York and many cities across the United States, working people often spend closer to half of their income on housing, increasing the

grind caused by the steady decrease in real wages.

Bloomberg’s plan will also bar from the shelters homeless families who come back after having been turned down once by social workers. “While the new system may be gentler on families applying for the first time, it will be much more skeptical of families who have applied in the past and been told they already have adequate housing, often with relatives,” the *New York Times* reported November 17.

U.S. offensive in Fallujah

Continued from page 6

they would boycott upcoming elections in protest.

The U.S. military said a number of “high-interest individuals” were among 32 armed opponents of the Allawi regime and the U.S. occupation arrested in an offensive by a combined force of U.S., Iraqi, and British troops in a region south of Baghdad known as the “Triangle of Death.” Dozens of Iraqi police and National Guardsmen have been executed by armed groups in the area, said the *Washington Post*. One Iraqi reporter who visited the area said the burning bodies of four Iraqi policemen whose car was set afire after they were killed remained in the road for a day. More than 5,000 troops were involved in the action dubbed “Operation Plymouth Rock,” an apparent reference to its proximity to the U.S. Thanksgiving holiday.

January election date not assured

Under the circumstances, it is not clear that the projected Iraqi elections will take place as planned early next year.

The Iraqi election commission has set January 30 as the date for elections. But just a few days earlier a summit of Iraq’s major political parties urged the government to postpone the elections until “order is restored” in the Sunni Triangle, said the *International Herald Tribune*.

During a November 19 press briefing, Lt. Gen. Lance Smith, was asked whether the elections could be considered legitimate if Iraqis in the Sunni Triangle were not able to vote due to the fighting. He said many

Sunni candidates are likely to be included in slates put up by Shia-led parties across the country. The results, he said, “would be adequate representation by Sunnis to feel or look like it was legitimate representation for all the parties involved.”

During a November 22 summit of foreign ministers from Arab countries in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, a number of government representatives from the Middle East indicated they will not back an Iraqi election if it is not assured that residents from the entire country can take part, including the Sunni Triangle.

A two-day meeting of representatives of all political parties in Iraq failed to agree on a joint list of secular candidates for the elections. “We decided to enter the elections on individual lists,” said Nashirwan Mustapha, a senior official of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, reported the *Financial Times*.

Meanwhile, Washington got another boost in its campaign to legitimize its occupation and the transition it projects to a “democratically elected” Iraqi government. Jean-Pierre Jouyet, president of the Paris Club, said it has agreed to forgive up to 80 percent of Iraq’s foreign debt. The Paris Club is a group of the wealthiest imperialist creditor nations. Baghdad’s debt will be reduced from \$38.9 billion to \$7.8 billion. The plan will be implemented in three steps over four years. Paris led efforts for an eight-year debt forgiveness plan. U.S. Treasury Secretary John Snow had insisted on a faster time frame and for forgiving 90-95 percent of Baghdad’s debt.

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —



December 7, 1979

The Ford Motor Company—one of the largest American investors in South Africa—claims that it is an “equal opportunity” employer. But on November 21 it showed its true face, firing all 700 Black workers at one of its plants in Port Elizabeth, the center of the country’s auto industry. The workers had been on strike to protest Ford’s racist policies.

Within a day, the General Tire and Rubber Company, another American firm operating in Port Elizabeth, fired 625 Black workers who were fighting for trade-union recognitions.

The response of these two American companies to the demands of Black workers is little different from that of any other foreign or domestic firm operation in South Africa.

The Ford Motor Company, however, has tried to maintain that its economic involvement in South Africa plays a “progressive role” by supposedly helping to undermine apartheid.

When company Chairman Henry Ford II visited South Africa in January 1978, he rejected demands by numerous Black liberation groups that Ford withdraw from South Africa, claiming that “we do more for the people of South Africa by staying here and providing equal opportunities.”

Under pressure from Black workers in South Africa, who make up more than three-quarters of the industrial workforce, and from antiapartheid organizations in the United States, Ford did institute some

minor reforms, such as integrating the factory cafeteria.



December 6, 1954

During the preliminary laudatory meetings leading up to the main celebration of Sir Winston Churchill’s eightieth birthday, the octogenarian boasted about his 1946 Fulton, Mo., speech that launched the “cold war,” and revealed for the first time a secret order he issued as head of the war-time British government showing how early he began to plan for World War III. The statement, made Nov. 23 is as follows:

“Even before the war had ended and while the Germans were surrendering by hundreds of thousands, I telegraphed to Lord Montgomery, directing him to be careful in collecting the German arms, to stack them so that they could easily be issued to the German soldiers whom we should have to work with if the Soviet advance continued.”

