

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Canada tour builds support for Cuban Five held in U.S. prisons

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 70/NO. 44 NOVEMBER 20, 2006

As Beijing expands trade with Africa, workers protest job conditions

BY OLYMPIA NEWTON

Government representatives from 48 of the 53 countries in Africa met in Beijing November 4–6 for the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation. The summit, attended by 40 African heads of state, was aimed at expanding China's trade and investments on the continent.

At the summit, Chinese prime minister Wen Jiabao said his government hoped to more than double trade with Africa to \$100 billion by 2010. Chinese officials unveiled \$1.9 billion worth of immediate trade and investment deals.

Trade between China and Africa has risen tenfold in the past decade, fueled by Beijing's quest for raw materials and fuel. In the first 10 months of 2006 it totaled \$40 billion, about 10 percent of Africa's total trade and 2.3 percent of China's.

In recent months, protests over wages and working conditions have erupted in Chinese-owned mines and factories in several African countries. In July, five workers were shot and wounded when hundreds protested the retraction of a pay raise at a Chinese government-owned copper mine in

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Goodyear strikers stand firm in face of threats to close plants

BY JACQUIE HENDERSON AND ANTHONY DUTROW

TYLER, Texas—"We aren't going anywhere," said Goodyear striker Doug Ray as he spoke to *Militant* reporters in front of the Steelworkers union hall across from the company's plant here November 3.

Ray was responding to an October 30 press release by the tire manufacturer that it will close the Tyler plant. The release, issued from corporate headquarters in Akron, Ohio, gave no timetable but received considerable press in Texas.

The response by strikers here has been to beef up their picket lines and strengthen their resolve.

"If Goodyear won't negotiate a contract that we can live with, then we will be here to talk to whoever replaces them" Ray said.

"No Goodyear worker has crossed the picket line at this plant," striker Joe Wyatt reported.

Some 15,000 workers at 16 Goodyear plants in the United States and Canada have been on strike since October 5 against company efforts to impose wage cuts of up to 40 percent,

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Socialist campaign: on to next 365 days!

Back fight to unionize all workers!
Legalization of all immigrants!
U.S. out of Afghanistan, Iraq now!



Militant/Jacquie Henderson

Anthony Dutrow, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Congress in 18th District in Texas, campaigns November 2 at Pilgrim's Pride meatpacking plant in Lufkin, Texas.

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

In the final week of the election campaign, from Los Angeles to Boston to Miami, the Socialist Workers Party candidates and their supporters offered solidarity to workers striking to defend their unions, took part in candidate debates, joined protests demanding freedom for five Cuban revolutionaries in U.S. prisons, spoke at university campuses, and campaigned in working-

class neighborhoods and at factories and mines around the country.

In Atlanta, Lisa Potash, the SWP nominee for Georgia lieutenant governor, headed up an all-day campaigning team November 6 at Georgia State University, reaching hundreds of students with the socialist platform. Many students who are also workers were glad to find that the SWP platform begins with the need

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Asian American student conference discusses fights against discrimination

Panel highlights book on Cuban Revolution

BY ERNEST MAILHOT

EVANSTON, Illinois—More than 250 students attended the Second National Asian American Student Conference, held here November 3–5 at Northwestern University, just north of Chicago.

Students of Chinese descent were the biggest component of the conference, which also included youth of Vietnamese, Cambodian, Indian, Laotian, Japanese, Filipino, and other nation origins. They came from more than 20 universities and colleges from around the Midwest and as far away as California and Massachusetts.

After hosting their first national gathering in 2004 at the University of Southern California, conference organizers explained, they decided to hold this one in the Midwest given the region's growing Asian and Pacific American population. Asian youth are 17 percent of the student body at Northwestern University and one-quarter of the 25,000 students at the University of Illinois in Chicago (UIC).

The heart of the conference was a full day of more than 30 workshops on a wide variety of topics. Among these

were "The New Immigrant Rights Movement"; "Rebuilding Community, Creating a Voice"; "Race, Gender and Sexuality"; "Putting the Action Back

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Welcome! to 2,500 new 'Militant' readers

Dear Reader,

Thank you for helping make the *Militant's* fall circulation campaign a success!

Some 2,500 people subscribed, including 573 who renewed their subscriptions or signed up for the first time as long-term readers. To all these readers: Welcome!

A feature of the subscription drive was maintaining and expanding the *Militant's* readership in the working class in the cities where distributors of the paper are based and beyond.

A turning point in the campaign,

Continued on page 4

Report: bosses' disregard for safety caused deadly mine fire

BY CINDY JAQUITH

PITTSBURGH—Willful, gross violation of elementary safety rules by the Massey Energy company led to the death of two West Virginia coal miners in January, a new report reveals.

Don Bragg and Ellery Hatfield died in a fire that started on a conveyor belt at the Alma No. 1 mine in Logan County, West Virginia, January 19. Their deaths came nearly three weeks after 12 men perished in the Sago mine disaster in West Virginia.

A total of 45 U.S. coal miners have been killed on the job so far this year, already the deadliest annual toll since 1995. Two more coal miners died in separate incidents in Kentucky and Arizona over the November 4–5 weekend.

The report by the West Virginia Office of Miners' Health, Safety, and Training was released November 3. Its findings indicate that Bragg and Hatfield would be alive today had Massey, the biggest coal producer in West Virginia, followed the most basic safety practices.

The report states that the cause

of the fire at Alma No. 1 was bad alignment in the drive and storage area of a conveyor belt, causing friction and then the fire. On Dec. 23, 2005, there had also been a fire in the storage unit.

Carl White, who worked day shift on this belt, testified in the investigation that on January 19 it kept shutting down and "he could see a hazy mist around the drive and storage unit [of the belt] but could not find any problems," according to the re-

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U.S. gov't measures restrict study programs in Cuba

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON—Hundreds of U.S. universities have been forced to cancel programs to study abroad in Cuba under guidelines Washington issued in 2004 tightening the four-decades-old U.S. embargo against Cuba.

U.S. academics and students sued the Treasury Department in June demanding that the new restrictions be removed immediately and that programs to study in Cuba be allowed to resume.

Wayne Smith, an adjunct professor at Johns Hopkins School of International Studies, told the *Militant* that the school no longer has any students in Cuba. Smith said that before the new restrictions were imposed some 200 universities ran programs for study in Cuba. "That's only a handful now," he said.

