

THE MILITANT

SPECIAL FEATURE INSIDE

**Separating myth from reality
on causes and outcome of WW II**

—PAGES 6–9

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MAY 23, 2005

U.S. officials at UN conference press Iran to stop developing nuclear power

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Officials of the governments of Iran and the United States clashed in the opening days of a UN review conference on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The month-long conference takes place every five years. A week after its official opening, representatives of the 180 governments in attendance were still unable to agree on a complete agenda.

Washington is seeking to use the meeting to press its campaign to halt the Iranian government's efforts to develop a nuclear power industry, which U.S. officials assert is a cover for a weapon's development program. Washington is also seeking to use the gathering to ratchet up its pressure on north Korea. The chief U.S. representative to the conference said his delegation would seek a condemnation of north Korea from the meeting.

Countries without nuclear weapons are pressing to focus more of the agenda on the commitments made during the last conference by Washington and other nuclear powers toward a reduction of their nuclear arsenals and testing and development of new nuclear weapons.

Iran's foreign minister, Kamal Kharrazi, said the conference has a special responsibility to review the progress made by nuclear powers, such as Washington, in complying with 13 steps to reduce nuclear arms agreed to at the 2000 conference. Among its provisions were the signing of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty, and a moratorium on test explosions.

"Concerns continue," said Kharrazi, "over

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Utah miners win support for union fight at Colorado conference

BY KATHERINE BENNETT

LAKEWOOD, Colorado—Some 45 representatives and members of immigrant rights organizations and trade unions attended the Mountain Regional Immigrant Worker Strategy Session held May 6 in Lakewood, Colorado. Sponsors included the National Immigration Law Center, Colorado's Immigrant Worker Rights Taskforce, Denver Area Labor Federation, United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) Region 4—Colorado, and the New Mexico Federation of Labor.

The all-day program included speakers and workshops on the rights of immigrant workers. State caucuses also convened to plan future activities.

UMWA Region 4 director Bob Butero, who spoke on one of the panels, described the 18-month-long struggle by miners at the Co-Op mine in Utah to win representation by the UMWA. Three Co-Op miners also attended the conference and set up an information table about their struggle to appeal for solidarity. These miners said a recent news release by a Missouri-based energy distributor shows that the company that owns the Co-Op mine, C.W. Mining, is unable to produce enough coal to meet its contract obligations since it fired most of the UMWA backers at the mine last December, a week before a union representation election.

During a presentation titled "The ABC's of Immigrant Workers' Rights," Tyler Moran from the National Immigration Law Center

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Chauvinist propaganda marks 'V-E Day' events

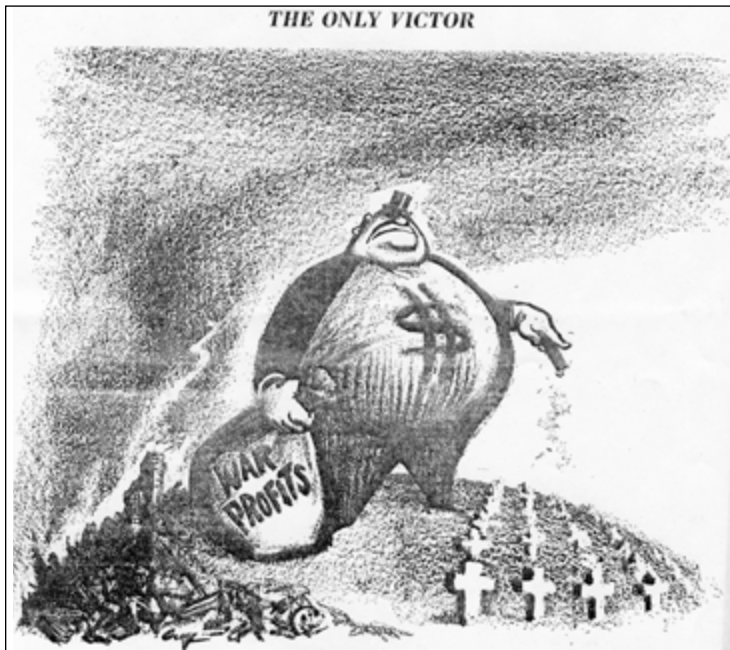
U.S. rulers use it to rationalize imperialist wars today

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Waving the bloody shirt of "the victory of democracy over fascism" in 1945, U.S. president George Bush completed a five-day trip to Europe May 10. Bush joined celebrations of the 60th anniversary of the so-called Victory in Europe Day in World War II. That's when the U.S. armed forces and the rest of the Allied imperialist powers defeated the Axis bloc of competing imperialists in Germany. (For an explanation of the historical background see the feature in the center spread.) Washington and its allies used Bush's tour and the surrounding events to crank up chauvinist propaganda in an attempt to rationalize recent imperialist assaults on Iraq and Afghanistan and prepare for future wars.

The trip included stops in the Netherlands, Russia, Latvia, and Georgia. Visits to the latter two became a source of conflict with the government of Russia, which also used the events to falsify history.

In a May 8 ceremony by a cemetery for some 8,300 U.S. soldiers who died in World War II and are buried in Margraten, Netherlands, Bush sought to tie the U.S. rulers' victory over their imperialist rivals in the second world war to Washington's



Cartoon published on front page of Aug. 18, 1945, *Militant* with banner headline "There Is No Peace!" upon end of World War II.

current foreign policy and military plans carried out under the banner of promoting "democracy."

"We commemorate a great victory for liberty," said Bush. "The world's tyrants learned a lesson—there is no power like the power of freedom and no soldier is as strong as the soldier that fights for freedom. The free and peaceful world that we hope to leave to our own children is inspired by their example." As he spoke, some 3,000 Dutch troops patrolled the area, while NATO surveillance aircraft monitored it from above.

Bush began his trip with a two-day stop in the former Soviet republic of Latvia, where President Vaira Vike-Freiberga awarded the U.S. president the country's "Three-Star Order" medal, calling him a "signal fighter for

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New Jersey: SWP campaigners complete ballot drive in two days

BY VED DOOKHUN

NEWARK, New Jersey—"A political group that advocates the need for labor unions is hoping to rouse a base of voters in the city for this year's general elections in November," says an article on the front page of the local section of the May 9 *Herald News*, a daily published in Paterson, New Jersey.

A photo of Angela Lariscy, the Socialist Workers Party gubernatorial candidate in the state, petitioning to put the socialist slate on the ballot, appears with the article

(see below). Over the May 7–8 weekend, SWP campaign supporters collected 2,100 signatures to put on the ballot Lariscy

What SWP stands and fights for — see page 10

and Michael Ortega, SWP candidate of State Assembly in the 28th District. The response exceeded expectations as 1,870

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Herald News/Elizabeth Lara

The SWP candidate for New Jersey governor, Angela Lariscy, petitions May 8 in Passaic to put socialist slate on the ballot. Photo was published in *Herald News*.

Socialist workers build June 9–11 party convention

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

A weekly series of classes is being held in cities across the United States to help prepare for the 43rd convention of the Socialist Workers Party. The convention will be held June 9–11 on the Oberlin College campus in Oberlin, Ohio.

Socialist workers, Young Socialists, and other working people and youth interested in learning more about the party and attending its convention are taking part in this class series. The study program focuses on two recently published issues of *New International*, a magazine of Marxist politics and theory.

The SWP National Committee has submitted a draft resolution, "Their Transformation and Ours," that the delegates to the convention will be discussing and voting on. The party's National Committee decided to make it publicly available in issue no. 12 of *New International* as part of the political preparations for the convention.

Those participating in the weekly classes have been discussing this draft resolution together with readings from "Capitalism's Long Hot Winter Has Begun," the lead article in *New International* no. 12. The latter is the political report, presented by the party's national secretary, Jack Barnes, that was discussed and adopted by the 2002 SWP convention.

"Their Transformation and Ours" analyzes the sharpening conflicts between the world's imperialist powers fueled both

by the opening stages of a world depression and by the most far-reaching shift in Washington's military policy and organization since the U.S. rulers' preparations for World War II.

Noting that labor remains at center stage of U.S. politics, the resolution also "weighs the importance of the beginning political transformation of militant workers who, impelled by these momentous changes, are taking the lead to reach for, organize, and use union power," Barnes explains in the introduction to *New International* no. 12. "As the social consequences of capitalist crises grow, as inevitable political conflicts

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‘V-E Day’ propaganda

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freedom and democracy in the world.”
Several days earlier, Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov had sent a formal letter of protest to U.S. secretary of state Condoleezza Rice objecting to Bush’s plan to visit Latvia and Georgia.

In remarks presented in Riga, Latvia’s capital, Bush hailed the role played by Washington in backing the ouster of the pro-Moscow government in the former Soviet republics of Georgia, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan, and their replacement with ones backing stronger ties with the U.S. government. “The idea of countries helping others become free, I hope that would be viewed as not revolutionary but rational foreign policy, as decent foreign policy,” said Bush.

On May 7 Bush held a news conference in Riga together with the presidents of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia, the three former Soviet Baltic republics, all of which had joined the European Union and NATO a year ago. Bush said “free and open and fair” elections should also take place in the Russian republic of Belarus. The government of Aleksandr Lukashenko, Belarus’s president, is often described in the capitalist media as “the last dictatorship in Europe.” Russian president Putin has backed Lukashenko’s regime.

A report filed from Riga by the Associated Press described the staged character of Bush’s visit. “Though the official welcome to Bush was warm and the select crowds at his appearance enthusiastically waved American flags alongside Latvian ones, much of this picturesque capital was locked down for Bush’s visit,” AP reported. “Shops and restaurants were shuttered and, since the government recommended that residents leave town, the winding cobblestone streets were virtually empty of people.”

The governments of Lithuania and Estonia boycotted the celebration in Moscow after Putin refused to condemn the occupation of the republics by the Stalinist government of the Soviet Union. The president of Georgia, Mikhail Saakashvili, also declined to attend in a dispute over the continued presence of a Russian military base in that republic.

In August 1939, Soviet premier Joseph Stalin signed a nonaggression pact with the Nazi regime of Adolf Hitler, dividing up Poland and giving Moscow control over Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. In the following months the three Baltic countries were forced to accept the presence of Soviet bases, leading to their total occupation in mid-1940. Shortly thereafter, they were

annexed to the Soviet Union. During World War II, German forces overran and occupied the three republics, until Soviet troops recaptured them toward the end of the war.

An article entitled, “The Second World War is still being fought,” by Adam Krzemiński, editor of the Polish magazine *Polityka*, first published in the March 23 issue of the magazine, reflected the differing attitudes toward the causes and outcome of World War II among governments in Europe. “To all intents and purposes there were as many Second World Wars as there were nations,” Krzemiński said.

“Apart from that, among the truly victorious powers, only Great Britain and the USA did not change front during the war, which does not mean they did not change their attitudes to Poland. Moreover, with the exception of Poland most of the countries involved in the war actually changed sides, above all France, which under the Vichy governments withdrew from the war, considerably augmenting German military capability. Until 1941 the USSR was allied to the Third Reich; to some point so were Italy, Hungary, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Romania, and Finland.”

In a May 9 military parade in Moscow to celebrate the Allied victory in World War II,



Georgian and U.S. presidents in Tbilisi, Georgia, a former Soviet republic, May 10.

Bush joined 57 government officials. These included Putin, German chancellor Gerhard Schröder, French president Jacques Chirac, Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusconi, Japan’s premier Junichiro Koizumi, and China’s president Hu Jintao.

Some 27 million people died in the Soviet Union during the second world war. Workers and peasants there made enormous sacri-

fices in beating back German imperialism’s invading armies, which aimed to overturn the only workers state in existence at the time and reestablish capitalism in the Soviet Union. As the featured article in the center spread explains, the toll was magnified because of the policies of Stalin’s government, including Moscow’s decapitation of the Red
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Washington: no nuclear development for Iran

Continued from front page
the research and development of new non-strategic and low yield nuclear weapons.” The Bush administration has asked Congress for money to study the feasibility of the development of “nuclear bunker buster” bombs. “It is unacceptable,” Kharrazi said, “that some tend to limit the access to peaceful nuclear technology to an exclusive club of technologically advanced states under the pretext of non-proliferation.”

The 35-year-old treaty provides cover for the imperialist powers in Washington, London, and Paris, as well as Moscow and Beijing, to have nuclear weapons, but bars other nations from acquiring them. It also subjects governments—primarily those of semicolonial countries—to a range of requirements, including regular reports and inspections of their nuclear research and energy facilities.

Last November Tehran suspended uranium enrichment—a step in the manufacture of nuclear fuel for power generation as well as weapons—as part of an agreement

with Berlin, Paris, and London, in exchange for access to trade and modern technology. Under pressure from Washington and the European imperialist powers, the Iranian government has also agreed to allow unannounced inspection of its nuclear facilities by the UN International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

But Kharrazi said Iran insists on its right to “all legal areas of nuclear technology, including enrichment, exclusively for peaceful purposes.”

Kharrazi lambasted the extensive restrictions that have been enforced by the IAEA against Iran, a signatory to the NPT, while Israel has been given unrestricted access to nuclear technology and possesses a significant nuclear arsenal. Tel Aviv, which has never signed the NPT, has refused to acknowledge publicly its nuclear arsenal.

In April, the U.S. government announced plans to sell 100 “bunker buster” bombs to Israel, potentially the first sale of the weapon to a foreign country. The sale of the bombs, conventional warheads designed to penetrate the earth and destroy underground facilities, were widely viewed as a direct threat to Iran.

In February the *Washington Post* reported that the U.S. military has been flying surveillance drones over Iran for nearly a year to seek evidence of nuclear weapons programs and detect weaknesses in Iran’s air defenses.