This order, as Churchill himself stresses, was issued in April 1945, that is, before the surrender of either Germany or Japan!

Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery, who was in command of the Northern Army Group of the Allied Expeditionary Force in Germany at the time, confirmed Churchill’s revelation. According to reporters, Montgomery appeared surprised that such a damaging admission had been made by the war-time Prime Minister, but he repeated over and over, “It’s true.”

EDITORIAL

Defend Lynne Stewart!

By placing attorney Lynne Stewart on trial for “providing material support for terrorist activity” in the course of representing Sheik Omar Abdel-Rahman—himself framed up on “terrorism” charges—Washington seeks to send a chill down the spine of any attorney considering taking on such a case. If Stewart is convicted, the capitalists and their government will have made it more difficult for unionists, farmers, Black rights fighters, and others to defend themselves from charges of “violent” or “terrorist” activity during a strike or protest.

The government’s case is based in part on putting Stewart on trial for expressing her political views. In questioning her on the witness stand in early November, the prosecutors tried to prove that Stewart is a willing conduit for “terrorist” activity because she said she is “revolutionary” and stated that ridding the world of “the entrenched voracious type of capitalism” cannot come about nonviolently.

The violence-baiting from the mouths of U.S. prosecutors reeks of hypocrisy. At the same time as the government lawyers were questioning Stewart, Washington was in the midst of a steamroller assault on Fallujah in central Iraq. The brutal U.S. war and occupation of Iraq has taken thousands of lives. It is one of many examples of the lengths the U.S. rulers will go to defend their position as the dominant imperialist power and win out in their conflicts with capitalist competitors over the division and revision of the world.

In attempting to prove its charges against Abdel-Rahman’s attorney, the prosecution is also taking a swipe at freedom of the press. As the trial opened this summer, the government issued subpoenas against four journalists who had interviewed Stewart. Because newspaper articles alone are rightly regarded as hearsay and can’t be used as evidence in court, the government is trying to force the reporters to testify under oath and affirm the quotations in

their articles to establish the content of Stewart’s political views. Such a step would set a dangerous precedent and should be vociferously opposed.

Washington’s lack of evidence against Stewart is highlighted by the prosecutors’ own admission that government wiretapping of her conversations with Abdel-Rahman form “the backbone of the government case.” This flagrant violation of lawyer/client privilege is also a direct attack on workers’ ability to defend themselves against government persecution.

The U.S. government has a history of going after lawyers that defend those whom Washington targets as its political enemies. In the *Dennis* case in the early 1950s, for example, leaders of the Communist Party USA (CPUSA) were convicted of “conspiracy” under the thought-control Smith Act. As soon as the trial ended, their attorneys, also from the CP, were framed up on contempt of court charges, imprisoned, and then disbarred. (The Stalinist party undermined its own defense in the case because a decade earlier it had cheered on the prosecution when Washington indicted and imprisoned 18 leaders of the Teamsters union and Socialist Workers Party in the first case brought under the Smith Act.)

Workers and farmers have a lot at stake in opposing the chipping away at civil liberties by Democratic and Republican administrations. The wealthy minority who runs this country is not carrying out sweeping assaults on democratic rights today. Instead, Washington is putting in place laws and establishing legal precedents that lay the groundwork for such assaults down the road, as working people defend ourselves against the bosses’ antilabor offensive and begin to challenge the prerogatives of the capitalist class.

Defeating the government’s case against Lynne Stewart is part of this struggle.

House Republicans scuttle bill on spying

Continued from front page

tive Republicans refused to embrace a compromise because they said it could reduce military control over battlefield intelligence,” said an article in the November 21 *Washington Post*. The bill was drafted largely as a result of the conclusions of the 9/11 bipartisan commission.

Democrats, in particular, used the commission’s hearings to paint themselves as the foremost champions of “homeland defense” and advance their charges that “intelligence failures” under the Bush administration were the reason the government was unable to prevent the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon. Such charges were used to boost the unsuccessful presidential bid of Democrat John Kerry.

The measure would have created a Director of National Intelligence (DNI). It would also have given the new spy chief authority to set priorities for the CIA and 14 other spy agencies, including several at the Defense Department.

Its two chief opponents were reportedly House Armed Services Committee chairman Duncan Hunter, and Judiciary Committee chairman James Sensenbrenner.