Smith heads the Cuba Exchange Program at Johns Hopkins. Under the new restrictions he can't accompany students to Cuba because he no longer teaches full-time, he said.

Smith, a former head of the U.S. Interests Section in Havana, is also one of the lead plaintiffs in a lawsuit against the Treasury Department to overturn the new restrictions. The Emergency Coalition to Defend Educational Travel is organizing the suit. Smith said he expects a date to be set soon for a hearing, even though the government claims it was not properly served notice.

Matilde Zimmermann, director of the Sarah Lawrence College in Cuba program, estimates that some 500 students from 50 U.S. universities were studying legally in Cuba in the fall of 2003. A year later that number had dropped to 13 students—all of them from Sarah Lawrence College, she said.

Sarah Lawrence has the largest program to study in Cuba and sends 12 to 20 students from August to December each year. The new guidelines require colleges to reapply for approval each year. "Right now we are taking applications and interviewing students but we don't know if we will get approval," Zimmermann said.

The college had to drop its Cuba study program offered over spring break because the new regulations require that study programs in Cuba be at least 10 weeks long, she said.

Meanwhile, the *Harvard Crimson* reported that the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies and the Harvard College Office of International Programs have gotten a license for a joint study program in Cuba. Obtaining the license for its spring-semester study-abroad program at the University of Havana was an arduous 18-month process said Cuban-born Jorge I. Dominguez, Harvard's vice provost for international



Tens of thousands protest repression in Mexico

Tens of thousands marched November 5 in Oaxaca, Mexico, calling for the resignation of state governor Ulises Ruiz. The call comes out of a five-month strike by teachers fighting for higher pay and accusing the governor of repression and corruption.

Federal police confronted the marchers with armored vehicles and water cannon. At least one protester was killed, bringing the death toll to 15 since the federal government sent riot police into Oaxaca October 29 to remove striking teachers and their supporters from the city's central square.

—OLYMPIA NEWTON

affairs. The license is good for one year. Dominguez said Harvard will apply again for a license next year but does not know whether the school would get it or by what time.

In May 2004 the White House-appointed Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba issued recommendations to tighten the U.S. embargo against Cuba. These included new travel re-

strictions, including for educational purposes. These guidelines limit licenses to travel to Cuba for educational programs to institutions issuing graduate or undergraduate degrees, require that students traveling to Cuba be enrolled full-time, and require the institution to renew permission for the program annually rather than bi-annually.

New York judge dismisses defamation lawsuit against Workers World party, newspaper

BY OLYMPIA NEWTON

NEW YORK—A state supreme court judge dismissed defamation charges on September 26 against the Workers World Party and its newspaper, *Workers World*. The multibillion-dollar holding company Renco Group filed the lawsuit in March against Workers World Party, WW Publishers, Inc., and *Workers World* reporter Brenda Ryan, alleging that two articles published in the paper on the underfunding of workers' pen-

sion funds from WCI Steel, at that time owned by Renco, were "malicious, false and defamatory."

Justice Edward H. Lehrner's decision stated that the articles "employed colorful rhetoric that is the hallmark of hyperbole" and "discuss in an impassioned manner an area of public concern." He ruled that a political party "that has a 'socialist' and 'revolutionary' perspective" published the articles for "advocacy purpose," and that "the statements therein alleged to be libelous are in fact nonactionable opinion."

The two articles, "WCI Steel bankruptcy robs workers' pensions" and "Is Renco robbing steelworker pensions?" were published by *Workers World* on February 14 and February 23. The first article, which outlined WCI Steel's efforts to shield itself from pension obligations through bankruptcy proceedings, stated, "After robbing the pension fund, Renco now claims it can cover the

shortfall." On February 16 attorneys from the firm Arnold & Porter LLP sent a letter to *Workers World* editor Deirdre Griswold threatening legal action if the paper did not retract the article and issue an apology. "The paper is standing by the article unconditionally and refuses to accept Arnold & Porter's ultimatum," responded Griswold in the February 23 article.

Shortly thereafter Renco filed a defamation lawsuit in New York State Supreme Court. Attorneys for the company claimed that by using the word "rob," *Workers World* accused them of "forcible stealing." Lehrner's decision noted that "the implication to the reasonable reader... is not one of criminality by the stealing of pension funds."

"We've said all along that we have the right to call the robber barons by their true name," wrote Griswold in an October 19 article announcing the victory. "Now a court has affirmed it."

THE MILITANT

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

Canada tour wins support for 5 Cuban revolutionaries jailed in the United States

BY JOE YOUNG

TORONTO, Ontario—Relatives of two of the five framed-up Cuban revolutionaries serving draconian sentences in U.S. prisons addressed a crowd of 130 people here October 29 as part of an eight-city speaking tour organized by the Canadian Network on Cuba. Irma González and Elizabeth Palmeiro, the daughter of René González and the wife of Ramón Labañino, were the featured speakers.

The Cuban Five, as they are known, are González, Labañino, Gerardo Hernández, Fernando González, and Antonio Guerrero. They have been in prison for eight years. They were arrested in 1998 and convicted three years later on frame-up charges brought by the U.S. government, which included “conspiracy to com-

mit espionage,” “conspiracy to act as an unregistered foreign agent,” and, in the case of Hernández, “conspiracy to commit murder.”

In order to defend Cuba’s sovereignty, the five had entered Cuban-American groups in the United States with a record of carrying out violent attacks on Cuba from U.S. soil with Washington’s complicity. They had also served on other internationalist missions in the past. Three of the five had been Cuban volunteer combatants in Angola who helped the Angolan army defeat invasions of the country by the South Africa apartheid forces and defend the country’s newly won independence from Portuguese colonial rule.

Irma González, a 22-year old university student, said that at the time of their arrest the five men were described



Militant/Naomi Jolliffe

Panel at October 29 Toronto meeting to demand freedom for five Cuban revolutionaries in U.S. jails. From left: moderator Juan Carranza of the Lawyers’ Committee for the Anti-Terrorist Cuban Five; Irma González, daughter of René González; Elizabeth Palmeiro, wife of Ramón Labañino; and legal defense team advisor Valentín Puron.

in the media as “spies of Castro” but at the trial Washington presented no evidence to substantiate the charge. That’s why the charges were framed as “conspiracy to commit espionage.”

González described how her father is teaching fellow inmates to read and write in prison. She said that at one time when Gerardo Hernández’s cell mate was replaced, the prisoners talked to his new partner and told him, “The man in that cell is a great man. He helps us, he studies, don’t bother him.”