The small, pilotless planes, which penetrated Iranian airspace from U.S. military facilities in Iraq, use radar, video, still photography, and air filters designed to pick up traces of nuclear activity to gather information that is not accessible by satellites, the officials said. The aerial espionage is standard in military preparations for an eventual air attack and is also employed as

a tool for intimidation.

In his statement to the conference, U.S. assistant secretary of state Stephen Rademaker accused Iran and north Korea of secretly enriching uranium to produce nuclear weapons. Rademaker said that any diplomatic agreement between Iran and the EU governments must include an end to Iran’s enrichment of uranium and the dismantling of equipment and facilities for that purpose.

Rademaker also called on the governments represented at the conference to endorse a seven-point U.S. government plan to “criminalize proliferation-related activities.” Most of the seven points are outside the formal framework of the NPT. Among them is the Proliferation Security Initiative, under which Washington and its allies claim the right to board and inspect on the high seas any vessel suspected of carrying so-called weapons of mass destruction.

One of the recommendations from the conference held five years ago was that the nuclear powers would provide countries without nuclear arsenals, who are parties to the NPT, an assurance not to use nuclear weapons against them. The recommendation was to be discussed and acted on at this year’s conference, but so far Washington has balked. “Both the Clinton and Bush administrations have taken the position that that would be a bad idea,” said Rademaker.

“We want to be creative with the tools we have at our disposal,” added Richard Grenell, a spokesman for the U.S. delegation.

The White House has proposed a ban on sales of enrichment and reprocessing technology for uranium to countries other than the dozen or so that already have it. Instead, countries like Iran would supposedly be guaranteed fuel for nuclear power plants from the powers that produce it.

THE MILITANT

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Martin Koppel, left, SWP mayoral candidate in New York, campaigns in Upper Manhattan.

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

How Cuban volunteers aided Vietnamese in expanding Ho Chi Minh Trail in 1970s

The following is an article that appeared in the May 1 Juventud Rebelde, a daily newspaper published in Havana by the Union of Young Communists of Cuba. It consists of interviews with Roberto León González, a retired colonel of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR), about his participation in a secret Cuban internationalist mission in 1973–75 (under the supervision of Cmdr. Raúl Díaz Argüelles of the FAR's "Tenth Directorate") to help the Vietnamese expand the Ho Chi Minh Trail. This was the trail used by the Vietnamese rebels to move materiel and personnel from the country's north to the south in fighting the U.S. invaders. Ho Chi Minh was the central leader of the Vietnamese Communist Party of the national liberation movement in Vietnam.

The article was published under the headline, "The Trail of the Jungle: Testimony of Colonel (retired) Roberto León González, who led a group of Cubans in one of the great secrets of the Vietnam War." It is part of a series of features that have appeared in the Cuban press. Trabajadores, the newspaper of the Central Organization of Cuban Workers, for example, has a special website devoted to the 30th anniversary of the Vietnamese victory.

We are publishing the article as part of a series to celebrate the 30th anniversary of this important victory for popular humanity. The first installment was a statement by the Socialist Workers Party National Committee published on May 1, 1975, the day after the last U.S. troops withdrew from Vietnam. The statement, which was reproduced in the May 9 Militant, said: "The Socialist Workers Party hails this victory, which has come after decades of heroic struggle against a succession of imperialist powers. The triumph is a powerful reaffirmation of what May Day itself represents to the workers movement: worldwide solidarity of all the oppressed. This solidarity found powerful expression in the international antiwar movement, the strongest component being right here in the United States, where the American revolutionists played a major role."

The SWP statement also pointed out that, unlike the example set by the Cuban revolutionaries, "The victory of the Vietnamese people over imperialism was long delayed by the policies of Moscow and Peking.... [which] refused from the beginning of Washington's escalation to provide adequate material aid for the Vietnamese rebels or to take the initiative in organizing international mass actions in their behalf. This betrayal was condemned in 1967 by Che Guevara, who warned that the Vietnamese were 'tragically alone' in their struggle and that in addition to the guilt of U.S. imperialism, 'they are likewise guilty [those] who at the decisive moment vacillated in making Vietnam an inviolable part of socialist territory.'"

Translation and subheadings are by the Militant.



BY LUIS RAÚL VÁZQUEZ MUÑOZ

The droning of the plane made him sleepy. But his mind returned to the figure of Commander Raúl Díaz Argüelles telling him, "No one can know about this, León." Díaz Argüelles then turned to him, with his eyebrows knit, before repeating slowly and in a low voice: "No one, León. Do you understand? No one."

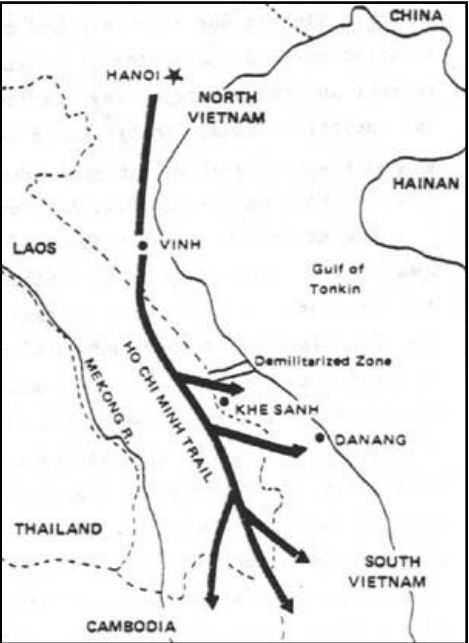
And so it was. It was known only by those who needed to know, including the group of 23 Cubans who now were aboard the flight. And even among them the secret had remained. They were traveling under the pretext of being civilian construction workers, and the only weapon each man was carrying was a machete hidden in his luggage.

In any case, the questions were there, and Commander Pablo Roberto León González must have imagined what they were. These began at the end of September 1973, when León was summoned to the Tenth Directorate of the Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces. There Argüelles gave him instructions.

In November they were sent 43 Vietnamese. For six months León's men showed them the mountain roads of Pinares de Mayarí, and, at the La Coca School, in



Left, Vietnamese liberation fighters in Saigon during fall of U.S. puppet regime, April 1975. Right, map of Ho Chi Minh trail used to transport materiel and troops.



Campo Florido, teaching them all the secrets of building roads. Nevertheless, on the firm orders of León, the Cubans attending them did not ask the questions that were eating away at each one.

Nor did the Asians, with their impenetrable smiles and their silent walk, mention the war. Therefore the unknowns, together with the questions about who they were and why they were in Cuba, kept the Cubans in a limbo of complicity that no one broke.

It was precisely in Hanoi, the capital of North Vietnam, where León felt the first alarm.

The date was August 11, 1974. Right when they landed. León's second in command, Mayor Justo Julián Chacón López, told him about it. Chacón, engineer Enrique Silva Galiano, and spare parts specialist Orlando Prado Ledo had arrived earlier to explore the zones of the South. Everything was going well, but the hotel where they were staying—the Ki Liem—was teeming with Cuban specialists in the most diverse fields.

A group of them asked, "And who are you?"

Chacón smiled. "Us? We're baseball players."

The technicians' mouths dropped. "Baseball players?"

"Yes yes, baseball players."

"And I suppose you've come to teach baseball to the Vietnamese?"

Chacón nodded his head. "Yes yes, of course."

The Cubans remained silent. Finally one of the specialists shrugged his shoulders and said, "Damn! That's real good!!"

The most guarded secret

Never again did they ask. And no one could have imagined that this group of Cubans had come to broaden the Ho Chi Minh Trail, one of the most guarded mysteries of the Vietnamese during the war.

It was started in 1959, and for 15 years they converted it into a system of jungle trails through which platoons of soldiers slipped southward to sustain the struggle for the reunification of the country. The Americans were obsessed with it. They marked its possible route on their maps, carpeted with bombs the forests that hid it, planted thermal sensors in the jungle to detect the movement of men. Nevertheless the Vietnamese continued to pass through.

Fidel learned about it in detail on the night of September 16–17, 1973. He was sleeping, after returning from the Southern Front. He was awoken by Prime Minister Pham Von Dong and the commander of the army, General Giap, and on a map they detailed the Trail's 16,000 kilometers. Later they asked to have their technicians receive training in Cuba, for equipment to broaden it, and for Cuban instructors in the field. To each request the Cuban leader said yes, with a smile.

Two months later 43 soldier-engineers left for Cuba, where they would be attended to by MINFAR in the Campo Florido school. Although they left for Moscow in civilian clothes, at the airport in Rabat, Morocco, U.S. intelligence photographed

them and thought they were a group of tank crew members going to Havana to receive courses about the new Soviet tank model that the Vietnamese would be launching into combat.

It was one of so many planted false stories that made those implicated in the secret catch their breath. Nevertheless, the tensions did not take long to surface. These began at the port of Haiphong in North Vietnam on September 24, 1974, when the boat *Imias* docked, carrying equipment purchased from the Japanese. The captain came ashore, concerned.

"What happened?" León asked. "In Tokyo we nabbed an intruder in the storage room," the sailor said. And his voice became more serious. "At the very least they sabotaged the shipment."

A specter in the port of Haiphong

And the specter of *Le Coubre* returned. On the ship and all around it, only the men necessary remained, waiting for the Cuban and Vietnamese sappers who searched every millimeter of the ship and each bulldozer before it was unloaded. By October 11 the cargo was ashore.

Once the last-minute details were solved—among them, requesting that Cuba send the lubricant needed to get the equipment moving, since North Vietnam did not have the type required—the bulldozers, the trucks, the movable cranes, and everything else, in its majority, was put on a train for the district of Vinh. From there it was taken in a caravan of over 100 giant vehicles driven by Vietnamese operators who had crossed the 17th Parallel for Quang Tri province, in the Southern Front.

A Cuban, on learning that they would be moving along 250 kilometers of roads riddled by bombs, lamented that they "would be suffering more" than if they were actually being bombed. But they got there, and immediately classes began, which included the use of the mobile laboratories, which had also been brought from Japan on board the *Imias*.

To reach the students, León and his 22

men had to travel two kilometers toward the Ben Hai River. They boarded canoes with outboard motors, which negotiated the current by zigzagging between rocks sticking up in the water, or skirting around boulders hidden below the surface. Later they climbed a cliff, and in a peaceful clearing surrounded by the jungle, they came to the school's cabins.

It seemed the most unprotected place in the world, were it not for the squadrons of soldiers who suddenly appeared in single file along the forest trails, almost without making a sound, then disappearing without leaving a trace, and without changing the voice of the translators and the impenetrable expression of the students.

Nevertheless, despite the peaceful haven, the marks of war were close by. These arose from all sides while the practical classes were being done, and while asphalt was being spread along the kilometers indicated by the Vietnamese command.

"From all sides, one collected pieces of metal shrapnel," León recounts. "You could fill trucks with what you dug up. Other times it was huge steel balls, and it was explained to us that these had been parts of cluster bombs. Once we encountered one of these huge bombs that had remained buried, unexploded, and had fins at its point.

"But the biggest fright was one day when one of the bulldozers was expanding a trail prior to laying down the road. The vehicle suddenly lurched forward, and this set off an explosion. The blade and the arms of the bulldozer went flying. The Vietnamese who was driving it got down stunned. He walked a few small steps, as if sleepwalking, and collapsed. First he fell down on one knee, then braced himself with his arm, falling little by little onto the ground, without anyone being able to help him get up again."

Smiles in a void of death

The Ham Rom bridge seemed like an 80 meter arm, half twisted, but reluctant to fall into the river passing below. León saw lines of villagers passing by smiling, carrying supplies. "Here they shot down 116 planes," he heard. And he turned to face the officer who was accompanying them on the tour.

He asked for an explanation, and the uniformed man told him that the Americans had attacked the bridge mercilessly. Nevertheless, to reach it they had to make a nosedive into a canyon formed by three hills, which the Vietnamese filled with anti-aircraft batteries to thus form a curtain of fire.

The officer extended his arm: "They made their nose dives and could be seen very clearly, with all the painting on their fuselages. Pointing to the void, he stated: "When they passed through here, they were turned into balls of fire that let off sparks on all sides."

León watched him attentively. He had the same smile as did all his compatriots. It seemed that Vietnam was the country of happiness. He suspected this when he saw the women of the Han Nam district, who were walking down interminable rows, dressed in black, along the sides of the mountain loaded with baskets full of clay to repair by hand the floodgates of a

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For Further Reading

Out Now!
A Participant's Account of the Movement in the U.S. against the Vietnam War
by Fred Halstead

The fight for a political course to organize working people, GIs, and youth and help lead growing world opposition to the Vietnam War. Gaining momentum from the mass struggle for Black civil rights at home, together with the unyielding revolutionary resistance by Vietnamese national liberation fighters, the antiwar movement helped force Washington to bring the troops home, altering the dynamic of the class struggle in the United States. **\$30.95**

Revolutionary Strategy in the Fight against the Vietnam War
by James P. Cannon
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Militant Fighting Fund gains new endorsers

BY PAT MILLER

SALT LAKE CITY—Backers of the Militant Fighting Fund in the western coalfields have been making progress in building support for the fight by the *Militant* and Socialist Workers Party to defend themselves against a harassment lawsuit by Utah mine bosses.

At the May 6 Mountain Regional Immigrant Worker Strategy Session held in Denver, many of the 45 participants received information about the Militant Fighting Fund. Materials about the C.W. Mining lawsuit against the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), 16 individual Co-op miners, several newspapers, including the *Militant*, and other unions and organizations that have backed the Co-Op miners union-organizing struggle were displayed on an information table. Bill Estrada, one of three Co-Op miners who attended the gathering, spoke in the final session of the conference about the Co-Op miners’ fight to unionize and the attempt by C.W. Mining to use the courts as one of the company’s weapons to break the struggle for a union.