According to the *Post*, Hunter said he opposed the bill “because Senate conferees had removed a White House–drafted section ensuring that tactical or battlefield intelligence agencies would still be primarily directed by the secretary of defense, even as they report to the new intelligence director.” Hunter told the *Post* that the version of the bill he helped kill “was elevating for the DNI but detrimental to the defense secretary... a change that would make war fighters not sure to whom they report and translate into confusion on the battlefield.”

Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, reportedly sent a letter backing Hunter’s position.

The U.S. government has been shifting the focus of its spy operations to direct infiltration of adversaries and real-time battlefield intelligence—such as that used in the recent assault on Fallujah by U.S. troops, who called in air strikes and artillery bombardment as they pinpointed enemy positions during battle. CIA “analysts” working largely from their desks in Washington, D.C., have been losing clout.

This process goes along with the “transformation” of the U.S. military posture worldwide toward smaller, more agile, and more lethal units that can move quickly around the globe using bases closer to the theaters of conflict. Within the administration, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld has been one of the main spokespeople for this course, along with Bush.

An article in the November 21 *New York Times* noted that “some legislators said... Rumsfeld had made clear his opposition to the proposed overhaul, which would have stripped the Pentagon of some budgetary control over its vast intelligence operations.” The disputed provisions were seen by the Pentagon as “threatening its budgetary control over intelligence-development, and thus its ability to generate the intelligence needed in war-fighting,” it said.

Statements by many Democrats showed that liberal politicians thought they had a pre-election deal that would sail through Congress and were flabbergasted by this turn of events, claiming that Hunter led a rightist rebellion against a bill that the White House had strongly backed. “I thought it was a fair, tough compromise—the stars and moon were aligned, and these few folks embarrassed the Speaker of the House, embarrassed the President of the United States, and set us back,” said Jane Harman, a ranking Democrat from

California on the House Intelligence Committee.

An editorial in the November 23 *Investors Business Daily* had a different take on the bill’s failure. After the scuttling of the bill, “media wags immediately began talking about a ‘defeat’ for President Bush. It was nothing of the sort,” it said.

“Yes, Bush backed the bill—but he did so in a lukewarm way.... Remember, reform was rushed onto the national agenda shortly after the release of the 9-11 commission’s report last summer,” the big-business daily said.

“Also, the Pentagon hated the bill—and rightly so,” the editorial continued. “It would have deprived them of the ability to run their own spy operations. Why should military chiefs have to beg a new Washington bureaucracy for the intelligence they need to protect us? It makes no sense.”

The Pentagon currently controls roughly 80 percent of the \$40 billion budget for U.S. government spying operations.

Other developments indicate that Rumsfeld’s course is right in step with that of his commander in chief. “President Bush has ordered an interagency group to devise a plan that could expand the Defense Department role in covert operations that have traditionally been the specialty of the Central Intelligence Agency,” said an article in the November 23 *New York Times*. The focus of the review, it continued, “will be whether the military’s Special Operations forces should have a role in paramilitary operations that a special CIA unit carries out.”

The *Investors Business Daily* editors urged taking time to make changes in the structure of the government’s spy operations.

“Besides,” they said, “new CIA Director Porter Goss is in the midst of a top-to-bottom shake-up of the CIA.... Why not give Goss, a former spy and congressman who knows something about both the conduct of spying and the policy issues involved, a little time to do his job?”

According to a front-page article in the November 17 *New York Times*, Goss told CIA employees that their job is to “support the administration and its policies in our work” in a recent internal memorandum. “As agency employees we do not identify with, support or champion opposition to the administration or its policies,” the memo said.

This was directed against numerous CIA operatives who banked their careers on support for Kerry, and who tried to aid the Democratic Party election campaign over the last year through “leaks” and “revelations” that could damage the Bush administration.

Michael Scheuer, for example, is one such “senior CIA analyst.” A 22-year CIA veteran who served as the chief of the Bin Laden unit at the Counterterrorist Center from 1996 to 1999, Scheuer wrote a book that was published this year titled *Imperial Hubris: Why the West is Losing the War on Terror*. Originally released under the authorship of “Anonymous,” the book attacked the Bush administration and was used by liberals to buttress the Kerry campaign. The author’s identity was revealed last June, and Scheuer resigned from the CIA.

Scheuer’s resignation was followed by that of higher-ranking CIA officers. The head of the CIA’s clandestine service, Stephen Kappes, and his deputy, Michael Sulick, resigned November 15. According to the *Times*, they became casualties of Goss’s efforts to “overhaul the agency’s spying operations.”

Chokepoint 2004

Continued from front page

board on the high seas any ships they suspect of carrying “weapons of mass destruction” or materials that could be used for their production and to confiscate their cargo.