Responding to a question about whether there could be a shift in U.S. foreign policy if the Democrats win a majority in Congress in the U.S. elections November 7, Palmeiro answered, “I don’t expect any change in their aggressiveness and hostility.” She told the audience that because of a change in procedures she will not be able to see her husband again until May 2008. The last time she saw him was in June.

At a similar meeting of 75 people held October 31 in Windsor, Ontario, Palmeiro said, “We are here because we need to mobilize public opinion in Canada and the United States against this injustice.”

Four stops have also included Montreal; Ottawa and Hamilton, Ontario; and Vancouver and Victoria, British Columbia. In addition to the public events, González and Palmeiro are meeting with members of parliament, unionists, and others, and are giving media interviews.

Bea Bryant in Blenheim, Ontario, contributed to this article.

Goodyear strikers stand firm in face of closure threat

Continued from front page

eliminate retiree medical benefits, and close factories in Alabama and Texas, including the one here.

Goodyear has been hiring temporary workers, and the talk on the picket line November 3 was of a busload that the early morning picket shift saw going into the plant. “A contractor named UNICO has been providing what they call ‘replacement workers,’” said Ray about the bosses’ strikebreaking efforts.

“The company was talking about cutting our benefits,” Travis Jasper, a Banbury machine operator with 36 years experience at the tire plant here, said as he walked the line. “They did that last contract, saying they needed the money to keep things going.” But, he added, “We weren’t going along with any of that this time.”

A dozen unionists keep a visible presence in front of the gate.

“See that semi driver,” said Robert Lemmons. “I just talked with him the other day and he told me a lot of these trailers are hauling scrap.” Lemmons has worked in shipping at the plant for 16 years. “If they do carry out tires, the driver told me, the weight is around 22,000 pounds, about half a full load,” he said, jok-

ing about how slow the truck was going.

Meanwhile, much-needed solidarity has continued to come in from throughout eastern Texas. Two tents across from the picket line where workers stop by to discuss the latest strike news or to help spell those on regular picket duty are also filling with solidarity drop-off donations. As *Militant* reporters talked with strikers, a worker pulled up with a van loaded to the roof with cartons of potato chips.

Amanda Ulman contributed to this article.



BY WILLIE COTTON AND SARA LOBMAN

TONAWANDA, New York—More than 1,000 members of United Steelworkers Local 135 here are standing firm as they go into the second month on strike against Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. Workers at this plant, located near Buffalo, are maintaining round-the-clock picket lines of 10 to 15 people at each of the two main gates.

Local members report that no union members have crossed the line.

The company has several hundred management personnel as well as replacement workers hired through a local temporary agency doing some production.

“My dad worked here for 44 years,” said Joe Herbeck, who has worked at Goodyear for 11 years. “Now my mother has macular degeneration and is legally blind, and they want to take away her medical benefits.”

“We gave up a lot in our last contract to help the company turn things around,” said Mike Nowaki, a bias machine operator who has worked at the Tonawanda plant for 15 years. “Now they’ve had record sales, but they still want to take more. It’s just not right.”

Building tires eight to twelve hours a day is hard work, Micah Milewski said, but “all the company cares about is the production numbers. A lot of workers get injured on the job.” Milewski is a loader-receiver who has worked here for four years.

Support from the community is evident. Many drivers honk as they pass the picket line. Strikers have received donations of food and firewood. Auto workers and other steelworkers from the area have visited the picket lines.

Thomas Tannehill, a warehouse worker who offered his support, summed up the sentiments of many workers. “Somebody’s got to take a stand,” he said.



BY BEVERLY BERNARDO

COLLINGWOOD, Ontario—Some 240 members of the United Steelworkers (USW) Local 834L are on strike here against Goodyear. Striking unionist Ray Woodcock told *Militant* reporters on the picket line November 5, “Two trucks brought in scabs from Toronto. And Goodyear is also sending workers from its nonunion plant in Quebec to work here.”

Strikers reported that on October 26 some 100 members of the Canadian Auto Workers attending a conference in Port Elgin boarded buses to join fellow USW strikers on their picket lines in Owen Sound.



The Stretch/Joe Wyatt

Members of the United Steelworkers union on strike against Goodyear rally in Tyler, Texas, October 27 after company announced that it would close the plant there.

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in New International number 12

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Report blames mine bosses

Continued from front page

port. He informed his supervisor.

The fire broke out on second shift. Miners tried unsuccessfully to put it out with fire extinguishers. They grabbed the fire hose but it did not fit the water valve. A fire boss then opened the water valve to flood the fire, but the water had been turned off. The water to the automatic sprinkler system had also been turned off. Another miner had previously reported to the company that the fire hose and valve couplings did not match.

Bragg and Hatfield were working on a production crew in the No. 2 section, which was deeper in the mine. There was no smoke alarm in their work area and at the spot where the fire actually started, the alarm battery was disconnected. The fire burned for 40 minutes before the No. 2 section crew received warning that something was wrong, and only then because a dispatcher outside the mine turned off the beltline, alerting them. The phone to their section did not work.

The No. 2 section crew got into a mine vehicle and started driving out on an established escapeway, but hit such thick smoke they could no longer see. They had to get out proceed by foot in total darkness, feeling their way along the mine's walls for hundreds of feet. When they reached clean air and could do a headcount, Bragg and Hatfield were no longer with them. Rescue crews found their bodies two days later.

The escapeway filled with smoke because the company had removed at least one wall, so the mine's airflow was reversed, blowing smoke from the belt into the workers' path. It used to be illegal to run fresh air into the mine along the belt line, but in recent years

federal rules were changed to allow this. Companies use the belt tunnel as an air intake to save on costs.

The state report charges 16 Alma No. 1 employees, most of them bosses, with violating safety rules. A criminal investigation is proceeding simultaneously because data in the mine computer was erased sometime before March 2.

"Everywhere you turn in this report, there is another safety procedure that was supposed to be followed that wasn't or safety equipment that was supposed to be in place that either wasn't there or didn't work," said Cecil Roberts, president of the United Mine Workers of America. The Alma No. 1 mine is nonunion. Only 3 percent of Massey's 5,700 employees are in a union.

The state report makes clear that production for Massey outweighed any safety considerations. Carl White



Delorice Bragg, whose husband Don Bragg was killed in the Alma No. 1 mine, addresses the West Virginia legislature March 8. Her son Ricky is next to her. AP/Bob Bird

told state investigators that on December 29, when a fire broke out on a different belt, he fought the fire without turning off the belt. "I have

been taught—you know, maybe it's wrong—don't turn the belts off, you know. Keep your belts running the week of production."