The *Militant* newspaper has regularly reported on the Co-op fight. Because of its accurate reporting of the miners’ side of the story the paper has become a special target of the mine owners. One-third of the lawsuit document filed by C.W. Mining in September 2004 consists of quotations from the *Militant*, all of which are purported to be defamations against the company. The Co-Op mine bosses claim statements by the miners about conditions that led the miners to fight for a real union were all lies. The mine owners allege that other persons,

organizations, or newspapers that repeated what the workers had to say are guilty of defaming the company.

During the immigrant rights conference in Denver four people signed endorsement cards. They include Daniel Rivera of the New Mexico Federation of Labor and Gustavo Maldonado from the Mountain West Regional Council of Carpenters. Pilar Carrillo from the Rights for All Peoples organization and Collen Breslin from El centro humanitario para los trabajadores—two Colorado immigrant rights organizations—also endorsed. Many others took endorsement cards and copies of the Militant Fighting Fund brochure with them.

The same weekend, *Militant* supporters from Price, Utah, attended the annual Cinco de Mayo celebration in Grand Junction, Colorado. Thomas Acker, a professor at Mesa State College, endorsed. He said he will work on getting an invitation for someone to speak about the Co-Op miners struggle and the fight against the harassment lawsuit at a meeting of a local peace and justice organization and at a class he will be teaching in the fall.

A table set up about the C.W. Mining lawsuit generated many inquiries at another Cinco de Mayo celebration in Craig, Colorado. Two reporters from the local media stopped by to find out what the Militant Fighting Fund was all about. Both said they would try to convince their editors to run something about the case.

“There’s definitely a place for papers like the *Militant*, which are unabashedly on the side of the workers,” said one of the reporters. “This is a question of free

Utah miners win solidarity in Colorado

Continued from front page

described how government agencies and federal laws are used to attack the rights of immigrant workers. She said the “Internet and databases is a new frontier. One example is how the Social Security Number Verification System (SSNVS) allows employers to electronically verify the Social Security numbers of their employees.” Moran added that this “is a pilot program with approximately 80 employers participating, but the Social Security administration plans to expand it nationwide in 2005.”

Butero spoke on the panel “Key Issues for Immigrant Workers and Labor Unions in the Region.” He said that the fights of immigrant workers are part of the early history of the UMWA. He invited everyone to attend the June 5 Ludlow monument services to be held in Ludlow, Colorado. Striking miners had set up a tent colony in Ludlow, near Trinidad in southeastern Colorado, he said. On April 20, 1914, Colorado militiamen, coal company guards, and thugs attacked the colony. Eighteen men, women, and children were killed—many of them Mexican, Greek, and Italian immigrants.

A monument to the Ludlow strike depicting a miner, a woman, and a child was vandalized two years ago. The vandals decapitated the statues. At the ceremony this year the monument will be restored to its original state. Donations came in from around the world to help pay for the \$80,000 restoration.

Butero then described the Co-Op miners’ union-organizing battle. He said the miners were working in an underground coal mine near Huntington, Utah, were paid \$5 to \$7 an hour, and had no decent benefits or basic rights. Wages for underground coal miners in the United States average at least \$17 an hour.

The miners contacted the UMWA for help and the company began suspending and harassing the miners, Butero said. “After one miner was fired, the miners stood up and said we are not working until you put him back to work,” he said. On Sept. 23, 2003, some 75 miners, mostly immigrants from Mexico, were fired by C.W. Mining for backing this fired worker.

The miners turned the lockout into a strike, setting up picket lines near the Co-Op mine’s entrance. Following a 10-month strike, during which they won widespread support from the labor movement in the West and beyond, the miners won their

jobs back. “A week before Thanksgiving the National Labor Relations Board issued a back-pay order and said that no family member of the company could vote in the union election,” Butero said. On December 9, the company fired most the workers again, claiming they did not have proper work documents. The miners have repeatedly told the press they had worked for years with the same documentation, which the bosses claimed had become an issue on the eve of the union certification vote.

“The exploitation of immigrants is an ongoing problem,” Butero said. “This is not an immigration issue, it is an employment issue. And if you don’t help all workers, you help no workers.”

Three Co-Op miners—Bill Estrada, Humberto Miranda, and Alyson Kennedy—set up a large display of photographs of their struggle at the conference. These miners said they were able to talk to many of the participants about their fight and how this struggle has led to a discussion among miners in Utah about the need to organize other mines throughout the western coalfields.

The Co-Op miners said their determination to press for winning reinstatement and UMWA representation has had an impact on C.W. Mining’s ability to produce coal.

U.S. rulers use ‘V-E Day’ for chauvinist propaganda

Continued from Page 2


Army command and the demobilizing consequences of the Stalin-Hitler pact.

In his remarks, Putin tied “V-E Day” to the U.S.-led “war on terrorism” today. “Faced with the real threat of terrorism today, we must therefore remain faithful to the memory of our fathers,” he said. “It is our duty to defend a world order based on security and justice and on a new culture of relations among nations that will not allow a repeat of any war.”

The Moscow event was largely staged for the media and invited guests. Some “veterans desperate to join the parade were turned down by security guards,” said the Associated Press. “I was badly wounded in battle fighting for the Soviet motherland. Don’t I have the right to be here?” Pyotr Komarov, 79, told an AP reporter.

The following day, Bush addressed tens of thousands of people in Tbilisi, Georgia,

Participants at forums in Toronto, Montreal contribute \$5,600 to Militant Fighting Fund



Militant photos by Heidi Rose

SWP National Committee member Joel Britton (left), and Communist League in Canada leader Michel Prairie, supporter of communist movement Marie-Claire David, and Pathfinder Press president Mary-Alice Waters (above, from left) were part of panel at May 8 forum in Toronto celebrating publication of new French-language edition of *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions*. Responding to a fund appeal by Britton, the 50 people at this forum, and those at a similar one in Montreal on May 6, donated \$5,600 to the Militant Fighting Fund.

speech.” The journalist for TV Channel 27, a local station, did an interview with supporters of the Militant Fighting Fund for the evening news.

At a Militant Labor Forum later that evening in Craig, supporters of the Co-Op miners’ fight, free speech, and freedom of the press gathered to discuss the stakes involved in the case. Carmen Sanjurjo, a teacher and union member from the Denver area, became an endorser of the Militant Fighting Fund and took literature to give to fellow union members. She said she hopes to get more endorsements for the campaign among her co-workers. Nearly \$400 was contrib-

uted to the Militant Fighting Fund there.

In Salt Lake City, supporters of the Militant Fighting Fund were invited to give a presentation about the Co-Op miners struggle and the Militant Fighting Fund to the May meeting of United Steelworkers (USW) Local 8-578. “About a dozen union members from the Holly and Flying J oil refineries attended,” said Paul Mailhot, who gave a presentation at the meeting. “These refinery workers have helped the Co-Op miners over the past year and a half of their struggle, and many of them have read the regular coverage in the *Militant*. One union officer commented how he had read the *Militant* for years and it can be counted on in a struggle.”

“Several motions were made at the meeting, and all passed unanimously,” said Mailhot. “The local endorsed the Militant Fighting Fund campaign, donated \$100 to the effort, and decided to post material about it on all the union bulletin boards in the plant. A hat was also passed at the meeting and people pitched in \$221 more. In addition to the endorsement of the union local, three officers also endorsed individually.”

Another USW local at the Kennecott Copper Smelter near Salt Lake City heard a report about the C.W. Mining lawsuit on May 6, reported Teri Ross, who made the presentation. “About 15 copper miners were at that meeting, and many of the younger workers especially were nodding their heads at the outrageousness of C.W. Mining’s actions. After the meeting, three union members approached USW member John Langford, who works at the smelter and is a supporter of the *Militant*, to let him know they planned to become endorsers of the case.

Katherine Bennett from Price, Utah, and Teri Moss from Salt Lake City contributed to this article.

New address for Militant Fighting Fund

P.O. Box 520994
Salt Lake City, UT 84152-0994
MilitantFightingFund@yahoo.com

Socialist workers build convention

Continued from front page sharpen between and within classes, and as probes to restrict political and democratic rights used by working people increase, these vanguard militants will join with other workers to resist accelerated employing-class assaults in the plants and the political arena, at home and abroad.”

These resolutions serve to help revolutionists internalize this changing world reality and to act today on its implications for building a party of communist workers.

The class series also includes readings from “Our Politics Start with the World,” the feature article in *New International* no. 13, and other materials from that issue. In New York and some other cities the classes are being organized with simultaneous translation for Spanish-speaking participants. This is facilitated by the publication of both issues of the Marxist magazine in Spanish in *Nueva Internacional*. The syllabus for the classes, including the readings in both English and Spanish, is available in a special *International Education Bulletin*.

Concurrent with the classes, branches of the Socialist Workers Party are organizing preconvention discussion sessions on the resolution and other documents submitted by the party leadership as well as written contributions to the *Discussion Bulletin*, which is open to all SWP members. The preconvention discussion will culminate with every branch electing delegates to the national convention.

Most sessions of the delegated convention will be open to invited observers. Those attending will include Socialist Workers Party members, Young Socialists, supporters and friends of the party, and workers and youth who want to get more involved in the activities of the socialist movement. Over the last year, the party and Young Socialists have reached out with “Socialist Workers election campaigns, *Militant* and *New International* sales campaigns, work to build the U.S. delegation to the world youth

festival in Caracas this summer, and work in the trade unions and other mass work,” said SWP National Committee member Róger Calero. “All this has resulted in a significant number of individuals becoming interested in or more involved with our movement. We are inviting all of them to the convention.”

Among those attending the convention will be a number of students and young workers who are planning to go to Caracas, Venezuela, in August for the 16th World Festival of Youth and Students. Taking part in the SWP convention will be the best political preparation for revolutionary-minded youth to join more effectively the discussions and debates on the big political questions in world politics that will take place at the youth festival, said Argiris Malapanis, who has been centrally involved in organizing the U.S. delegation to the Caracas festival.

Socialists are organizing the class series and preconvention discussion as they join in working-class struggles and campaign to sell *Militant* subscriptions and the twin new issues of *New International* in workers districts, on union picket lines, at campuses, and among co-workers. In many cities they are running Socialist Workers Party candidates for state and local office, presenting a platform in the interests of working people, and organizing petition drives to get the socialist slates on the ballot (see page 10).

At the same time, SWP supporters have been active in an effort to get the two new issues of *New International*, as well as the full range of Pathfinder titles, into retail bookstores and libraries.

At the convention, the deliberations of the delegates will be complemented by activities for all participants. These will include classes, meal-time discussions on questions under discussion, and film showings, as well as other social and recreational activities.

Those interested in attending the Socialist Workers Party convention can contact the nearest branch of the party.



Militant/Ted Leonard

Laura Garza, Socialist Workers Party candidate for city council at-large in Boston, campaigns at May 8 rally in opposition to white supremacist action.

2 weeks, 431 ‘Militant’ subs to go, All out to make the goal!

BY PAUL PEDERSON

With two weeks remaining in the *Militant* subscription campaign, 431 subs are needed to make the 1,350 goal. A special effort over the next 12 days can bring the drive home—in full and on time—by the May 22 deadline. This includes sales on the job and at factory gates, campaigning for Socialist Workers Party candidates, regional teams, and calling everyone whose sub is about to expire to renew now.

Alongside the subscription campaign, partisans of the *Militant* and its sister Spanish-language magazine *Perspectiva Mundial* have been campaigning to meet their quotas on sales of the new issues of the Marxist magazine *New International*. This campaign will culminate with efforts

to sell hundreds of copies to youth attending the 16th World Festival of Youth and Students in Caracas, Venezuela, August 7–15. In the first month and a half of the five-month effort sales of the two new magazines have already reached 56 percent of local quotas.

Socialists in Des Moines, Iowa, have kept themselves on top of the chart through steady sales efforts. Through tabling at two different Cinco de Mayo celebrations, the opening of the local farmers’ market, a table in a workers district in Des Moines, and at a Militant Labor Forum on the first weekend of May, they signed up nine subscribers. They also sold three copies of the two new issues of *New International* as part of a total of \$347 in socialist literature sold off a table at a conference on racism that drew 500 people at Central College in Pella, Iowa, reported Mary Martin.

The same weekend, SWP campaign supporters in New Jersey petitioning to put on the ballot Angela Lariscy and Michael Ortega—the party’s candidates for governor and state assembly in the 28th district, respectively—were also successful in combining the ballot effort with *Militant* sales. Ved Dookhun reported that petitioners sold six *Militant* subscriptions and more than \$200 in Pathfinder books.

Similar efforts across the United States and other countries can help bring the drive home.

\$42,000 needed in 2 weeks to meet Militant Fund goal

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Partisans of the *Militant* and its sister monthly magazine in

Spanish *Perspectiva Mundial* in Los Angeles continue to lead the way in contributions to the spring fund drive. They have sent in \$8,120 putting them at the top of the chart, at 90 percent of their quota. They are joined by partisans of the socialist newsweekly in Birmingham and Boston.

The funds are needed to pay for electricity, rent, telephone, equipment maintenance, printing, and shipping. Preparations are also under way for another reporting team to Venezuela at the end of June.

Two weeks ago, the *Militant* didn’t have enough funds to meet its financial obligations since the pace of contributions from readers—upon which the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* depend to sustain their publication—had been behind the first half of the fund drive.

Once staff members got on the phone with supporters around the country to explain the situation, donations picked up—exceeding \$15,000 each of the last two weeks, compared to a weekly average of \$3,900 the previous four weeks.

The *Militant’s* flatbed scanner broke down a week ago, forcing the staff to go to Kinko’s to scan graphics, like those reproduced in this issue, at greater financial cost per print and allocation of time. Replacing the scanner, which was not in the budget, will depend on whether readers can help raise the \$1,400 needed by exceeding the \$90,000 fund goal.