This was the 13th such joint operation since the PSI was announced by U.S. president George Bush in a May 2003 speech in Cracow, Poland.

“Our nations are sharing intelligence information, tracking suspect international cargo, conducting joint military exercises,” said Bush nine months later at the National Defense University in Washington, D.C. Taking stock of the gains the U.S. rulers had made in bringing other governments into the PSI, he said, “We’re prepared to search planes and ships, to seize weapons and missiles and equipment that raise proliferation concerns.”

Coast Guard vice-admiral Vivien Crea told reporters in Miami that Chokepoint ’04 “emphasized the sharing of intelligence information in order to improve the ability of these countries to successfully track and take down a suspected vessel.” Aircraft and ships for the operation were provided by Washington, London, Paris, and the Hague. Troops also came from Canada. From Europe, the governments of Denmark, Germany, Italy, Norway, Spain, and Sweden took part. From Asia and the Pacific, the governments of Australia, Japan, Singapore, and Turkey dispatched troops. In addition, the four Latin American governments mentioned above participated.

The U.S. State Department said in a statement that “the purpose of the exercise is to enhance the level of training and interoperability among the agencies of participating countries in carrying out maritime interdictions of weapons of mass destruction, their delivery systems, and related materials.” Washington aimed to use this particular training session to “promote greater awareness” of the PSI in the Caribbean, and “focused on unique operational issues and legal authorities associated with interdictions in maritime chokepoints, such as straits and canals.”

The last naval exercise, Operation Samurai, was held in late October near Japan’s Tokyo Bay off Korean waters. It involved warships from Australia, France, Japan, and the United States. The government of north Korea protested these naval maneuvers as “a reckless preliminary war against DPRK.” U.S. imperialism has made Pyongyang a central target in its “nonproliferation” campaign.

Washington is not trying to forge long-term alliances through the PSI, or to conclude treaties that will commit the U.S. rulers to any particular grouping of governments. “We often say ‘PSI is an activity, not an organization,’” said U.S. undersecretary of state John Bolton in a speech in Tokyo at the time of Operation Samurai. “This is not hard to understand, but is unusual. We think it is a fundamental reason for PSI’s success to date.... Through PSI, we create the basis for action.”

Bolton is in line for promotion to deputy secretary of state, reports the *Wall Street Journal*. In a November 19 editorial, the big-business daily said Bolton “is also the architect of what has arguably been Colin Powell’s most important achievement at State, the very ‘multilateral’ Proliferation Security Initiative.” The *Journal* noted that “one of the attractions of PSI is that countries participate as needed on a voluntary basis.”

Although the PSI is not directed at any single government, said Bolton, north Korea is a target. Washington and its allies “are sending a message to rogue states like North Korea: get out of the proliferation business or risk having your cargoes of terror interdicted, regardless of whether you ship them by land, by air, or by sea.”

During the buildup to the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq and six months prior to Bush’s launching of the PSI, Spanish commandos at Washington’s request boarded a north Korean ship in the Arabian Sea headed for Yemen in December 2002. The ship was carrying Scud missile parts that were not listed on its cargo manifest. Madrid released the ship because such cargo is not forbidden by maritime laws.

In August 2003 the government of Taiwan detained a north Korean ship carrying chemicals used in the making of rocket fuel. According to the *Christian Science Monitor*, Washington informed Taipei of the cargo on board the *Be Gaehung*, which had docked in Kaohsiung Harbor, Taiwan’s largest port. Taiwanese authorities received agreement for the unloading of barrels of phosphorous pentasulfide, and then confiscated the cargo. The action was carried out under bilateral accords between Washington and Taipei.

In his National Defense University speech in February 2004, the U.S. president pointed to the interception of the *BBC China* in October of last year as a model. The German-owned ship was allegedly loaded with parts for centrifuges used to enrich uranium. “After the ship passed through the Suez Canal, bound for Libya,” said Bush, “it was stopped by German and Italian authorities.” Following the seizure, he said, “The U.S. and Britain confronted Libyan officials with this evidence of an active and illegal nuclear program. About two months ago Libya’s leader voluntarily agreed to end his nuclear and chemical weapons programs.”

On Dec. 19, 2003, the Libyan government effectively surrendered a good part of its sovereignty with the announcement that it would dismantle its nuclear and chemical weapons programs and allow United Nations “inspectors” to verify its compliance. The decision came after Washington and London made it clear that the Libyan regime could face a similar fate to that of former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein unless it bowed to U.S. dictates on “weapons of mass destruction.”