Welcome! 2,500 new 'Militant' readers

Continued from front page

which had started to lag midway, was the response by *Militant* readers to distribute widely the October 23 issue featuring a statement by the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party with the headline, "U.S. Hands Off Korea! No to sanctions, acts of piracy! Withdraw all U.S. troops and weapons."

The coverage in that and subsequent issues found a hearing among thousands of working people and others, including Koreans and other Asian Americans.

The last three weeks of the drive coincided with the final stretch of campaigning for the Socialist Workers Party candidates in the U.S. midterm elections. During this period, supporters of the paper won the most readers, improving their record each week: 262, 305, and 464 the last week of the drive.

Another feature of the sub drive was participation by Young Socialists in more areas around the country. YS organizers in Albany, New York; Tampa, Florida; and Detroit made or went over their quotas. Those in Amherst, Massachusetts, and San Diego were just

a few shy of their targets.

Below are excerpts from notes *Militant* campaigners sent that show the kind of work they carried out.

"Three of us from Houston went to Tyler, Texas, today to bring solidarity and sell the *Militant* to Steelworkers on strike against Goodyear," Steve Warshell wrote in November 2. "On the way to Tyler, we stopped at the entrance to a Goodyear chemical plant in Beaumont where 12 workers bought the *Militant*. Then we went to Angelina College in Lufkin, where we sold five subscriptions. We met an organizer of the immigrant rights action that mobilized 11,000 people there on May Day. He invited Amanda Ulman, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate in Texas, to come speak before his organization. Now we are headed to Tyler to meet with the strikers. Stay tuned."

"We extended every effort to make our quota in the last two weeks of the drive," Gregg Schmidt reported from Tampa. "We set up tables at the University of South Florida campus, sold at the entrance to the Smithfield meatpacking plant in Plant City, and introduced people to the paper at shopping areas in the Black and Latino neighborhoods of Dade City. We

got a great response to the *Militant's* stance for the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of imperialist troops from Iraq."

"Together with Young Socialist Marshall Lambie from Detroit, supporters of the *Militant* in Iceland sold 6 subscriptions, 37 single issues, 2 books, and 3 pamphlets in a two-day effort," wrote Ögmundur Jónsson from Reykjavik. "We got four of the six subscriptions by setting up appointments, in some cases sitting down for a political discussion over coffee or tea.

"A worker who subscribed last week came to our book center on Wednesday," Jónsson continued. "He appreciated the revolutionary books on display.

"'You have too many books,' he said jokingly. 'I can't choose between them.' He started with *Thomas Sankara Speaks*."

Sincerely,
Argiris Malapanis
Editor

Fall 'Militant' Subscription Drive Sept. 9 – Nov. 7 ♦ final chart

Country	Quota	Sold	%
SWEDEN	37	46	124%
CANADA	130	144	111%
UNITED KINGDOM			
Edinburgh**	55	57	104%
London*	100	105	105%
UK Total	155	162	105%
NEW ZEALAND	60	62	103%
AUSTRALIA	50	51	102%
ICELAND	18	18	100%
UNITED STATES			
Detroit	10	11	110%
Miami	170	181	106%
San Francisco	75	79	105%
Albany, NY	20	21	105%
Washington, DC	105	108	103%
Houston	100	102	102%
Newark	150	153	102%
Des Moines	175	177	101%
Birmingham	115	116	101%
Philadelphia*	135	136	101%
Tampa, FL	10	10	100%
Boston	120	120	100%
Chicago	100	89	89%
New York	300	266	89%
Twin Cities	160	136	85%
Atlanta	100	84	84%
Pittsburgh	60	50	83%
Los Angeles	145	112	77%
Amherst, MA	10	7	70%
San Diego, CA	6	4	67%
Seattle	80	52	65%
U.S. Total	2146	2014	94%
OTHER			
		2	
Int'l totals	2596	2499	96%
Should be	2600	2600	100%

* increased quota (** twice)

Militant Fund ends with bang

BY PAUL PEDERSON

Supporters of the *Militant* collected more than \$23,000 in the final week of the Militant Fund campaign, sending the \$90,000 drive way over the top. The international effort raised more than \$97,000 to help keep the socialist newspaper in print and circulating.

Thanks are due to everyone who contributed to this campaign. The *Militant* depends entirely on contributions from its supporters to keep the paper coming out and to reach out and respond to developments in the class struggle wherever they occur. For example, fund contributions have helped make possible the *Militant* reporting team that is now in Caracas to cover the Venezuela Book Fair, headed up by editor Argiris Malapanis.

A contributor from Minnesota sent a letter along with her donation. She explained, "For some time now I have established the practice, at my job, of having \$50 per paycheck deposited automatically into a special savings account, with the plan that at some point I would use the money for a vacation.

"Occasional vacations are a fine idea," she wrote, "but at this juncture in history, with the potential influence of the *Militant*, it seems both more important and more joyful to contribute to the *Militant* instead!"

"If I just take a vacation, I will only get a short break from work, and the money will disappear instantly. But if I add this amount to the funds others are giving towards expanding the readership of the *Militant*, I am making a difference in history!"

Its with that spirit that working people who appreciate the paper made this drive a resounding success.

\$90,000 'Militant' Fund Drive Sept. 9 – Nov. 7 ♦ final chart

Country	Quota	Paid	%
ICELAND	450	700	156%
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	1,300	1,622	125%
Edinburgh	500	500	100%
UK total	1,800	2,122	118%
AUSTRALIA	1,200	1,330	111%
NEW ZEALAND	2,500	2,750	110%
CANADA	3,500	3,715	106%
UNITED STATES			
Twin Cities	4,800	6,003	125%
Washington, D.C.	2,800	3,287	117%
Miami	2,500	2,767	111%
Birmingham	3,500	3,843	110%
Atlanta	5,500	5,938	108%
Philadelphia	4,000	4,248	106%
Boston	3,500	3,710	106%
New York	13,000	13,775	106%
Los Angeles	8,200	8,624	105%
San Francisco	9,000	9,294	103%
Des Moines	2,200	2,250	102%
Seattle	7,000	7,123	102%
Tampa	300	303	101%
Newark	3,500	3,505	100%
Amherst	60	60	100%
Houston	3,200	3,200	100%
Albany	120	100	83%
Detroit	1,200	925	77%
Pittsburgh	4,200	2,986	71%
Chicago	5,000	3,338	67%
San Diego	50	0	0%
Other		750	
U.S. total	83,630	86,029	103%
SWEDEN	500	440	88%
FRANCE	250	212	85%
Int'l totals	93,830	97,298	108%
Goal/Should be	90,000	90,000	100%

— ON THE PICKET LINE —

Janitors in Houston strike for a union contract

HOUSTON—Chanting “Let the rich clean up, we’re on strike,” more than 300 striking janitors and their supporters marched and rallied here October 28. “We’re tired of their abuse, we’re tired of rotten pay. We are ready for this strike,” said Flora Guerra, a union member on strike from ABM Services. “I’ve had enough of part-time work at night for \$5.30 per hour!”