Last week, the sixth of the drive, \$15,390 was received, bringing the total collected to more than \$48,000. Another \$42,000 must be collected during the remaining two weeks to meet the \$90,000 goal by the May 22 deadline.

“We sent in a big batch of checks for the Militant Fund today express mail to arrive in New York tomorrow by noon,” said Cecelia Moriarity from Seattle the day before this issue went to press. Partisans of the socialist newsweekly there are talking to “everyone we can,” she said. “We will send what we pick up *más pronto* and continue talking to people.” Seattle supporters sent in \$1,400 last week.

Militant supporters in San Francisco report that they now have pledges that surpass their quota. They expect to pick up another \$2,200 by the end of the week to send in express mail and they are talking with every reader who has made a pledge

to ensure that it is sent in right away.

This kind of efforts are needed everywhere. Please send your contribution now. Checks or money orders should be made out to the *Militant*, earmarked “Spring Fund Drive,” and sent to the *Militant* at 306 W. 37th St., 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.

\$90,000 Militant Fund 3/26–5/22: Week 6 of 8			
	Goal	Paid	%
AUSTRALIA	750	180	24%
CANADA	1,230	500	41%
FRANCE	300	100	33%
ICELAND	200	20	10%
NEW ZEALAND			
Auckland	1,750	1,002	57%
Christchurch	800	131	16%
SWEDEN	800	339	42%
UNITED KINGDOM	700	0	0%
UNITED STATES			
Los Angeles	9,000	8,120	90%
Birmingham	1,300	1,170	90%
Boston	3,300	2,676	81%
Tampa	1,500	1,075	72%
Craig, CO	1,800	1,250	69%
Houston	3,500	2,345	67%
Omaha	355	233	66%
Price, UT	2,400	1,550	65%
Newark	3,750	2,345	63%
Salt Lake City	600	375	63%
Detroit	2,500	1,510	60%
San Francisco	9,500	5,595	59%
Atlanta	4,300	2,375	55%
New York	11,000	5,891	54%
Washington	3,000	1,421	47%
Seattle	6,000	2,600	43%
Des Moines	1,100	425	39%
NE Pennsylvania	1,500	525	35%
Twin Cities	4,800	1,506	31%
Miami	1,400	425	30%
Pittsburgh	2,500	700	28%
Chicago	4,000	1,085	27%
Philadelphia	3,000	800	27%
Cleveland	1,000	233	23%
Other	700	200	29%
Totals	90,335	48,702	54%
Should be	90,000	67,500	75%

New International sales campaign March 26 – August 15			
Country	Goal	Sold	%
NEW ZEALAND			
Auckland	50	39	78%
Christchurch	20	12	60%
N.Z. total	70	51	73%
UNITED KINGDOM			
Edinburgh	35	25	71%
London	120	85	71%
UK total	155	110	71%
SWEDEN	40	26	65%
UNITED STATES			
Tampa	60	55	92%
Omaha	32	28	88%
Washington	100	68	68%
Chicago	100	66	66%
Cleveland	40	26	65%
NE Pennsylvania	40	25	63%
Miami	70	43	61%
Seattle	90	53	59%
Los Angeles	200	114	57%
Atlanta	100	56	56%
Detroit	60	32	53%
New York	250	131	52%
Houston	100	50	50%
Pittsburgh	100	48	48%
Craig, CO	40	19	48%
Boston	120	53	44%
Newark	125	52	42%
Philadelphia	75	31	41%
San Francisco	185	76	41%
Twin Cities	105	41	39%
Des Moines	80	31	39%
Price, UT	65	25	38%
Birmingham	50	13	26%
Salt Lake City	15	2	13%
Other		72	
U.S. total	2202	1210	55%
CANADA	120	63	53%
AUSTRALIA	50	26	52%
ICELAND	32	11	34%
Int'l totals	2669	1497	56%

'Militant' Subscription Drive April 2–May 22 Week 5 of 7			
Country	Goal	Sold	%
SWEDEN	20	17	85%
NEW ZEALAND			
Auckland	35	29	83%
Christchurch	15	12	80%
N.Z. total	50	41	82%
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	40	35	88%
Edinburgh	20	14	70%
UK total	60	49	82%
AUSTRALIA	30	23	77%
UNITED STATES			
Craig, CO	20	18	90%
Los Angeles	100	88	88%
Washington	55	48	87%
Omaha	25	20	80%
Tampa	30	23	77%
Des Moines	50	38	76%
San Francisco	25	19	76%
Atlanta	40	29	73%
Boston	60	43	72%
Chicago	65	46	71%
New York	115	80	70%
Newark	70	48	69%
Seattle	35	23	66%
Twin Cities	70	45	64%
NE Pennsylvania	40	25	63%
Houston	50	29	58%
Price, UT	50	28	56%
Detroit	28	15	54%
Miami	65	27	42%
Pittsburgh	50	20	40%
Birmingham	25	9	36%
Cleveland	35	9	26%
Philadelphia	50	12	24%
Salt Lake City	10	2	20%
U.S. total	1163	744	64%
CANADA	60	36	60%
ICELAND	17	9	53%
Int'l totals	1400	919	66%
Goal/Should be	1350	964	71%

Strengthening anti-imperialist character

Separating myth from reality about the causes and outcome of World War II

The following is a letter from the Young Socialists in the United States to the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY) and the Venezuela National Preparatory Committee for the 16th World Festival of Youth and Students, to be held August 7-15 in Caracas, Venezuela. The letter, signed by Argiris Malapanis, Olympia Newton, and Jacob Perasso, was written in response to the request by the leadership of WFDY and Venezuela NPC in mid-March for comments on the proposed program for the youth festival.

In consultation with the Young Socialists, the Socialist Workers Party leadership agreed to draft the reply. The letter explains why the YS and SWP opposed dropping the initial plan to dedicate the culminating day of political conferences and seminars to defense of Venezuela in face of escalating U.S. imperialist pressure, and to focus that day instead on the theme: "Anti-Fascist People's Victory—60 Years after We Continue the Struggle against Imperialism and War."

The letter was distributed to delegates at the Third International Preparatory Meeting for the world youth festival that took place in Lisbon, Portugal, April 22-24, and the political points raised in it became part of the discussion at the meeting. Delegates at that gathering decided to dedicate the last day of the festival, August 15, to Venezuela, adding an international solidarity conference with Venezuela to the program that day. The political theme of August 14 was set as "60 Years since Anti-Fascist People's Victory in World War II: The Struggle against Imperialism, Fascism, and War Today."

We publish the letter, and an accompanying article by Steve Clark, as part of this series, which appears regularly this year—the 60th anniversary since the end of World War II—to tell the truth about the second worldwide interimperialist slaughter.

Endnotes can be found on page 9.



April 9, 2005
New York

TO THE WORLD FEDERATION
OF DEMOCRATIC YOUTH
AND THE VENEZUELA NATIONAL
PREPARATORY COMMITTEE

Dear Comrades,

This letter is in response to your request



January 23 rally in Caracas to oppose U.S. threats against Venezuela. Protesters also denounced Colombian regime for violating Venezuela's sovereignty by bribing Caracas cops to capture and take to Colombia an opponent of that government.

in mid-March, addressed to all the partners of the festival movement, for feedback on the guidelines of the program for the 16th World Festival of Youth and Students. We've already indicated our strong support for other aspects of the program, but we do want to say a few words about the new proposal contained in that letter, that is, the proposal to dedicate August 14—the culminating, and thus most prominent, day of political conferences and seminars—to the theme: "Anti-Fascist People's Victory—60 years after we continue the struggle against imperialism and war."

At the second International Preparatory Meeting in Hanoi in February, the Venezuela National Preparatory Committee, the host committee, proposed a schedule devoting that final day of festival conferences to Venezuela. Delegates from the Communist Youth of Portugal, backed by several other delegates from Europe, proposed altering that schedule by doubling up the Venezuela theme with closing events on the final day of the festival. Several delegates who spoke (from the Socialist Youth League of Japan, Young Socialists of New Zealand, and Union of Young Communists of Cuba) expressed concerns and indicated they thought the proposal by the Venezuela NPC was stronger.

The proposal by the Portuguese comrades was not adopted but taken under advisement for future consideration.

We too are convinced that the aims of the Caracas festival—built around its slogan: "For Peace and Solidarity, We Struggle against Imperialism and War!"—are better served by maintaining Day 8 as an opportunity for the host country to give delegations a concrete feel for the deep-rooted anti-impe-

"The 60th anniversaries of 'V-E Day' & 'V-J Day' are being used by the U.S. imperialist rulers as opportunities for an orgy of chauvinist war propaganda."

rialist struggle there, whose defense in face of Washington's accelerating threats grows more pressing by the day. Replacing the Venezuela theme along the lines proposed in the March letter weakens the worldwide effort to unite the broadest layers of students and youth around the very real struggles we confront today. Venezuela is a special target of U.S. imperialism's confrontationist course, and this poses additional dangers for the people of Cuba and throughout the Americas. Focusing the concluding day of festival conferences on support to Venezuelan national sovereignty in face of these threats will represent a powerful political statement by all the delegations.

We hope that for these reasons the revised schedule will be reconsidered, and that we will return to the program dedicating Day 8 to Venezuela.

* * *

There is value, of course, in separating myth from reality about the causes and the outcome of World War II on the sixtieth anniversary of its end. Unless this is done, we are disarmed in face of the chauvinist campaign of the imperialist powers to advance their political and military aims today. Even more, unless we draw the lessons from this history, we will be condemned to repeat the errors that have cost the world's toilers so dearly. There are a number of political points we are developing at public forums and other meetings that we believe are central to this discussion.

1. Orgy of imperialist war propaganda

The sixtieth anniversaries of the so-called Victory in Europe Day ("V-E Day") and Victory over Japan Day ("V-J Day") are already being exploited by the rulers in the United States and other imperialist countries as an opportunity for an orgy of chauvinist propaganda. Similar to what they organized

during and after the fiftieth anniversary activities a decade ago—using "patriotic" spectacles, TV documentaries, movies such as *Saving Private Ryan*, and books such as the modestly titled *The Greatest Generation*—the U.S. rulers this year are seeking to rationalize their assaults against Afghanistan and Iraq and prepare for future wars by waving the bloody shirt of "the victory of democracy over fascism" in 1945.

The U.S. government's "World War II 60th Anniversary Committee," announced last year by Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, is organizing and cosponsoring activities across North America, Europe, and the Pacific to "acquaint or reacquaint all Americans with the significance of World War II to our nation and the world." Calling the war "the pivotal event of the 20th Century," the committee's brochure asserts that "the enduring legacy of World War II is reflected in the faces of those who served, the alliances that were formed, the many technological advances [ask the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki!], and the continued rise of democratic reform throughout the world."

The committee recently announced that during President George W. Bush's May 6-10 European trip, he will visit the Netherlands American Cemetery in Margraten in order to "honor the shared sacrifice of millions of Americans and Europeans to defeat tyranny, and mark the growth of democracy throughout the continent." President Bush, they noted, will also travel to Moscow "to participate in another World War II commemoration ceremony and to meet President Putin. The President will conclude his trip with a visit to T'bilisi, Georgia, to underscore his support for democracy, historic reform, and peaceful conflict resolution."

These imperialist-organized "commemorations" falsify history. They cover up the crimes against the greatest victims of World War II: the toilers of the Soviet Union, working people in the imperialist countries of both the Allied and Axis alliances, and peasants and workers throughout the colonial world.

The imperialist victors, above all Washington and London, downplay and at the same time attempt to justify their decision—for the first time in modern warfare—to carry out the systematic mass murder of civilian populations, both in Germany and Japan, as a "necessary" and "legitimate" method of war. The British air force firebombed Hamburg and other German cities in 1943. U.S. and British planes did the same to Dresden in 1945. In these raids Allied forces deliberately targeted working-class housing, suffocating or incinerating several hundred thousand German civilians. Washington's firebombing of Tokyo, Osaka, Kobe, and dozens of other cities in the opening months of 1945 killed more Japanese civilians than were massacred in the subsequent atomic horrors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.¹

(Washington has not yet repeated its barbaric and inhuman use of nuclear weapons, but it emulated what was done to the people of Dresden and Tokyo across broad swaths of Korea and Vietnam. And the U.S. rulers, in the bloody effort to hang on to their domination, are preparing a "transformed" armed forces today to repeat this as often and "effectively" as necessary.)

It is impossible to assess either the causes of World War II, or its consequences for the exploited and oppressed the world over, without recognizing that it was actually three wars in one.²

First, it was the second interimperialist slaughter in a quarter century waged over the redivision and plunder of the world. The victory in that war by Washington, London, and their allies over Berlin, Tokyo, and Rome did nothing to weaken, let alone eliminate, the worldwide system of imperialist oppression and capitalist exploitation, which is the social root of the march toward depression, fascism, and war that have continued to confront humanity to this day. U.S. finance capital used the war to consolidate its position—economically and

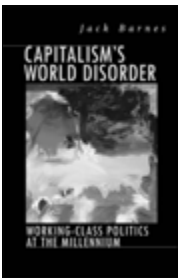
For further reading

Capitalism's World Disorder

Working-Class Politics at the Millennium

by Jack Barnes

"Fascism conquered in Europe on the corpses of defeated revolutions. Whether it will once again conquer depends on one thing: whether a proletarian combat party—with a leadership that is genuinely revolutionary, communist, and working class—can be built in time." This book presents a political course to built such a party at the opening of the 21st century—at the early stages of a world depression and stepped-up drive toward imperialist wars. Also available in Spanish and French. **\$24**



The Changing Face of U.S. Politics

Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions

by Jack Barnes

"The SWP's founding convention in 1938 decided on a turn to industry and the industrial unions as the foundations on which all other accomplishments would be built.... This turn was essential to prepare the party to stand up against intensifying bourgeois pressure as the imperialist ruling classes headed toward World War II." This book recounts how the SWP, from the late 1970s through today, has carried on that communist political continuity in word and deed. Also available in Spanish and French. **\$23**



"1945: When U.S. Troops Said 'No!'"

by Mary-Alice Waters, in *New International* no. 7. Also includes: "The communist antiwar program, 1940-1969." **\$12**

"Washington's 50-year Domestic Contra Operation"

by Larry Siegle, in *New International* no. 6. Also includes: "The Second Assassination of Maurice Bishop" by Steve Clark. **\$16**

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Center of Caracas world youth festival

World War II

militarily—as the world’s mightiest (and, we should add, final) dominant imperialist power.