Organization of western coal has begun

Socialist miners respond, throw themselves into new openings for unionization

BY BRIAN TAYLOR
AND PAT MILLER

PRICE, Utah—“There has been a dramatic change in coal mining and the potential for union advances in this area over the past year,” said Susan Monroe, a miner in the Price area, who took part in a meeting here of socialists working in coal mines across the country. “It is unlike any other development in the coalfields, anywhere in the country, right now.”

In fact, the organization of western coal has begun, she said.

“There is significant hiring taking place at every mine around Price—union and nonunion alike. The Consol Emery mine has reopened constituting the second union mine in the area,” said Monroe.

“These developments, together with the advances in the struggle of Co-Op miners in Huntington, Utah, for union representation, are breathing new life into the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA),” she continued. (See front-page article.)

“This new reality is beginning to transform the possibilities to build and strengthen the UMWA in the region,” Monroe said.

Socialist workers in coal mines met here November 13–14 to discuss these developments and to organize to throw themselves wholeheartedly into the expanding unionization effort. “We don’t know how long

this period will last, but how we act now is decisive,” Socialist Workers Party leader Róger Calero said.

Hiring, push to get into union mines

At the same time, miners in the Price area are taking advantage of one of the biggest hiring booms in three decades, as the coal bosses are expanding production because of increased demand for coal worldwide and higher coal prices. The number of union miners has grown.

Price is the center of underground mining in the West, with 10 mines currently working in the surrounding counties, and another two scheduled to open within the next year.

Hundreds of workers at nonunion mines are putting in applications at the unionized Consol Emery and Energy West Deer Creek mines. According to several miners, one coal company, Andalex Resources, recently raised the pay of all miners at their three facilities by more than \$1 an hour to nearly \$23 an hour. This is above average union scale. The bosses are trying to stem the flow of experienced workers leaving to get into the union mines. Even with lower pay, union mines are more attractive to workers because of their reputation for better safety standards, benefits, and work schedules.



Militant
Pacific Corp. Huntington Power Plant and Deer Creek Coal Mine in Huntington, Utah. The Deer Creek mine is one of the two union mines in this area. Hundreds of nonunion miners are applying for jobs at these two UMWA-organized mines.

“There is a real change in confidence among miners due to the hiring,” Shirley Burton reported. “A guy I met several times while applying for jobs at a couple of mines

recently got hired. After a long period of looking with no success, you can see the confidence he has now knowing that he got the job and could get one somewhere else.”

Macedonia referendum defeated

Continued from Page 3

Thomas Miller, “I noted the many negative effects that this unilateral U.S. decision will have.” On November 19, a statement from the Greek foreign ministry warned Skopje that Athens will use its veto power to block its entry into the EU and NATO with its current name. Athens also warned that it will take action against Skopje at the United Nations Security Council where it currently holds a seat.

“The EU has the position at this moment that the official name is FYROM,” Dutch prime minister Jan-Peter Balkenende, who holds the European Union presidency, told reporters. “For the time being, we can use this name as we look at the consequences.”

Successive governments in Greece of the social democratic Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) and the conservative New Democracy, currently the governing party, have used the dispute over the name of the Macedonian republic to promote Greek imperialism’s economic and political interests in the Balkans. Greek capitalists are the biggest foreign investors in the Republic of Macedonia. Greek capital

controls majority shares in Macedonia’s OKTA oil refinery and is in the process of building a pipeline from Skopje to Thessaloniki—Greece’s second largest city. Investments have also poured into the cement, food and beverage, tobacco, and telecommunications industries and in supermarket chains.

Athens has hoped to use this economic influence to pressure Macedonia to make concessions, including changing its name. In the 1990s it blockaded landlocked FYROM for 18 months cutting off vital access to the sea and forcing Skopje to agree to change its flag and alter its constitution. Since then, about 40 governments have recognized Macedonia with its constitutional name—including China, Cuba, and Mexico, with which Athens has had friendly relations.

Unlike the early 1990s, when the Greek government and rightist forces organized demonstrations of hundreds of thousands across the country with the slogan “Macedonia is Greek,” this time only one rally of 2,000 took place in Thessaloniki protesting Washington’s recognition of the Republic of Macedonia.

— LETTERS —

Openings in coal

The coverage of the elections and their lessons has been excellent. Likewise the articles and editorials about the Iraq war and the plans of our enemies as they “transform” their military might. I am sure someone will nit pick about one thing or another. I’ll leave that to others.