Some 1,700 janitors, members of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), are on strike for a union contract, decent pay, and medical benefits, against the city’s five largest cleaning companies: ABM, OneSource, GCA, Sanitors, and Pritchard. The average wage here is \$5.30 per hour for a 20-hour-a-week part-time job; in Chicago, janitors for the same companies make \$13.80 for a full-time position with health insurance, according to the SEIU.

On October 25, about 30 janitors who walked off their job as cleaners for Thomas Properties’ San Felipe Chase were threatened by Federico Meléndez, an ABM supervisor. Strikers say Meléndez followed them to a waiting bus before assaulting a union organizer.

“He was trying to force his way onto the bus, and the organizer told him no,” said striker Mercedes Herrera, quoted in a union press release. “She tried to block him. But he became even angrier and he pushed her down. He started hitting her and then dragged her out of the bus by her hair.”

—Steve Warshell

Teachers in Greece return to work, continue fight for raise

ATHENS, Greece—After a six-week national strike, primary school teachers returned to work October 30, pledging to stage one-day strikes until the government meets their demands. The teachers are fighting for a 45 percent raise in their basic pay from 950 euros to 1,400 euros a month, increased government funding to public education, and other demands.

The public servants’ union joined the teachers in the first of two planned 24-hour strikes November 3. Some 9,000 strikers, secondary school teachers, students, and university professors rallied in Athens to support the primary school teachers and oppose government plans to open up the education system to privatization.

High school and junior high students across the country walked out of school

during the fifth week of the teachers’ strike. Over 1,000 schools were occupied by students in a show of solidarity with the teachers, and to demand less onerous university entrance requirements. Hundreds of high schools and 75 universities remained occupied as of November 4.

The elementary school teachers’ union DOE has called another 24-hour strike for November 9.

—Georges Mehrabian

Massachusetts nurses strike against take-back demands

WORCESTER, Massachusetts—A five-hour strike by 830 nurses at the University of Massachusetts forced hospital management to back down from previous take-back demands. On October 26, members of the Massachusetts Nurses Association walked out at 6:00 a.m. Management was demanding cuts in health benefits, pensions, and pay.

The day before several hundred U-Mass nurses rallied along with hospital



Militant/Sarah Ullman

Nurses and their supporters rally in Boston on October 25, on the eve of a five-hour strike that won a tentative contract.

workers from across the state, as well as representatives from the Teamsters, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Communications Workers of America, Firefighters, and other unions.

“The main thing this is about is respect,” said Mike Michalik, a nurse with 16 years at the hospital. “When you can barely take care of the patients you have, they add more. Now they want to cut our pay by 20 percent.”

The nurses returned to work at 11:00 a.m., five hours after the walkout began, with a tentative agreement for a three-year contract. According to the union, hospital management dropped most of its concession demands.

—Betsy Farley and Sarah Ullman

Protests at university for the deaf force out new president

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, October 30—Some 500 students at Gallaudet University, the country’s premier college for the deaf, took part in a victory rally here today. A spreading protest by students, faculty, and alumni the previous three weeks virtually shut down the school and forced its board of trustees to terminate its appointment of Jane K. Fernandes as president-designate.

The appointment of Fernandes, students said, was the spark that set off an explosion over a range of issues, including student input into the selection process, the place of American Sign Language (ASL) as the method of instruction and discourse on campus, and the impact of new hearing technologies that many students say undermine “deaf identity and culture.”

“This is a great day for Gallaudet and for us all,” signed Christopher Corrigan, a junior and one of the leaders of a tent encampment that shut down the university’s main entrance. “The whole world has been watching, and we have shown the power of our unity.” Hundreds of students responded by waving their hands in the air vigorously, a gesture for cheering.

Leila Holcomb thanked a half-dozen volunteer sign language interpreters who joined them throughout the protests. Throughout the rally motorists driving by honked their horns in support of the students.

Before the rally began LaToya Plummer, another student leader, told the *Militant* that protest organizers had talks all day with the administration over reopening the campus. “This is only the beginning,” Plummer signed. “Now we must address what changes need to be made in the search process.”

Plummer said the board had pledged that students who had been arrested during the protests would not automatically be expelled but that those who had broken the law or campus rules could face some disciplinary action. More than 100 students were arrested after taking over an administration building and blockad-

ing entrances to the campus, she said.

Student Debbie Mason said Fernandes was not committed to deaf culture. Mason, who cannot hear, has learned to speak. She cited a number of examples of a weakening of standards on Fernandes’ watch as provost, including professors with an inadequate command of sign language, and campus staff and security guards who don’t sign at all.

Fernandes has said that in order to address declining enrollment the university must attract a broader range of students who are deaf or have a hard time hearing, including those who rely mostly on lip reading or hearing implants to communicate.

Many students insist on using ASL as the core method for instruction and other campus activities. They express concern about the emergence of new hearing technologies and their use to undermine sign language instruction.

One such tool is the cochlear implant, which is surgically placed in the inner ear to transmit sound as impulses to the brain. About 100,000 people use it worldwide, including 37,000 in the United States, according to the Food and Drug Administration.

Fernandes has charged that some students want to ban speech altogether as a means of communications in classes and public meetings on campus. Mason

called that charge a distortion. “Students have different views on this,” she said. “Whether you speak but can’t hear, or hear but can’t speak, or neither, sign is the most accessible language for us all.”

Gallaudet, with 1,839 students, was founded in 1864 by an act of Congress. The campus includes elementary and secondary schools serving students from kindergarten through 12th grade.