There were sharply opposed views within the working-class movement toward that second interimperialist war and its outcome. The Communist Party and its youth group in the United States, for example, like its sister parties around the world, supported Washington’s war and welcomed the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. For two days in a row, the *Daily Worker* featured editorial cartoons celebrating the knock-out punches being dealt the residents of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the people of Japan. They hailed “the old one-two,” referring to the U.S. nuclear bombing and the Soviet Union’s declaration of war against Japan that same month. Those blood-drenched days of August, in the words of a *Daily Worker* headline, were “The Super-Duper Week.”

The Socialist Workers Party and young socialists, which opposed Washington’s imperialist war aims and efforts, had a different response to the atomic annihilation of the people of those two Japanese cities. The *Militant* denounced the crime against humanity and its issue of August 18, 1945, carried the banner headline, “There Is No

“World War II was three wars in one. First, it was the second inter-imperialist slaughter in 25 years waged over the redivision and plunder of the world.”

Peace!”³ The accuracy of that historical fact has been amply confirmed in blood since the end of World War II by imperialist-organized wars, military interventions, or rightist coups in Greece, China, the Philippines, Korea, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, Iran, Guatemala, Egypt, Cuba, Congo, Indonesia, the Dominican Republic, Lebanon, Syria, Chile, Nicaragua, Grenada, Panama, Yugoslavia, Somalia, Haiti, Afghanistan, and Iraq, to name just a few of the better-known cases.

2. Defense of the Soviet Union

Within World War II was also a historic war to defend the Soviet Union, to preserve the state property, economic planning, and related social conquests that workers and peasants fought and died for in making the Bolshevik-led Russian Revolution of October 1917. That revolution, unlike the U.S. Defense Department’s false claim about their victory in World War II, truly was “the pivotal event of the 20th Century.” The Red Army’s victory at Stalingrad in early 1943 over the invading forces of German imperialism—at the cost of the lives of some one million Soviet soldiers and civilians—was a turning point not only in the struggle to defend the USSR but against imperialist oppression and domination worldwide.

In the years leading up to World War II, U.S. capitalism faced the decision of whether to seek to crush the Soviet workers state before or after establishing its dominance

over its imperialist rivals in Europe and Asia. U.S. and British imperialism chose to take on Berlin and Tokyo first, hoping the Soviet Union would be so devastated by the German imperialist invasion that it could be brought down in the war’s aftermath. Once the Axis had been defeated, Washington, London, and other imperialist powers lost no time in launching a global crusade against “communism” at home and abroad. Among their central aims was to roll back the October Revolution and restore the dominance of capitalist social relations throughout the USSR. This was registered in the rapidity with which the U.S. rulers shifted between 1945 and 1947 from an alliance with the Soviet Union to the escalated buildup of a military machine equipped by the late 1950s with sufficient nuclear capacity to kill humanity many times over.⁴

The Soviet toilers’ successful defense of their conquests was achieved despite the reversal by the regime of Joseph Stalin of the Bolsheviks’ proletarian internationalism. Following Lenin’s incapacitating stroke in 1923, the bloody course of Stalin’s bureaucratic regime corroded the foundations of the Soviet workers state and demoralized the vanguard of the working class internationally (ultimately leading to the collapse of the Stalinist apparatuses across Eastern and Central Europe and in the USSR itself between 1989 and 1991). The Moscow-imposed ultraleft “Third Period” course of the German Communist Party at the opening of the 1930s—refusing to fight for working-class unity, for a united front with the Social Democratic Party to defeat the rise of Nazism—set up the workers for the disastrous ascendancy in 1933 of Hitler’s National Socialist movement. The Nazi regime established itself without the workers movement firing a shot.

Stalin’s subsequent lurch to imposing a Popular Front strategy on Communist parties across Europe and worldwide—subordinating the class interests and organization of labor and its allies to programmatic and even governmental alliances with imperialist parties deemed “antifascist” or friendly to Moscow’s conjunctural diplomatic needs—foreclosed revolutionary prospects in France and Spain, opened the way to fascist regimes there, and thus made the onset of a second, even more devastating interimperialist slaughter inevitable by the close of the 1930s.⁵

These obstacles to defense of the Soviet Union were compounded manifold by the trials and executions of the top command of the Red Army during the Moscow frame-up trials of the late 1930s.⁶ The beheading of

the Soviet Union’s armed forces, with tens of thousands of officers purged, was followed by the demoralizing and demobilizing political consequences of the Stalin-Hitler Pact signed in August 1939, including Stalin’s refusal to acknowledge Berlin’s preparations to invade the USSR until well after Wehrmacht Panzer divisions smashed their way across its borders in June 1941.

It was not until the 1959 victory of Cuban workers and peasants over the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship that a revolutionary internationalist leadership once again came to power, one that recognized that defense of the toilers’ gains depends not only on their political consciousness, military readiness, and armed mobilization, but is also indissolubly linked with advancing revolutionary struggles by the oppressed and exploited the world over. As the program of the Communist Party of Cuba adopted at its First Congress in 1975 explained, the defense of the revolutionary conquests of the Cuban people

starts with “subordination ... of the interests of Cuba to the general interests of the struggle for socialism and communism, of national liberation, of the defeat of imperialism and the elimination of colonialism, neocolonialism and all forms of exploitation and discrimination.” That is the policy Cuban revolutionaries have followed from Vietnam to the Middle East and southern Africa, from Grenada and Nicaragua to Venezuela and elsewhere today.

3. Anticolonial revolutions

A third inseparable conflict within what is generally called “World War II” was the exploding wars of national liberation by colonial peoples across Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and the Americas. Foremost among these national liberation struggles was the nearly decade-long resistance by the people of China against occupation by imperial Japan. That was a struggle of such

Continued on Page 8



Left, front page of the Aug. 18, 1945, *Militant*. Right, headlines and editorial cartoons that appeared in the *Daily Worker*, newspaper of the U.S. Communist Party, in August 1945, hailing the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by Washington.

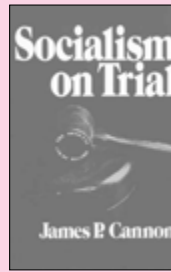


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Separating myth from reality on World War II

Continued from Page 7

magnitude and blood that protests demanding of Tokyo a public apology, justice, and restitution continue to rage today.

Other colonial peoples, too, took advantage of the conflict among their respective imperialist overlords (both in the Axis and Allied blocs) to advance their battles for national sovereignty, independence, land redistribution, and labor rights. As the war headed toward its conclusion, these movements were strengthened and inspired by the victory of the Soviet Union, as well.

Especially where the imperialist slave masters were Allied powers (the reality in the big majority of cases), freedom fighters pressed forward their battle against colonial or neocolonial domination despite charges—inspired both by the imperialist colonizers imposed on them for decades, and by the Soviet government and its political followers—that they were “splitting” and “sabotaging” the struggle against fascism. Independence fighters in India continued their mobilizations against British colonial rule throughout the war. Puerto Rican Nationalists, Irish Republicans, and Quebecois independence supporters refused conscription to serve as cannon fodder in the armies of their oppressors.⁷

During the war neocolonial governments across the Americas divided. Most backed the Allied forces—including the regimes of Fulgencio Batista in Cuba, Anastasio Somoza in Nicaragua, and Getulio Vargas in Brazil. Others, at least during the opening years of the war, remained “neutral” in sympathy with the Axis—including the governments of Argentina, Bolivia, and Paraguay.

In the wake of the war, following the defeat of the Japanese occupiers, national liberation forces in Vietnam and Indonesia continued the fight to expel the “victorious Allies,” the French and Dutch governments, which sought to reimpose colonial rule. The Chinese people, one-fifth of humanity, made a powerful revolution and overturned the rule of the landlords and capitalists. It is worth noting that massive “Bring Us Home!” demonstrations by U.S. GIs across Asia and Europe in late 1945 and early 1946 blocked the U.S. rulers from their postwar plans to use these troops to intervene against colonial peoples in China and elsewhere in Asia, against European workers, as well as at home against the strike wave sweeping the United States at the same time.⁸

In the early 1950s, the Korean people, having rid their land of Tokyo’s hated boot, fought Washington to a standoff and liberated half their country from imperialist domination. From the late 1950s through the mid-1970s, one country after another on the African continent—from Tanzania to Algeria, from the Congo to Mozambique, and dozens of others—won political independence from London, Paris, Brussels, and Lisbon. During that same period, Guyana, Trinidad, Barbados, Suriname, and other British and Dutch colonies in the Caribbean gained their independence as well.

In the very first days of 1959, in a great leap forward for popular humanity, Cuba became “the first free territory of the Americas.” The victory of the Rebel Army and a general strike and uprising across the island opened the door to socialist revolution in the Western Hemisphere and gave an impulse to revolutionary struggles by workers and peasants across the Caribbean and Central and South America. And, in the aftermath of the 1988 defeat of apartheid’s invasion forces in Angola at Cuito Cuanavale, with decisive help from Cuban internationalist volunteers, Namibia won its freedom in 1990 and the system of white supremacy was toppled in South Africa itself by 1994.

These national liberation struggles against both Axis and Allied imperialist powers, which began accelerating in the midst of the Second World War and exploded in its wake, have been the most powerful single motor force of the world revolutionary movement since the latter half of the twentieth century—a confirmation of the anti-imperialist focus around which the forces building the Caracas festival are united.

4. An injury to one is an injury to all!

The class struggle in the United States during World War II is among the chapters richest in lessons for working people and the



Dresden, Germany, in ruins after firebombing raids by U.S. and British warplanes in 1945. Washington and London made this kind of systematic murder of civilian populations in Germany and Japan a “legitimate” method of war.

oppressed. As the U.S. rulers cranked up the war effort, they targeted the constitutional rights and space for political action of the labor movement, communists, Blacks and other oppressed nationalities, Puerto Rican independence fighters, Japanese-Americans, and others. As sections of the exploited and oppressed continued to press their demands during the war, their efforts to do so were publicly and aggressively opposed by the Communist Party in the United States and those influenced by its Popular Front line of subordinating the struggles of working people to support for the U.S. imperialist government in the war. Those who refused to simply bend their knee were branded as “splitters,” “appeasers,” “disrupters,” and often outright “agents of Hitler and the Mikado.”

• On December 8, 1941, eighteen leaders of Minneapolis Local 544-CIO and of the Socialist Workers Party were convicted in federal court, and given sentences ranging

from twelve to eighteen months in prison, on frame-up charges of “conspiring to advocate the overthrow of the U.S. government.” These were the first convictions under the notorious Smith “Gag” Act, newly signed into law by President Roosevelt. The indictments and prosecution were aimed at breaking the class-struggle vanguard of the labor movement that was leading opposition to Washington’s preparations to drag workers and farmers into the imperialist slaughter of World War II.

Despite the fact that the Smith Act was aimed at the entire labor movement, especially its radical components, the Communist Party used its press and podiums to urge everyone it could influence to support the government frame-up, charging that the Local 544 and SWP leaders, through “their fifth column service to Hitlerism,” were “spreading disunity in labor’s ranks.” The CP went so far as to prepare evidence for the federal prosecutors, sending a dossier to the Justice Department entitled “The Fifth Column Role of the

Trotskyites in the United States.” Eight years later, eleven leaders of the Communist Party itself were convicted under the very same Smith Act, most of them railroaded to federal prison for five years. The Socialist Workers Party actively campaigned in their defense, covering the trial regularly in the pages of the *Militant*.⁹

• In an effort to weaken the rising industrial union movement, Washington imposed a wartime wage freeze and won a no-strike pledge from class-collaborationist labor officials, who threw themselves into the imperialist war effort of the employing class. In 1943, in defiance of these antilabor measures, members of the United Mine Workers union, whose president was John L. Lewis, went on strike over the coal operators’ efforts to increase hours and freeze pay.

When the Roosevelt administration threatened to send in troops to break the strike, the miners responded: “You can’t mine coal with bayonets!” The Communist

Party, through the *Daily Worker*, not only opposed the UMW strike but called for the “Lewis line” of defying the no-strike pledge to be “utterly defeated.”¹⁰ Nonetheless, the miners won, opening the road to the strike wave that exploded in 1945 and 1946.

• The federal government resisted and sought to undermine the March on Washington Movement, which organized throughout the war years against Jim Crow segregation in the armed forces, against racist discrimination in munitions industries and society as a whole, and against the Roosevelt administration’s refusal to introduce antilynching legislation. The Communist Party opposed the March on Washington Movement. CP leader Benjamin Davis insisted in 1942 that “the winning of this war is *the primary issue* before the Negro people.” Davis charged that leaders of the movement were working “to exploit the just demands of the Negro people against the war and against the best interests of the Negroes.”¹¹

In November 1942 U.S. postal authorities began withholding delivery of issues of the *Militant* newspaper from the mails. In March 1943 the Postmaster General revoked the *Militant*’s second-class mailing rights on the grounds, among others, that its articles included “stimulation of race issues” in wartime. The Communist Party supported the revocation of these mailing rights.¹²

• Several years before the war, the U.S. government incarcerated Pedro Albizu Campos and other Puerto Rican Nationalist leaders on trumped-up charges of conspiring to overthrow the government and “inciting rebellion” against the United States. Scores of Puerto Ricans were also jailed for resisting the wartime draft. Albizu Campos and the other Nationalist leaders rejected the government’s degrading “offer” to free them if they would suspend proindependence activity during the war.