My favorite article, however, is the one on the new openings in coal, the opening of a second union mine in Utah and the prospect of jobs and union building that now lies before us. That is a great article. It is a call to revolutionary minded youth to join the fight, work side by side with other toilers in beginning the rebuilding of the unions and workers’ consciousness and self-confidence. It is the “what” and the “why” that I signed up for 40 years ago.
Robin Maisel
Waco, Texas

Co-Op coverage

I have been reading the *Militant* for some 45 years and have always been impressed by the honesty, objectivity, and correctness of its reporting.

However, I must now express my discomfort about the November 23 article on the Co-Op mine owners, the Kingston family. Here, the *Militant* has infringed, I believe, on its own high standards.

What has their flouting of bourgeois legality and morals (polygamy, child support obligations) have to do with their oppression of their workers?

I think that reports on this very important struggle should be kept on a strictly political basis.

Bea Bryant
Blenheim, Ontario

[We agree. And we’ll work with our reporters to keep the proper focus on the coverage. —Editor]

U.S. elections

I am a high school student living in Canada, and I have been trusting you as my number one source of information regarding the American elections. Thank goodness that somebody is telling the truth about the pro-imperialist, pro-war warmonger, Sen. John Kerry. Kerry’s platform was in no way different from Bush; if anything, he was more like Bush than Bush himself. I sort

of mean that sarcastically, but really it’s almost true. I think that America needs a political party based on the unions, but be careful. In Canada, we have a party called the New Democratic Party (NDP), based on “labour,” and it is pretty much all for business as usual (capitalism!).

For a month or two now, I have been printing off articles from the *Militant*, and my friends and I have been doing a small reading group at lunch hour. We may be of all different races, but we are united by the fact that our moms and dads sure aren’t rich. Up here, we understand why a lot of working people (who are like our families) in the United States voted for Bush. He didn’t try to talk like some Ivy League snob like Kerry.

Keep up the great work.
Norm P.
by e-mail

Antiworker bias

Your article “Middle-class contempt for workers fuels liberal panic over U.S. elections” (November 23 issue) raised a few questions for me. The article generalized the reasons that the majority of workers voted for the incumbent. What relationship

do these generalizations have to the voting habits of the Black working class and large city workers? These groups seemed to vote overwhelmingly against the incumbent.

How should we interpret the polling for many workers that indicated the impact of “moral issues” on voting motivation and candidate choice?
Kenneth Page
Brooklyn, New York

Key industries

Seems to me you missed two key industries that were tiny or non-existent in Marx’s time and would also quickly bring the whole economy to a halt (Reply to Reader “Are industrial workers becoming irrelevant?” in November 16 issue).

In the electrical generation and distribution industry shut down even a small number of generation plants and the wheels of industry would come to a screeching halt. Electricity has to be generated in real time, which means the bosses can’t stock up in preparation for a strike unless they want to build in extra capacity to the power grids and more generating plants.

The communications industry—

Becoming skilled miners

In response to these developments, socialist miners said they are organizing to develop and expand their mining skills in order to have maximum flexibility and mobility to join the developing struggles in the coalfields.

Price miner Lynn Birwood reported that “bosses are looking for miners with certain skills—like roof bolters.”

John Delaney, a miner from the Price area, noted that having more skills “puts you in a better position on the job. Skilled workers have more authority, that’s how it works.”

Tony Lane, a miner from the Pittsburgh area, said that the socialist miners seek to become competent in as many skills as possible. He noted that “the newest miners at the meeting showed the greatest hunger for learning new skills. We need to broaden this out, make it universal.”

Responding to these opportunities the socialist movement is organizing to expand its work among coal miners and other working people in the West. Coal miners at the meeting enthusiastically adopted this course of action and have begun implementing it.

mail, telegraph, telephone, and Internet—once again functions in real time and any significant halt here would quickly cripple transportation, just-in-time manufacturing, trade, and banking.

While telegraph has been long in decline and cable TV started in the 1950s in rural areas for TV, cable TV now provides Internet, and telephone services beginning to directly competing with the major telephone companies. The phone company unions allowed the Internet portion of the industry to be classified as management positions and have had little success organizing cable TV workers.

SBC, one of the so-called “Baby Bells,” recently announced the elimination of 10,000 jobs through attrition and layoffs.
Kim O’Brien
Willimantic, Connecticut

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.

Snokist strikers march to build support

BY CECELIA MORIARITY

TERRACE HEIGHTS, Washington—"I am very proud we are standing up for what we think is right," said Judith Karnes at a November 20 march and rally here to support the 270 cannery workers who have been on strike against Snokist since September 23. "The support is fabulous!" added Karnes, who has worked at the plant 31 years.