In 1988, after the board of trustees selected a hearing woman as president, mass protests swept I. King Jordan into office as the school’s first deaf president. Jordan, who backed Fernandes’ appointment, was set to step down January 1.

— 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO —

35 CENTS
THE MILITANT
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEK/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

November 20, 1981

There is growing evidence that U.S. military intervention in Central America and the Caribbean is imminent. The details of Washington’s plans are being kept secret, but the targets are unmistakable: the advancing rebel forces in El Salvador, the deepening revolutions in Nicaragua and Grenada, and Cuba—which Secretary of State Alexander Haig has repeatedly slandered as the “source” of the problems the United States government faces in the region.

In response to the most recent developments, the Cuban government has had its armed forces on full alert since October 31. Reserves have been called up, troops have been restricted to barracks, and anti-aircraft weapons have been set up on roof tops in Havana. The newly organized Territorial Troop Militias have been mobilized.

Along with these steps to strengthen their military self-defense the Cubans have launched a political campaign, in Cuba and throughout the world, to explain the critical situation and mobilize opposition to U.S. plans.

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

November 19, 1956

While 64,000 boycotters in Montgomery and Tallahassee are continuing their fight for equality, the Supreme Court today ruled that it is unconstitutional for a state or city to require racial segregation on intrastate buses. The court’s unanimous decision was a legal victory for Montgomery’s eleven-month-old protest movement which led to this favorable decision...

The Supreme Court ruling coincides with the climaxing of attempts to smash the two protest movements, by declaring the Negro voluntary car pools in Montgomery and Tallahassee illegal...

In Tallahassee, 21 bus boycotters on Oct. 20 were fined \$500 each and 60 days suspended sentences with one year’s probation, on charges of running an illegal transportation system.... Under the banner of “We’ll walk in humble dignity rather than ride in shameful humiliation” 14,400 boycotters are staying off the buses. As E.D. Nixon of Montgomery said: “Our people are no longer afraid.”

THE MILITANT
Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America [Opposition]

November 21, 1931

The first state trial of its kind in the experience of the Dominion [Canada] has passed into history. On Friday November 13, eight leading members of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Canada were convicted at the Fall Assizes, under section 98 of the Criminal Code on three counts: of belonging to an unlawful association, of being officers of such an association, and of being parties to a seditious conspiracy. Seven were sentenced to five years imprisonment each on the first two counts and to more years on the third count, the sentences to run concurrently... All those of foreign birth, though citizens, will be subject to an order for deportation...

The prosecution has been the high-water mark of the political reaction in Canada since the economic crisis set in... The organized workers are confronted with attacks on their standards of living. The wage cut offensive has been launched against railroad workers, mine workers, steel workers and others. To the demands of the workers for unemployment insurance or adequate relief the Bennet Government has turned a deaf ear.

As Beijing expands trade with Africa, workers protest job conditions

Continued from front page
Zambia.

The expansion of Chinese trade in Africa and other parts of the semicolonial world reflects the capitalist aspirations of a section of the privileged bureaucratic caste in China, a workers state where capitalist property relations have been overturned.

Beijing cloaks its international crusade for profit in anti-imperialist rhetoric. In contrast to imperialist governments and institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, Chinese officials place few political conditions on the governments of other nations in exchange for foreign aid, loans, and investment at often more favorable terms.

“China has firmly supported Africa in winning liberation and pursuing development,” said Chinese president Hu Jintao in his opening address to the summit. “We both respect the development path independently embarked upon by the other side.”

“The Western approach of imposing its values and political system on other countries is not acceptable to China,” said Wang Hongyi, an Africa specialist at the China Institute of International Studies in Beijing. China’s president announced that Beijing would double its aid and extend \$5 billion worth of preferential loans and credit to African countries over the next three years.

Many of the estimated 2,500 business deals negotiated during the summit involved Africa’s mineral resources, especially its oil. Today Angola is China’s largest single provider of oil. The two governments have set aside earlier differences stemming from the fact that during the 1970s Beijing provided arms and military training to pro-imperialist forces that invaded Angola, forces that the Angolan government defeated with aid from Cuba.

Beijing also imports oil from Nigeria, Equatorial Guinea, and Gabon. One third of Congo-Brazzaville’s oil output goes to Chinese refiners. Of Sudan’s \$2 billion a year in crude oil exports, half goes to China. The Chinese government buys iron ore from

South Africa and cobalt and copper from Zambia.

Protests at Chinese-run plants

Unsafe working conditions and low pay at Chinese-owned industries in Africa, however, have sparked resistance by workers.

In July hundreds of miners tried to force their way into the NFC Africa copper mine in Chambishi, a Chinese-owned facility in northeast Zambia, over reports that management was backtracking on a promised wage increase. NFC is a subsidiary of the government-owned Chinese Non-Ferrous Metals Corp.

The miners marched to a Chinese neighborhood where a company manager shot at the workers, wounding four.

Elias Siama, 32, was shot in the head during the protests. “After being discharged from the clinic, I reported for work, but I was told not to come to work because I was seen as being among the ringleaders,” he told a *Los Angeles Times* reporter.

“It’s very little money,” said Ghengo Nguni, a 25-year-old miner at the Collum mine, according to the *Times*. “There are no leave days... We are seen as nonentities. The mine management is



Militant/Martin Koppel

Construction workers from China Dalian, a major Chinese government-owned construction firm with projects throughout Africa, march in Equatorial Guinea’s October 2005 independence day parade. Beijing, which imports oil and timber from the Central African nation, has increased its trade in Africa tenfold over the past decade to \$40 billion a year.

just concerned about profit, not human life.” In July, miners at Collum won a nearly 500 percent raise to \$68 a month, which is still no higher than Zambia’s minimum wage. They are still forced to work with “no such thing as a day off,” the paper reported.

In April 2005, an explosion at an NFC subsidiary explosives plant on the grounds of the Chambishi mine killed more than 50 workers who were reportedly locked inside.

In the September presidential elections in Zambia, opposition candidate Michael Sata exploited the high death toll of workers in Chinese-owned industries, campaigning with reactionary anti-Chinese rhetoric including a threat to expel all Chinese from the country.

An estimated 80,000 Chinese live in

Africa, many of them workers brought in to labor in Chinese-owned mines, construction sites, and factories. Chinese merchants have been established in Africa for decades. Many of them sell Chinese-made goods, often at prices lower than their African counterparts.