As this resistance was being organized both on the island and in the United States, the Communist Party publicly urged Puerto Rican fighters to suspend the struggle for independence during the war, comply with the draft to advance Washington’s military efforts, and—in the words of CP leader Earl Browder—put an end to their “intransigent and unreasoning hostility toward the United States.”¹³ (The CP and its sister parties in the United Kingdom, Canada, and elsewhere

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adopted the same stance toward resistance by Irish and Quebecois independence fighters during the war.)

• The U.S. government in 1942 rounded up 112,000 Japanese-Americans living on the West Coast and held them in barbed-wire-ringed concentration camps for much of the duration of the war. When they were released, thousands found that their farmland, tools, and often even homes had been confiscated and sold to new, non-Japanese-American owners.

Already, in the aftermath of Tokyo's bombing of Pearl Harbor, the Communist Party had deregistered its Japanese-American members, saying that "the Party was the best place for any Japanese fifth columnist to hide and we don't want to take any chances." When Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066 was issued establishing the concentration camps, the CP hailed it as "a sensible program" and instructed its former members to go into the camps peacefully—and to lead others to do so—as their contribution to the war effort.

The Socialist Workers Party condemned the camps from the outset as a violation of the rights of Japanese-Americans, "driving them from their homes" and "terrorizing them." The federal executive order, the SWP said, was "an indiscriminate and brutal witch-hunt...having the character of a racial pogrom."¹⁴

As these examples show—and there are others too numerous to recount—never before or since has there been a more pressing need than during World War II to champion and act on the longtime slogan of the working-class movement: "An injury to one is an injury to all!"

* * *

Among the many forces worldwide who are united around the anti-imperialist aims of the 16th World Festival of Youth and Students in Caracas, there is undoubtedly a broad range of views about what there is, and what there is *not*, to commemorate, much less celebrate, on the sixtieth anniversary of the end of World War II. We do not expect that our opinions will be embraced by everyone building the festival. We are convinced, however, that any effort to impose a particular assessment of these historical questions on the movement as a whole will cause division and disunity in



People's Liberation Army fighters march through Beijing in June 1949 as Chinese people defeated landlord-capitalist government headed by Chiang Kai-shek, who fled to Taiwan. The Chinese revolution was foremost among national liberation struggles that exploded during and in the aftermath of World War II.

building the festival.

In line with the slogan of the Caracas festival, we continue to strongly believe it would be better to conclude the discussions there on Day 8 by uniting participants around activities in defense of Venezuela's national sovereignty in face of U.S. imperialism's mounting threats.

We urge our meeting in Portugal to return to the original program proposed at the Hanoi meeting.

Fraternally,

s/Argiris Malapanis
Argiris Malapanis

s/Olympia Newton
Olympia Newton

s/Jacob Perasso
Jacob Perasso

Young Socialists

cc: Union of Young Communists of Cuba

NOTES

1. See "U.S. firebombing of Tokyo in 1945 killed 100,000" in March 28, 2005, issue of the *Militant*.
2. See "World War II: Three Wars in One" by Dan Roberts, major excerpts of which were reprinted in the April 25, 2005, issue of the *Militant*. Also see *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics* (pp. 109–111) and *Capitalism's World Disorder* (pp. 423–31) by Jack Barnes; *Socialism on Trial* (pp. 59–85) and *The Socialist Workers Party in World War II* (pp. 245–65) by James P. Cannon; and *In Defense of Marxism* (pp. 41–64) and *Writings of Leon Trotsky (1939–40)* (pp. 221–65), by Leon Trotsky. All the above books are published

by Pathfinder Press.

3. "There Is No Peace!" the August 1945 statement of the Socialist Workers Party National Committee, was reprinted in the April 11, 2005, *Militant*. The front page of the Aug. 18, 1945, *Militant* is reproduced on page 7, along with several cartoons and headlines that same month from the Communist Party's *Daily Worker*. The *Daily Worker*'s response to the U.S. firebombing of Tokyo was much the same. "309 B-29s in Record Raid on Tokyo" was the headline on a United Press dispatch in its March 10, 1945, issue. And in July 1943, with no comment, the paper ran another UP dispatch reporting that "Britain's giant night bombers loosed a record bomb load of more

than 2,300 tons on Hamburg [Germany] in the sixth raid on that seared and flaming city within 72 hours."

4. See *Capitalism's World Disorder* (pp. 111–20) and "Washington's Third Militarization Drive" by Mary-Alice Waters in *New International* no. 7 (pp. 251–290).

5. For further reading on the historic defeats of the working class resulting from the Stalin-led Comintern's ultraleftism and subsequent swing to Popular Frontism, see *Fascism: What It Is and How To Fight It* by Leon Trotsky, as well as "Once Again on the Causes of the Defeat in Spain," in *The Spanish Revolution (1931–39)*. Both are published by Pathfinder.

6. Throughout the 1930s the Stalinist regime in Moscow organized the systematic murder of revolutionists not only in the Soviet Union but in Spain and elsewhere across Europe, culminating in the assassination of Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky in Mexico in August 1940. In doing so, they stilled the voices of those who were presenting a communist course on the questions discussed in the letter reprinted here at a time when something *could still be done* by the workers movement to reverse the disastrous policies that resulted in defeat after defeat, made the onset of World War II inevitable, and blocked the implementation of a revolutionary line of march during the war itself.

7. See "Washington's Fifty-Year Domestic Contra Operation" by Larry Seigle in *New International* no. 6 (pp. 245–48). See also "The Struggle in India" in *Fighting Racism in World War II* (pp. 246–51); *The Changing*

Face of U.S. Politics (pp. 427–28); *The Socialist Workers Party in World War II* (pp. 261–65); and *Writings of Leon Trotsky (1939–40)* (pp. 242–47, 252–54).

8. See "1945: When U.S. Troops Said 'No!'" by Mary-Alice Waters in *New International* no. 7 (pp. 301–324).

9. See "Anatomy of a Frame-up" in *Teamster Bureaucracy* by Farrell Dobbs (pp. 230–44, 306–29). See also "Washington's Fifty-Year Domestic Contra Operation" in *New International* no. 6 (pp. 215–24, 237–45). An accompanying article in this week's *Militant* quotes from accounts of the Communist Party's course during the 1941 Smith Act trials by two longtime CPUSA members or supporters.

10. See "Washington's Fifty-Year Domestic Contra Operation" in *New International* no. 6, especially pp. 235–36, 241. When the UMWA miners threatened to go back out at the opening of the great strike wave of 1945, the *Daily Worker* wrote in its March 12 issue: "The coal miners will have to learn this bitter lesson, that so long as they permit John L. Lewis in their name to sabotage the war effort, to lead them into strikes at the height of the war, to carry on civil warfare against the President, and to conspire to defeat America's foreign policy, just that long also will the miners suffer substandard conditions of wages and labor."

11. See *Fighting Racism in World War II* (pp. 196–97, 213–21, 252–61).

12. See "Washington's Fifty-Year Domestic Contra Operation" in *New International* no. 6 (pp. 228–31), *Fighting Racism in World War II* (pp. 273–81), and *Teamster Bureaucracy* (pp. 309–12).

13. Earl Browder, *Teheran: Our Path in War and Peace* (New York: International Publishers, 1944), pp. 57–58. See also "Washington's Fifty-Year Domestic Contra Operation" in *New International* no. 6, pp. 232–33; Oscar Collazo, *Memorias de un patriota encarcelado* (Memoirs of an imprisoned patriot) (Fundación Francisco Manrique Cabrera: San Juan, 2000), pp. 233, 246; A.G. Quintero Rivera, *La lucha obrera en Puerto Rico* (CEREP: San Juan, 1972); Carlos Rodríguez-Fraticelli, "Pedro Albizu Campos: Strategies of Struggle and Strategic Struggles" in *Puerto Rican History and Politics*, Winter 1991–92, pp. 29–30; and the Marisa Rosado biography of Pedro Albizu Campos, *Las llamas de la aurora* (The Flames of Dawn) (San Juan, Puerto Rico, 1998).

14. See "American Concentration Camps: Racism and Japanese-Americans during World War II" by Patti Iiyama in the April 18, 2005, issue of the *Militant*. See also the comments by the Communist Party's longtime general counsel, John Abt, in the accompanying article below.

How CP USA backed Smith Act convictions of SWP, Teamster leaders

BY STEVE CLARK

"It wasn't until 1949, with the first Smith Act indictments of the Communist party, that I read the documents against the Minnesota Trotskyists and saw that the cases against the two organizations were virtually identical," said John Abt in his 1993 autobiography, *Advocate and Activist: Memoirs of an American Communist Lawyer*.¹ "The Communists had made a terrible mistake in not defending the [Socialist Workers Party]."

Abt was the longtime chief counsel of the Communist Party USA and a CP cadre going back to the 1930s. He was commenting on the CP's course with regard to the 1941 federal government frame-up of leaders of Minneapolis Local 544-CIO and of the Socialist Workers Party on charges of conspiracy "to advocate the overthrow of the U.S. government."

'Crime' was opposing U.S. entry in war

Eighteen union and SWP leaders were found guilty—the first convictions under the notorious Smith "Gag" Act—and sentenced to between 12 and 18 months in prison. In the eyes of the U.S. government, the real crime was their organized effort in the

union movement to mobilize opposition to Washington's drive to drag working people into World War II.

Abt does not question the Communist Party's "unqualified support" to that interimperialist slaughter. Such a policy "was unquestionably, then and in retrospect, the correct policy," he says. The CP "played an honorable role in mobilizing public support for the antifascist cause and in defeating detractors from the Right.

"However," Abt adds, "it must also be acknowledged that we were not without blinders in our enthusiasm. In 1941, the federal government launched a prosecution of a group of Trotskyists who were active in the Teamsters' union in Minneapolis. They were charged with violating the Smith Act, a little-known and heretofore unused law, which forbade 'conspiracy to teach or to advocate the overthrow' of the U.S. government by force and violence."

The defense campaign to block the convictions, and later to free the imprisoned leaders, won broad support within the labor movement in the United States and beyond. But not from the Communist Party.

In face of this antilabor frame up, Abt says, the CP "remained silent, while individual leaders spoke of a 'fifth column' at work in the Twin Cities. At the time, I

Continued on Page 11



December 1943: Socialist Workers Party and Local 544 leaders convicted in Smith "Gag" Act trial on their way to federal prison. SWP and Local 544 leader Farrell Dobbs (below county welfare sign) covered for the *Militant* the 1949 trial of CP leaders on charges of alleged Smith Act violations (see *Militant* front pages on page 11).

* Endnotes appear on page 11.

We are using the editorial space this week to publish the Socialist Workers Party 2005 election campaign platform. A list of the 22 SWP candidates running in 14 states appears below.

What the SWP stands and fights for

- Support workers’ struggles to organize trade unions and to use and extend union power to defend themselves and other working people from the bosses’ assaults. Defend the labor movement from the continuing offensive by the employers and their twin parties of capitalism—the Democrats and Republicans. Build a labor party, based on the unions, that fights in the interests of working people.
- For the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of U.S., UN, and other imperialist armed forces from Iraq, Afghanistan, Yugoslavia, Korea, Haiti, Colombia, and Guantánamo Bay, Cuba.
- For a massive federally funded public works program to put millions to work at union scale.
- No cuts in present or future Social Security benefits, Medicaid programs, or workers compensation. Extend Social Security to cover universal, government-guaranteed, lifetime health care for everyone in this country.
- Fight cop brutality. Abolish the death penalty.
- Defend and extend affirmative action in employment, education, and housing.
- No national ID card. End all federal and state regu-

It’s not who you are against. It’s what you are for! Support the Socialist Workers campaign! Vote SWP in 2005!

The Socialist Workers Party candidates present a working-class alternative to the Democrats, Republicans, and other capitalist parties.

Working people face an unrelenting offensive by the employers, who—driven by the need to reverse the decline in their profit rates—are intensifying speedup, lengthening work hours, eroding job safety, cutting pensions and health-care coverage, and seeking to undermine Social Security and break down class solidarity. The imperialist wars abroad by Washington and its allies, from Iraq and Afghanistan to others they are preparing, including threats against Iran and north Korea, are an extension of the war on workers and farmers at home.

The resistance today by working people to these assaults points to the road forward: to rely on our collec-

- Support the efforts of semicolonial countries to acquire and develop the energy sources necessary to expand electrification—a prerequisite for economic and social advances. Expose the drive by Washington and its allies to prevent the nations oppressed by imperialism from developing nuclear power and other sources of energy needed to bring much of humanity out of darkness.
- lations aimed at turning a driver’s license into such a document.
- Repeal federal and state laws mandating immigration-document checks by employers.
- Defend a woman’s right to choose! Oppose restrictions on access to abortion.
- End Washington’s economic war against Cuba! U.S. hands off Venezuela!
- Defend the constitutional right of GIs as citizen-soldiers to engage in political discussion, debate, and activity.
- Stop farm foreclosures! Government-funded cheap credit for working farmers and price supports to cover production costs.

tive power and solidarity and organize independently of the capitalists and their parties to advance the common interests of workers and farmers worldwide. We need to build a revolutionary movement that will lead a fight by working people and their allies to take power out of the hands of the ruling billionaire class, establish a workers and farmers government, and join the worldwide struggle for socialism.

Support the 2005 Socialist Workers campaign! Join the petitioning efforts to get the SWP candidates on the ballot. Organize speaking engagements for the socialist candidates. Contribute to the Socialist Workers campaign.