More than 400 striking cannery workers and their supporters had just marched from the Snokist fruit canning plant across the Yakima River bridge near Wal-Mart and back past the plant, shouting their support for the strike. Passersby honked and waved in solidarity along the busy streets. Marchers then returned to the lot across the street from the main entrance to the Snokist plant for a rally and barbecue to celebrate.

Protesters included Teamsters from the area's Del Monte plant, who pack and ship asparagus; members of Yakima Valley Col-

lege Federation of Teachers (YVCFT) Local 1485; United Farm Workers members from the Chateau Ste. Michelle vineyard; union nurses from Yakima Valley Memorial Hospital; and Yakima city employees who are members of AFSCME Local 1122.

On November 12, about 175 people turned out for an evening picket line, organized by Community Members for the Snokist Strikers. Gail Pearlman, an organizer of the group, who teaches English at Yakima Community College in Grandview, told the *Militant* the group organized the expanded picket line "to make it clear the strike has community support." Pearlman said that she and another teacher had invited strikers to their classes to explain why they walked out.

Snokist workers, members of Western Council of Industrial Workers (WCW) Local 3023, have been on the picket line since September 23 to win their first contract,

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Militant/Scott Breen

About 400 cannery workers and supporters march November 20 in Washington State

N.Y. mayor fails to block law on equal benefits to gay couples

BY PAUL PEDERSON

NEW YORK—Mayor Michael Bloomberg has so far failed in his effort to restrict domestic partners—including same-sex couples—from receiving the same benefits as married couples under the city's Equal Benefits Law. A state supreme court judge ruled November 8 that the city government must enforce the legislation.

The measure requires contractors that do more than \$100,000 worth of business in New York City annually to provide health insurance, bereavement, and other benefits to domestic partners—if the company offers such benefits to married spouses. Similar measures have passed in San Francisco, Seattle, and Los Angeles.

City Council member Christine Quinn, the bill's sponsor, told the *New York Times* the law would have a far-reaching effect. There are thousands of companies with contracts with the city that exceed \$100,000 in business, she noted. They include many large, nationwide firms and monopolies with an international reach that are based elsewhere but do business with the city.

The Republican mayor's stance has placed him out of step with a substantial number of leaders of his party nationally. They include President George Bush and California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, who have come out in favor of civil rights for same-sex couples adopted on the state level.

The November 8 ruling was the latest round in a losing battle by the mayor. First, Bloomberg vetoed the bill after it passed in the city council last June. Then, after his veto was overridden by a city council vote of 41-4, he obtained an injunction to prevent the law from being enforced. Bloomberg announced he plans to appeal the latest ruling, saying the measure would be bad for business and that city money should not be used "to advance social issues."

As part of their efforts to turn the Republican Party into a majority party, prominent Republican figures have taken positions in favor of equal rights for gays and lesbians (even while opposing same-sex marriage), oppressed nationalities, and women. These positions are more in line with predominating views in bourgeois public opinion, which reflect gains by previous working-class struggles like the civil rights movement. These stances have drawn the ire of the Republican right wing, which has pressed its case for a "culture war" against such social gains.

"I don't think we should deny people rights to a civil union, a legal arrangement, if that's what a state chooses to do," said Bush in a pre-election interview on ABC TV's "Good Morning America" October 26.

When interviewer Charles Gibson reminded Bush that "the Republican platform opposes it," Bush replied, "Well, I don't. I view the definition of marriage different

from legal arrangements that enable people to have rights."

At the same time, the Bush administration has also used demagogic maneuvers to appease the right wing of the Republican Party and the conservative-minded voters who constitute an important part of the party's electoral base. Bush's position in calling for a constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage this year was an example of this tactic. Bush grandstanded for a reactionary proposal he knew had virtually no chance of success—because a two-thirds majority vote in Congress is required for such an amendment, as well as its adoption by three-quarters of the 50 state legislatures—in order to score points with his rightist supporters.

But on the whole, the Bush administration has distanced itself from the "culture war" approach of the ultraright on this and other social issues. On domestic policy Bush has focused, like his predecessor Clinton, on advancing the main ruling-class offensive to shore up the bosses' declining profit rates: cutting workers' real wages, worsening working conditions, and undermining social programs—like his proposals to "reform"

Social Security. But his administration has not carried out sweeping assaults on rights won on social questions like affirmative action. Bush is not the only prominent Republican to take this approach.

In a November 16 interview on CNN TV's "Larry King Live," California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger reiterated his support for equal rights for gay couples. When asked what he thought about gay marriage, Schwarzenegger told King he agreed with California state law. He described it as everyone having "equal rights and the same rights as a married couple...anything that makes the relationship, you know, strong and also gives them the same rights that a married couple has."