While Chinese businessmen, managers, and government officials are lining their pockets, workers and peasants in China have not benefited much from this increased trade. “When I explain to my African friends that we are still a developing country, they start laughing,” He Wenping, director of African Studies at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, told the *Financial Times*. “But I tell them, just go and look across the road from my compound, and you will see all the poverty of a developing country too.”

Australian gov’t steps up intervention in Pacific

BY BOB AIKEN
AND LINDA HARRIS

SYDNEY, Australia—The annual Pacific Islands Forum, which includes representatives of the governments of Australia and New Zealand, the two imperialist powers in the South Pacific, and 14 independent Pacific Island countries, was held in Fiji, October 24–25 amidst a sharp conflict between the government of Australia and those of the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea.

At the forum Australia’s prime minister John Howard, with the backing of New Zealand’s prime minister Helen Clark, pushed through a continuation of the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI). Manasseh Sogavare, prime minister of the Solomon Islands, had proposed at the meeting to drastically reduce Australia’s dominant role in the so-called assistance mission.

RAMSI is an Australian-dominated intervention into the Solomon Islands set up in 2003 that includes hundreds of Australian troops, cops, and government officials. There is no timetable for their withdrawal. The stated goal of the intervention is to “restore law and order,” and to rebuild the “justice” and prison systems and reorganize government finances.

In mid-September Sogavare expelled Patrick Cole, the Australian High Commissioner to the Solomon Islands, accusing him of interfering in local politics.

In the lead-up to the gathering Howard declared that in return for “aid” the Australian government would continue to assert the right to determine “standards of governance” and “economic management” in the Pacific Island

nations. The Australian rulers provide \$A300 million [\$A1 = US\$.77] a year in budgetary “assistance” to Papua New Guinea, and claim to have spent \$A800 million on RAMSI. As much as 90 percent of the Australian government’s \$A2.1 billion “aid” program finds its way into the pockets of Australian businesses.

The trigger for the sharpening tensions between the Australian government and those of the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea was the Howard administration’s opposition to the appointment of Julian Moti as Solomon Islands attorney-general. After Moti was nominated in June, Australian police in Vanuatu reopened charges against him—dismissed by the local courts 1999—that he had engaged in sexual relations with a minor. Australian authorities are now seeking to extradite Moti, a dual Australian-Solomon Islands citizen, to face charges in Australia.

Moti was arrested at the request of Australian authorities while visiting Papua New Guinea September 29. After being granted bail he sought help from the Solomon Islands High Commission and was subsequently flown to the Solomons in a Papuan New Guinea military aircraft.

In retaliation Australian foreign minister Alexander Downer barred Papua New Guinea prime minister Michael Somare and other ministers in his government from visiting Australia until Moti’s move was explained.

Australian police assigned to RAMSI arrested Moti October 10 in the Solomons, and charged him with entering the country without a valid passport.

On the eve of the October 24–25 meeting, Australian police in the

Solomons, claiming to be investigating Moti, raided the offices of the prime minister, booting in the door and seizing a fax machine. They also arrested the Solomons minister of immigration, Peter Shanel, and charged him with “conspiracy to pervert the course of justice.”

The governments of the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, and Fiji “strongly condemned” the raid in a statement to the forum as “a serious violation of Solomon Islands’ territorial sovereignty and integrity.”

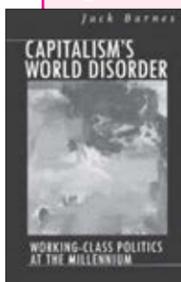
Somare condemned the “arrogant attitude” of the Australian government in “treating the people of the region with contempt.”

In recent years the Australian government has increased the number of its officials and advisors sent to Papua New Guinea, its former colony. Last year, however, it withdrew 115 cops from the country after the Papua New Guinea Supreme Court ruled that Australia’s demands for immunity from prosecution of its cops was unconstitutional. Over Somare’s objections, Howard recently cited an “inherently unstable situation in Papua New Guinea” as the main reason for a planned expansion of the Australian military and police.

In addition to the troops and cops in the Solomon Islands, there are 1,400 Australian troops in Iraq, 650 in Afghanistan, and 1,000 troops in Timor Leste (formerly East Timor).

On November 1 an Australian frigate set sail for Fiji in response to the Australian government’s fears of a military coup in that country. “Rapid Response” troops were also placed on alert, and a second warship dispatched, ostensibly to evacuate Australian citizens.

Capitalism’s World Disorder



“As capitalist exploitation increases throughout China, so do strikes, peasant protests, and attacks on bosses.... Workers in China...will eventually link up with dissatisfied peasants and also win support from young people attracted to the working class as

the force that can revitalize society. That will be the real bloc. It will be forged through enormous class battles, and as that happens growing numbers of fighters will be open to the ideas of the communist movement.”

—Jack Barnes, from the article, “Youth and the Communist Movement,” printed in *Capitalism’s World Disorder*

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Asian American student conference discusses fights against discrimination

Continued from front page in Affirmative Action”; “Who Are We”; “Asian American Studies Campaigns”; “Environmental Justice 101”; and “Organizing APA [Asian Pacific American] Women.”

The workshop on “Rebuilding Community, Creating a Voice” took up struggles by the Vietnamese community of 6,000 in New Orleans, one of the main concentrations of Vietnamese in the country. Minh Nguyen, from the Vietnamese American Young Leaders Association of New Orleans, has been part of protests demanding decent housing and opposing the development of a toxic landfill in the Vietnamese community.

“We knew before Hurricane Katrina hit that we couldn’t depend on the government. That’s why we organized so quickly to fight for our rights and try to rebuild,” he said. “Many from the Vietnamese community around the country came to help us. The youth where I live organized to drive the elderly to the protests.”

In the “Asian American Studies Campaign” workshop, UIC students Bettina Johnson and Aaditi Dubale discussed the 15-year-long fight to win an Asian American Studies Department at their campus. In 2005 students and their supporters finally won an Asian American Research Center. The fight for a fully accredited department and the option to major in Asian American studies continues.

Chinese in Cuba, Cuba in the world

One of the best-attended workshops featured a panel presentation on the book *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*.

The workshop was chaired by Michelle Tsao, president of the Chinese Students Association at Northwestern University. Having grown up in Hong Kong, she said, it was here in the United States that she really learned of discrimination.

Tsao said that before reading this book she had not known there were Chinese in Cuba. She was inspired to learn how Chinese, former African slaves, and Cubans of European origins had surmounted historical and cultural barriers and come together in the struggle for Cuban independence in the latter half of

the 19th century.