(For more information contact SWP campaign supporters nearest you. See directory on page 8.)

Cubans in Vietnam

Continued from Page 3

dam destroyed by the bombings. He also felt it when he saw them hanging over the cliffs of the mountains as they carved with hammer and chisel the sides of the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

The only thing that changed were their eyes. The eyes of those women, and of the Vietnamese man who was accompanying them to the entrance of the Ham Rom, transmitted a certain serenity, along with satisfaction.

This was different from the expression he noticed in the features of another officer.

Days earlier he was advancing along a road when suddenly the jungle turned into a void. Everything was pure sadness. Not even was there any wind blowing, and the branches of the trees pointed down and had no leaves. What earlier had been an unbreakable wall of vegetation had now become a wasteland of melted and gloomy grass, with a yellow that could not be of this world. León felt the atmosphere of a cemetery there. “This was caused by fire, right?” he commented, and looked at the officer. There was the smile, but the eyelids had become half-closed.

“No, this was not caused by fire.”

“Then what was it?”

The man took a breath, and for the first time—and only for an instant—the sadness of the man’s eyes merged with the expression on his lips. He remained with his eyes fixed on the plain of death in front of him, and murmured:

“This was caused by Agent Orange.”

The jungle did not speak

On February 23, 1975, General Don Si Nguyen appeared at the school. Roberto León did not see him, since he was in Hanoi presenting his report. But Major Justo Julián Chacón López became surprised by the energetic features that he saw in the face and in the open and jovial manner shown by the military man in comparison with the usual dryness of the students of the center.

Nevertheless, behind that temperament lay one of the brains of the Ho Chi Minh Trail. It was the head of the rear guard of Zone One, where the Trail passed through, and he was one of those who caused the North Americans so many headaches. Often the Rangers took off in helicopters, thinking of surprising the guerrillas, when they discovered that they had fallen into a trap, and that the warnings emitted by the censors did not come from the heat of soldiers, but of the buffalos put in the zone by Don Si Nguyen’s men.

That day, after touring the school and as he was relaxing with the Cuban officers, he said in passing: “If everything goes well, I think that in May you’ll get to know Saigon.”

At best, they didn’t understand him. But a few nights later, in camp, a harsh and heavy cannon sound was heard. Every explosion seemed like a roar, and ended in an echo before dying out. León remained alert for a few seconds and said: “It seems like Americans, and they are firing some 40 kilometers from here.”

Days later, the murmurs of the forest suddenly quieted down, and a constant and dry hammering was heard all night throughout the forest. At dawn León and the troops saw the marks left by tank treads. Sometimes there were columns of trucks advancing full of Vietnamese soldiers along the roads that had just been spread with asphalt. In others, the vehicles appeared in the middle of the jungle covered with tree branches, and they didn’t know how these had arrived.

“It was a large-scale offensive, and the troops never stopped passing by, day and night, day and night. Without rest,” recounts León.

It was even more than that. The attack was being unleashed in five directions simultaneously, and was going to put an end to the game of South Vietnam’s president Nguyen Van Thieu. On January 27, 1973, the Paris Accords had been signed, which set the withdrawal of the United States. But espionage had detected—and this is what Fidel had been told—that in its capital Saigon, Thieu’s faction was preparing a crisis in order to sharpen the war and prevent the total withdrawal of the Yankees. Because of this, it was necessary to repair the roads and asphalt the Ho Chi Minh Trail and its connections with other roads, thus facilitating the passage of the armies of the north.

At the end of April, the Cubans and their Vietnamese students had finished the theoretical part, and were concentrating on practical classes, which led them to pave 2,420 meters of various roads. Of these 1,710 were in the mountains that hid the Ho Chi Minh trail, amidst a 40 degree heat [over 100° F] that forced the men of the Caribbean to walk with damp towels wrapped around their heads, while at night the cold forced them to sleep in their clothes and wrap themselves with two blankets.

Every morning, a Vietnamese colonel or lieutenant colonel arrived at the school and told León how the battles were going. The information was marked down on a map, pinned to the wall, on whose surface the annotations kept growing.

‘Today we took Saigon’

On April 30, when they woke up, the Cubans did everything as usual. They inspected inside their boots and below their beds to check whether snakes were there. They crossed the Ben Hai and began the classes.

León recalls that in his cabin he felt some steps on the wooden floor. In the doorway was the colonel. His smile was different. He no longer seemed so impenetrable as he had at other times, and even less so when he stood in front of the map without uttering a word. He looked at León, marked a point on the southernmost part of the country, and said with glowing eyes:

“Today we took Saigon.”

New Jersey ballot drive

Continued from front page

signed for Lariscy’s nomination and 275 for Ortega. The requirements are 800 and 100 signatures respectively. Campaigners were planning to collect double the state requirement in a week. They went over their goal in two days.

“The Socialist Workers Party, which has roots in New Jersey that date back to the 1930s, began distributing campaign literature over the weekend in Passaic and other cities throughout the state,” the *Herald* article continued. “The party’s gubernatorial and state assembly candidates...are aiming to get their names on the general election ballot by the state’s June 7 deadline.

““We are campaigning with literature that explains what our campaign is about, presenting a working-class alternative, defense of working people,” said Ved Dookhun, campaign manager for Lariscy and Ortega,” the *Herald* said.

“Working people responded to the campaign’s central demand to support the struggles of workers to organize trade unions, and to use and extend union power to defend themselves form the bosses’ assaults,” said Lariscy, who is a garment worker. A number of airline workers signed, citing their concerns over cuts in wages and benefits, and the gutting of pension plans that bosses are imposing throughout the industry. One worker took a stack of campaign flyers to distribute at work.

In addition to Irvington and Newark, the campaign received a good response in Passaic, where many workers signed up because of the party’s opposition to the creation of a national ID and to federal and state restrictions on drivers’ licenses for immigrant workers. “Everybody needs a license,” said one worker who signed the petition. “How do you get to work?”

“It was good to be out there,” said Josias Caminero, a student at Stony Brook University in New York who came to help get the SWP slate on the ballot. “Many young people were attracted to getting a garment worker on the ballot and readily signed.”

“Our campaign starts with the world, and opposes the efforts by Washington and its allies to prevent the nations oppressed by imperialism from developing the sources of energy they need, including nuclear power, to make social and economic advances,” said Ortega, a student at Rutgers University, at a campaign barbecue on the evening of May 7. SWP campaign supporters there donated \$300 to the socialist campaign.

2005 Socialist Workers Party election campaigns	
City/State	Candidate(s)
Ailanta	James Harris, Mayor
Boston*	Margaret Trowe, Mayor Laura Garza, City Council*
Cleveland	Romina Green, Mayor
Craig, Colorado*	Deborah Liatos, Board of Education, Moffat County
Des Moines, Iowa	Edwin Fruit, City Council
Detroit	Ilona Gersh, Mayor
Houston*	Brian Williams, Mayor Anthony Dutrow, City Controller
Miami**	Omari Musa, Mayor
New Jersey*	Angela Lariscy, Governor Michael Ortega, State Assembly, 28th District
New York*	Martín Koppel, Mayor Arrin Hawkins, Manhattan Borough President Pete Musser, Bronx Borough President Dan Fein, City Comptroller
Pittsburgh*	Brian Taylor, Mayor
San Francisco	Dennis Richter, Treasurer Laura Anderson, City Attorney
Seattle*	Chris Hoepfner, Mayor
St. Paul, Minnesota	Jacob Perasso, Mayor Rebecca Williamson, City Council
*petitioning planned	
**plan to get candidate on ballot through filing fee	

Smith Act convictions

Continued from Page 9

accepted the Party estimate of the case, but paid little attention to it and did not read the legal documents, briefs, opinions, and appeals. Little did we know that in the postwar period the Smith Act would become the primary legal weapon to attack our Party and imprison its leaders.”

Abt recalls that “many years later, in the eighties, I was in a meeting with the CPUSA national board; under discussion was an SWP appeal for support in its lawsuit against the government for political harassment.² I referred to the Party’s mistake in the 1941 case and said that those who now opposed supporting the SWP lawsuit were repeating the same error.

“A longtime Party leader from Michigan replied, ‘Ah, that was entirely different. They were interfering with the war effort.’

“Dogma reigned,” Abt says, “and the Party again refused to defend the SWP against government persecution.

“The Party has never engaged in any self-criticism--presumably the Leninist corrective--of that episode or other unworthy policies that we advocated, e.g., support for the relocation camps for Japanese-Americans, in our ardor for the anti-fascist war effort.”³

A lot more than ‘silence’

How accurate is Abt’s memory that the Communist Party “remained silent” about the 1941 Smith Act trial, “while individual leaders spoke of a ‘fifth column’”? A 1975

account by another longtime CP supporter confirms that Abt, to say the least, is guilty of understatement.⁴

Philip J. Jaffe, former national secretary of the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, describes in detail the documents the Communist Party turned over to the cops in 1941 to aid the prosecution of the union and SWP leaders. Jaffe says that in the late 1950s, Earl Browder, who was general secretary of the Communist Party at the time of the Minneapolis frame-up, gave him a copy of the entire dossier prepared by top CP leaders for the U.S. Department of Justice.

Jaffe begins by describing the Communist Party’s public campaign hailing the federal indictments. The *Daily Worker* immediately published an article stating: “The leaders of the Trotskyist organization which operates under the false name of ‘Socialist Workers Party’ deserve no more support from labor ... than do the Nazis who camouflage their Party under the false name of ‘National Socialist Workers Party.’”

Jaffe continues: “The fourteen documents marked Exhibit A, B, C, etc., consisted of two pamphlets, ‘War and the 4th International,’ dated 1934, and ‘Manifesto of the 4th International on the Imperialist War and the Proletarian Revolution,’ dated 1940; four complete issues of the *International Bulletin for Members Only*, dated August and September 1942; and several pages from the monthly, *Fourth International*, and from the weekly,



In 1949 the *Militant* featured coverage of Washington’s prosecution of 11 CP leaders on alleged violations of the Smith Act. Socialist Workers Party leader Farrell Dobbs covered the trial for the *Militant*. The SWP and the *Militant* opposed this government frame-up of CP leaders. On the right and above are the front pages of the *Militant’s* January 24 and October 24 issues from that year.

The Militant, for the year 1942. In some of the exhibits the pertinent wording was underlined in red. In addition to the documents, there was an original 24-page typescript, many of the pages single-spaced, entitled, “The Fifth Column Role of the Trotskyites in the United States.”

Jaffe quotes few sentences, headed “In Conclusion,” from the last page of the 24-page manuscript. That passage, he says, typifies “the nature of the entire assembly of exhibits and summaries” cobbled together by the CP leadership for U.S. imperialism’s star chamber proceedings. The paragraph reads:

“Being a sabotage organization, concentrating upon the disruption of the war effort, the Trotskyites do not require a large organization. On the contrary, a smaller group is more easily controlled and efficient for their purposes . . . The dangerous efficiency of this small group is shown by the fact that it succeeded in obtaining aid for the convicted Minneapolis traitors from the AFL and CIO unions representing 1,000,000 workers [exhibit M] . . . This core of saboteurs is small, but its underground influence is large. Remove the core and you wreck a strong fascist weapon in America.”

SWP fights frame-up of CP leaders

In 1949 the U.S. government convicted 11 Communist Party leaders under the Smith Act and sentenced most of them to federal prison for five years.

“Trial of C.P. Threatens All Labor’s Rights,” was the lead, three-column headline on the Jan. 24, 1949, issue of the *Militant*, which reported on the opening day of the trial. “Atmosphere of Police Terror Marks Thought-Control Case,” read the subhead.

The reporter was Farrell Dobbs, who covered the trial for the *Militant* throughout the year, direct from the federal courthouse at New York City’s Foley Square. Dobbs was a central leader of the Midwest Teamsters

battles of the 1930s, the Socialist Workers Party’s 1948 presidential candidate, and the party’s national secretary from 1953–72. He was also one of the 18 union and SWP leaders imprisoned under the Smith Act for 12 months in 1944–45.

“CP Trial Verdict Hits Rights of All,” was the full-page lead headline on the *Militant* when the CP leaders were convicted in October 1949.

“Friday, Oct. 14, 1949, will go down as a black-letter day for civil rights in `America,” opened the front-page editorial. “The conviction on that day of 11 Communist Party leaders in the political trial at Foley Square struck a hammer-blow against the democratic liberties of the whole working class.”

The convictions, the editorial said, underlined the burning need for a united front “to halt the offensive of the witch-hunters.”

NOTES

1. John Abt, *Advocate and Activist: Memoirs of an American Communist Lawyer* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993), pp. 88–90.
2. The significance of the 1987 victory in the SWP’s 14-year legal battle against the FBI, CIA, and other government spy agencies is described in the article, “Washington’s 50-Year Domestic Contra Operation” by Larry Seigle in *New Internationalist* no. 6. Excerpts from trial testimony by SWP leaders, as well as the full 1986 federal court decision, are published in *FBI on Trial: The Victory in the Socialist Workers Party Suit against Government Spying* (New York: Pathfinder, 1988).
3. The Communist Party’s support for the Japanese-American concentration camps during World War II is described in the accompanying April 2005 letter printed in this issue.
4. Philip J. Jaffe, *The Rise and Fall of American Communism* (New York: Horizon Press, 1975), pp. 24–28.

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

60 Years Since the End of WWII, There Is No Peace: The Imperialist Slaughter and Stalinist Betrayal. Speaker: Chris Remple. Fri. May 20, 7:30 p.m. 4229 S. Central Avenue. (323) 233-9372.

FLORIDA

Tampa

Support Sami Al-Arian and His Co-defendants. Panel discussion. Fri. May 20, 7:30 p.m. 1441 E. Fletcher #421 (2nd floor, enter in rear). (813) 910-8507.