When King asked if the governor's views on social issues put him "out of step with your party," the Austrian-born actor-cum-politician replied, "Well, that is okay to be on the left side of that party because the party is very—has a wide range. All the way from the right, to all the way to the center, to the left. This is what I am—socially more moderate, but I am very conservative when it comes to fiscal policies."

It appears that New York mayor Bloomberg is also beginning to sense the direction in which the political winds are blowing.

Following the legal defeat, Bloomberg announced that the city's pension fund boards will treat city employees in same-sex relationships the same way as those in traditional marriages. Those eligible would be gay couples that received marriage licenses or official civil union status in Massachusetts, Vermont, and several Canadian provinces, among other places.

"All of our city employees deserve to be treated equally regardless of their sexual orientation," Bloomberg told *New York Newsday* November 17. The New York mayor "has said that he goes 'back-and-forth' on whether same-sex marriages should be allowed, but believes that civil unions for homosexuals should confer the same legal rights as marriage," the daily reported.

Newsday also noted that "the mayor's announcement comes as he is locked in a legal battle with the City Council over its attempt to grant benefits to the same-sex spouses of employees of companies that do business with the city."

Hundreds protest closing of L.A. trauma unit

BY NAN BAILEY

LOS ANGELES—More than 1,000 people rallied here November 15 at the King/Drew Medical Center in Willowbrook to protest the plan by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors to shut down the hospital's trauma unit.

"Save Trauma/Save King-Drew" said one placard. "Don't disrespect or underestimate us" read another. Protesters included clerical workers, nurses, and doctors at King/Drew; medical students; high school students; and workers living in Watts, Compton, and Willowbrook—the communities served by the hospital.

Watts is part of South Los Angeles. Compton and Willowbrook are working-class suburbs in the South Los Angeles metropolitan area. About 1.5 million people, heavily Latino and African-American, live here. County statistics indicate that one third live below the official poverty level. The King/Drew Medical Center is the only public hospital that serves this area.

The hospital has been the target of criticism over the last several months for its shortage of nurses, overcrowded emergency room, and errors and lapses in patient care. Although the trauma unit has not been included in the criticisms, the board's proposal is to shut it down to "save" the rest of the hospital.

The rally was one of several that have taken place over the last two months. The actions followed the September 13 announcement by the Board of Supervisors that they intend to close what is the county's

second-busiest trauma facility. This comes on the heels of a steady decline in medical services in the county over the last three years—as cutbacks have led to the closure of 10 trauma facilities in the Los Angeles metropolitan area.

The November 15 rally was followed by a public hearing of the Board of Supervisors. Over 400 people packed the hearing, which was scheduled for three hours but lasted more than six. Speakers included elected officials, representatives of the NAACP, local ministers, hospital workers, and representatives of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 660—the union which represents nurses at King/Drew.

Some pointed out that the hospital was the product of the 1965 Watts riots, when the predominantly African-American community at that time rose up in outrage in a social explosion that involved many thousands. Building a public hospital in an area that had no access to medical care was one of a number of reforms that were implemented to prevent further rebellions by working people.

Some at the hearing also pointed out that the problems that plague King/Drew are also faced by other hospitals—public and private—in the area.

One of the major complaints, for example, the severe nursing shortage at the facility, has been the focus of protests by nurses at King/Drew and other hospitals. County officials acknowledge that the county hospitals are about 1,200 nurses

short of staffing needs.

A state law that went into effect January 1 of this year set limits on the number of patients a nurse can attend to. The current limit is one nurse for every six patients. The ratio is lower for nurses in more specialized units—such as intensive care. In the past month, over 150 nurses at county hospitals have refused supervisors' instructions to take on more patients than the limit allows, citing concern for patient safety. About 20 nurses have been suspended for their defiance. Some arguments with supervisors grew so heated that police were called.

Grace Huguez, a registered nurse in the surgical trauma unit of LAC-USC Medical Center, was one of the workers who protested after being assigned 10 patients, four over the legal limit. "We're barely able to check if the patients are breathing and if their IVs are working," she said. "We don't have time to actually see how they're doing. What about all the other stuff that happens? Can we really catch everything when we have too many patients?"

County nurses have also been working without a contract for a year.

Similar demonstrations have also been announced. One is a December 1 rally at the state capital in Sacramento to protest Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's plan to postpone the implementation of phase two of the Safe Staffing Law. Phase two lowers the nurse-patient ratio to 1 to 5. The demonstration has been called by the California Nurses Association, which has 57,000 members in the state.