TEXAS

Houston

Today’s High-Stake Battle for Freedom of Speech: Fight Utah Mine Bosses’ Lawsuit against the ‘Militant’ Newspaper. Speaker: Tony Dutrow, Socialist Workers Party, and others to be announced. Fri. May 20. Dinner 6:30 p.m., program 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5 dinner, \$5 program.

4800 W. 34th St., Suite C-51A. (713) 869-6550.

SWEDEN

Stockholm

Imperialism’s Stepped-Up Pressures against North Korea, Iran, and Syria. Fri. May 20, 7:00 p.m. Bjulevägen 33, 121 44 ENSKEDE. 46 8 31 69 33.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

Video Documentary: “The Murder of Emmett Till.” Fri. May 20, 7 p.m. Donation \$3. 7 Mason Ave., Otahuhu (upstairs) (09) 276 8885.

UNITED KINGDOM

London

Iran and the Politics of the Middle East Today. Sat. May 21. Speakers just returned from region. Dinner 6:00 p.m., program 7:00 p.m. Donation £3 dinner, £3 program. 120 Bethnal Green Rd. (first floor, entrance on Brick Lane). 020 7613-2466.

LETTERS

Internments

I read with interest the article on the internment of Japanese in the U.S. during WWII. *Militant* readers will be interested to know that this happened in Australia too. The first to be singled out were Germans, particularly known Nazi sympathizers, followed by Hungarians and Italians. The total number of internees reached over half a million.

Very few Japanese were able to become permanent residents of Australia because they were excluded, along with all Asians, from becoming citizens by the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901. Japanese migrants were interred after Japan entered the war. They were mainly pearl divers on the northern west and east coasts.

There were also Japanese prisoners of war kept in Australia, along with a large number of Italians. Not all accepted their fate quietly and a group of Japanese prisoners of war attempted to escape in 1944. Army guards killed 200 and left over 100 wounded.

The racism whipped up to justify

the war endangered enlisted Asians as well. As in the U.S., Japanese volunteered for the armed forces. A certain man of Chinese descent, Albert Que Noy, joined the army in Darwin, Northern Territory, and served in New Guinea. He was in constant danger from Australian forces who mistook him for a Japanese soldier. He was eventually sent back to Australia for his own safety.

Kate Rodda

Adelaide, South Australia

Workers and farmers gov’t

I very much appreciated reading the article in the May 2 *Militant* by Martin Koppel, “Bolshevism versus class collaboration.” But I just wanted to make one political observation.

In one section of the article, writing about the demand for a workers and farmers government, it says that the “demand remains valid and useful today as part of a revolutionary strategy.” “Valid and useful” seems a bit understated to me. I think it would be better to say that it remains “essential as

part of a revolutionary strategy” or “essential as part of advancing the line of march of the working class and its allies”—or something along those lines.

To illustrate this, let me cite the opening paragraph of “Communism and the Fight for a Popular Revolutionary Government: 1848 to Today,” written by Mary-Alice Waters and published in *New Internationalist* no. 3.

Waters writes, “The historic task facing the working-class movement is to wrest political power from the small minority of wealthy property owners, whose class dictatorship is predicated on war and on the misery, hunger, and disease of the great majority of humanity. The task is to establish a new kind of state power—popular revolutionary dictatorship—supported by the vast majority, the exploited producers, who are organized and mobilized to fight for their interests.

“The challenge before the vanguard of the working class is then to wield the powerful weapon thus created, a government of the workers and farmers [emphasis

mine], in order to defend the initial revolutionary conquests and to begin the process of transforming the economic foundations of class society, as well as the social relations that flow from the division of humanity into the classes that own land, factories, and machinery, and those who do not. Accomplishing this is intertwined with using the new state power to aid and advance the world revolution.”

As the *Militant* article points out, that is the furthest cry from “workers backing electoral or governmental alliances with capitalist parties.”

Janet Post

Hazleton, Pennsylvania

British Labour Party

Recent *Militant* articles refer to the British Labour Party as a “capitalist party.” While this outfit has never been based on a revolutionary, anti-capitalist program, its history, membership and ties to the unions led Marxists in the past to consider it a “workers party.”

The Communist League and its predecessors in the UK used

the tactic of “critical support.” That approach, naturally, has been dropped along with the previous characterization.

While not denying that the Labour Party may have indeed crawled completely into the bourgeois camp, the explanation of how and when that happened would be appreciated.

Tom Mauer

Dallas, Texas

For an explanation of the communist stance toward the British Labour Party, and other such parties, see Reply to the Reader column, titled “Why communists don’t call for a vote for British Labour Party,” in Dec. 28, 2004, *Militant*.

—Editor

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.

U.S. Congress pushes national ID card

Real ID Act moves toward turning driver's licenses into such a document

BY PAUL PEDERSON

In May, the U.S. Congress passed the Real ID Act as a rider to the \$82 billion special appropriations bill to finance Washington's ongoing military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The act is a further move by the U.S. government toward instituting a national identification card for the first time. The legislation includes provisions that will further restrict the rights of foreign-born workers to obtain driver's licenses and gain asylum.

Real ID's driver's license provisions, however, "will affect everyone, citizens and non-citizens alike," Jeanne Butterfield, executive director of the American Immigration Lawyers Association, told the *Washington Post*. "I think citizens are going to be surprised at how burdensome this is on them."

Applicants for a driver's license will now need an authentic copy of their birth certificate, which must be verified by the Department of Motor Vehicles, along with other identification like Social Security numbers and utility bills.

In recent decades the U.S. rulers have moved step by step toward instituting a national identification system based on Social Security numbers and driver's licenses. In all but 11 states a Social Security number is a requirement for receiving a driver's license today. The Real ID Act would make driver's licenses from these 11 states invalid for federal identification purposes, and impose federal requirements to standardize the issuing of licenses.

Any form of national ID means that workers who are stopped by cops, go to rent an apartment, apply for a job, or board



New York cop checks identification in Manhattan, Dec. 31, 2003. Real ID Act, passed by the U.S. Congress, is a step toward establishing a national ID card.

an airplane will be tracked more easily through a nationwide system, allowing the police to follow the movement and history of any individual. Such an ID gives the government and the employers another tool to potentially victimize unionists and others who find themselves out of favor with the powers-that-be.

Among the imperialist governments in Europe, seven—those of France, Belgium, Greece, Luxembourg, Portugal, Germany, and Spain—require citizens to have a national identification card. In the latter two cases the identification card systems were introduced under fascist regimes and never repealed.

Tokyo made an attempt recently to institute a national ID card in Japan, but in the face of opposition the effort fell flat. The Japanese government decided to institute a card on a voluntary basis. Only 250,000 Japanese citizens applied for it, however, far short of the government projection of 3 million.

The governments of Canada and the United Kingdom have been considering such systems but have not yet put one into place. A bill is under discussion currently in the British Parliament to institute such an ID. A serious fight developed in Australia over efforts to impose a national ID card in the 1980s. A similar struggle followed in New Zealand, forcing the scrapping of the government's plans to introduce the "Kiwi card."

Some version of a national ID system exists in many semicolonial countries.

Police harassment, blacklisting

In addition to tracking movements, such identification systems have been used to facilitate state and employer blacklists, measures to enforce second-class status for oppressed nationalities and other sections of the population, and other moves to further exert state control over the population.

In France, Algerians and Africans face routine harassment from the police in the form of identification checks. In Germany, workers are required to show the boss an identification card with a number in order to gain employment. The state identification system is used to limit access to public housing for Turkish and other immigrant workers.

While these are normal discriminatory practices under bourgeois democracies, in Europe and elsewhere these identification systems have been part of enforcing broader

assaults on sections of the population by dictatorial regimes. Under a military government in Greece, for example, which was in power between 1967 and 1974, the national ID card was used to blacklist communists and other opponents of the regime.

Moves to further curtail the rights of undocumented workers in the United States are part of the Real ID bill and similar measures that have been passed on a state level. Requiring workers to provide valid Social Security numbers or other state-issued identifiers in order to qualify for a driver's license imposes a burden on workers who need to drive to get to work but do not have the proper documents to do so.

Deportations of immigrants decline

These moves are aimed at reducing the rights, not the numbers, of immigrants living and working in the United States. Today, the foreign-born population in the United States stands at nearly 36 million. That is more than 12 percent of the population—double the rate 25 years ago.

The number of undocumented workers living and working in the United States has grown to nearly 11 million, an increase of half a million annually over the past five years. More than 6 million of those workers came from Mexico.

As foreign-born workers in the United States have become more integrated into society and the economy, the number of people deported from the United States has declined. In 1997, more than 61,000 people were deported from the United States. Last year the figure was just under 50,000.

What has tightened is control of U.S. borders. The number of people ruled inadmissible before entering the United States increased from 53,000 in 1997 to 153,000 last year, and the numbers of border cops were beefed up. This shift, however, is not aimed at stemming the tide of immigration.

Over the past two decades, finance capital has penetrated into native agricultural markets and the price of basic commodities like coffee, cacao, and sugar have plummeted—destroying the livelihoods of millions in Latin America, Asia, and Africa and forcing peasants to move to the cities and become part of the proletariat. According to the International Labour Organization, a United Nations agency, the world working class has grown by 400 million in the last decade, from 2.4 billion to 2.8 billion.

At the same time, class exploitation by local capitalists and landlords, increased by the debt bondage imperialism imposes on the semicolonial world, has forced a larger number of these workers to seek a livelihood in the United States and other imperialist countries.

Roughly half the immigrants who moved between 1995 and 2000 from semicolonial to imperialist countries went to the United States.

For the U.S. employing class, this inflow of cheap labor has been its principal competitive edge against its rivals.

A recent editorial in the *Wall Street Journal*, titled "Immigration Reality Check," illustrated a view shared by many in the ruling class. "So long as the U.S. shares a 2,000-mile border with a developing nation, we'll never reduce the illegal flow with punitive measures that ignore the market forces lurking foreign workers here in the first place," it said. "The best way to decrease the number of illegal crossings, while also satisfying our economic needs, is to give immigrants more legal ways to come."

Many in the ruling class also oppose new regulations that make it harder for undocumented immigrants to get a driver's license. Judge Karen Smith of the State Supreme Court in Manhattan, for example, ruled May 10 that New York State motor vehicle authorities may not deny driver's licenses to immigrants who cannot provide residency documents. Smith said the N.Y. Department of Motor Vehicles exceeded its authority when it imposed such restrictions in 2002.

Washington State cannery workers win union contract

BY CECELIA MORIARITY

SEATTLE—After a seven-month strike, nearly 200 cannery workers voted April 28 in Yakima, Washington, to ratify a contract with Snokist. Only three workers voted against the agreement.

Snokist workers, members of the Western Council of Industrial Workers (WCW), had stood on the picket line since September 23 of last year to win their first contract. Their demands included health benefits, an end to company cutbacks, and the reinstatement of all strikers. "Everybody's happy because we're going inside," Jesús Gutiérrez, a forklift driver with four years at the fruit-packing plant, told the *Militant*.

Winning a contract with the company was important for workers at Snokist and in Yakima because "everybody's going to know we have rights," Gutiérrez said. Earlier this month the regional office of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) announced it found evidence that the company engaged in "bad-faith bargaining" prior to the strike. On April 7 the union made an unconditional offer to return to work and the company recalled about half the local. Negotiations between the company and the union then resumed, producing the first union contract in the 102-year history of the company.

According to Rogelio Montes, WCW organizer, half of the local's members are now on layoff and 30 of the scabs who worked during the strike remain inside the plant. On May 5, he said, the union local filed new grievances with the NLRB charging the company with failing to implement one of the wage increases for some of the workers in maintenance and production, non-payment of shift differential pay, and awarding some job positions out of seniority.

Production and maintenance workers joined WCW two years ago after Snokist terminated health-care benefits, fired production workers, and rehired some of them through a temporary employment agency at \$2 to \$3 an hour less than before.

The three-year contract the workers voted for includes an hourly wage increase of 25 cents in the first year, 50 cents per hour if employees work over 500 hours, \$1 per hour if they work over 1,000 hours, a small bonus in 2006, and a cost-of-living increase in the third year, according to union officials. After 90 days on the job, all workers now join the union, eliminating the company's practice of using temporary workers for longer jobs.

The workers held a barbecue at the picket line two days after the vote to celebrate their victory and to take down the picket tents and poles.

"We stayed united because we needed to get this contract," said Otilio Herrera, a juice room operator, who added he thought the company was getting worried that the strike would still be going on when the cherry packing season begins in mid-July.

Nebraskaland meat packers demand contract at N.Y. plant

BY DON PANE

BRONX, New York—Warehouse workers at Nebraskaland, a large meat and food distributor in New York, are currently negotiating their first union contract. The warehouse is based at the Hunts Point Cooperative Meat Market, the center of meatpacking and distribution in the New York City area and the site of a number of union-organizing efforts in the last few years.

In March 2004, an election was held to determine if the warehouse workers would be represented by United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 342. Truck drivers at Nebraskaland are organized by the Teamsters.

In the lead up to the election, the company fired pro-union workers and began a campaign of harassment and intimidation. When the votes were counted, the union

had lost the election 44-32. The union challenged the election and fought to win back the jobs of the fired unionists. The National Labor Relations Board subsequently ordered the company to take back some of the fired workers and ordered the company to give them back pay. In November 2004, the company agreed to recognize the union and began negotiations on a contract.

"A couple of weeks ago the company rehired a few more of the fired workers with back pay," said a Nebraskaland worker, who asked not to be identified. "I heard some of the fired workers refused the offer, preferring to wait for the new contract to be signed before returning. Local 342 union representatives come to the parking lot almost every day to give us a progress report on negotiations and we tell them about conditions in the plant."