As a premed student, she was impressed with the role of Cuban volunteer doctors in Venezuela. In the United States, she said, “most become doctors for money and prestige. The fact that the Cuban doctors go to the poorest areas and treat people for free is really admirable. That’s what medicine should be.”

Mary-Alice Waters, editor of *Our History Is Still Being Written* and facilitator of the workshop that drew some 35 conference participants, said the book was “one of the best introductions to the Cuban Revolution.

“But even more important,” she said, “it is not just about Cuba. It is about us and why a socialist revolution right here is both necessary and possible—as well as liberating.”

Waters noted that Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui, and Moisés Sío Wong recount how as youth they became involved in the struggle that, in 1959, overthrew the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship and opened the first socialist revolution in the Americas. All three joined in Cuba’s defense of Angola against attacks by the South African apartheid regime in the 1970s and 1980s.

She noted that this internationalist course—which continues today with tens of thousands of Cuban volunteer medical personnel serving in countries around the world—is rooted in the same working-class policies that have guided the revolution in Cuba. They have led to what South African leader Nelson Mandela described as Cuba’s “unparalleled commitment to the systematic eradication of racism.”

The lessons contained in *Our History Is Still Being Written*, Waters said, “help us learn how to fight effectively and how to win, how working people can take political power, transforming society and themselves in the process.”

Jason Eng, president of the Asian Pacific American Coalition at Northwestern, said he had known little about Cuba and that the book got his curiosity up.

“All you hear about is that Cuba is real bad,” said Eng. “In high school we learned nothing about Chinese history in this country either, like the fact that Chinese fought in the Civil War. Reading the book made me wonder about every-



Militant/Ben O’Shaughnessy

Panel at November 4 workshop on *Our History Is Still Being Written* at National Asian American Student Conference. From left: Mary-Alice Waters, the book’s editor; Jason Eng, chair, Northwestern University’s Asian Pacific American Coalition; Michelle Tsao, president of Chinese American Student Association at Northwestern; Joyce Yin, chair of the Asian American Coalition Committee, University of Illinois at Chicago; and Amy Gao, executive board of Northwestern’s Model United Nations.

thing else we’re told.” He added, “Even though the generals were Chinese, they felt they were at home in Cuba. This is different from the United States and other places where Asians are so discriminated against.”

Joyce Yin from the Asian American Coalition Committee at UIC commented that reading the book “took me outside my comfort zone.” She said she had “learned a lot about what is going on in the world and the huge struggle to overthrow Batista.

“In a smaller way we’re fighting for a just cause too,” Yin said. “We’ve been fighting for Asian studies at UIC for 16 years.”

Amy Gao, an executive board member of the Model United Nations at Northwestern, said the book by the three Chinese-Cuban generals showed

“completely the other side from what the United States says.” Referring to Cuba’s defense of Angola against the apartheid regime, Gao said, “What is really unique is the breaking down of colonialist divisions between Cuba and Africa. And the Chinese population rising along with the Afro-Cubans and taking action together is also really unique.”

Gao noted that despite the isolation imposed on Cuba, the country has been able to develop and the book shows how “the population has been empowered.”

The conference participants also selected regional coordinators and elected a new national board to serve until the next national conference, scheduled for 2008.

Ben O’Shaughnessy and Laura Anderson contributed to this article.

NATO air strikes kill scores of civilians in Afghanistan

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON—Authorities in Afghanistan estimate that as many as 85 Afghan civilians were killed by NATO troops during the last week of October. Many were killed by airstrikes, which are often used by NATO forces against armed supporters of the Taliban.

A top NATO general expressed regret for the deaths but accused the Taliban of using civilians as cover. The Taliban regime was ousted by the U.S.-led invasion shortly after the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon on Sept. 11, 2001.

In other developments, a spokesman for the Taliban said the group has rejected an offer of “peace talks” by the U.S.-backed regime in Kabul. Supporters of the Taliban have stepped up use of roadside bombs over the past year, often striking civilians.

NATO placed the number of civilians killed in an attack in the Panjwayi district of Kandahar at 12. Afghan officials disputed that figure and said about 25 civilians were killed.

Maj. Luke Knittig, a spokesman for NATO forces, said as many as 70 Taliban supporters were killed in three clashes in or around the villages of Lay Kundi and Mirwisa Mina. But Abdul Aye, a resident of Mirwisa Mina, said there were no Taliban in his village. Aye said he lost 22 family members in the NATO attack, according to the

Associated Press.

Human Rights Watch criticized NATO for relying too much on airstrikes. The group noted that the U.S. Central Command reported 340 airstrikes in Afghanistan in June, double the 160 strikes in Iraq the same month.

A spokesman for the Taliban rejected an offer to open talks with the Afghan government, reported AP. An e-mail sent to the news agency by Muhammad Hanif dismissed the offer, calling the U.S.-backed regime in Kabul headed by President Hamid Karzai a “puppet” government. “We say even today that there is no possibility of any talks when the country is under occupation,” the statement said.

The Pakistani military, meanwhile, said it destroyed an Islamic school alleged to have ties to al-Qaeda. Kabul has said that al-Qaeda ally and former Taliban leader Mullah Omar has taken sanctuary in Pakistan, while Islamabad maintains Omar is still in Afghanistan.

The attack on the Islamic school came two days after some 3,000 Taliban supporters held a rally nearby in support of Omar and al-Qaeda leader Osama bin-Laden. Pakistani military spokesman Shaukat Sultan said the school was run by a local cleric wanted for providing sanctuary to al-Qaeda.

Part of 17-title series...



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All 17 books are available from distributors listed on page 8, or at...

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'Our every action a battle cry against imperialism'

The 1966–68 revolutionary campaign in Bolivia led by Ernesto Che Guevara

Below is an excerpt from Pombo: a Man of Che's Guerrilla, one of Pathfinder Books of the Month for November. It is an account by Harry Villegas, a member of Ernesto Che Guevara's general staff during Che's 1966–68 revolutionary campaign in Bolivia. Villegas, known the world over by his nom de guerre Pombo, is today a brigadier general in Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces. Copyright © 1997 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY HARRY VILLEGAS

In his 1966 "Message to the Tricontinental," Che made a thorough and deep-going analysis of this policy of imperialist domination. At the same time he expounded, in all their strategic and continental dimensions, his anti-imperialist ideas and course of action that by then were already being put into practice through his own personal example. In that message, Che proclaimed: "Our every action is a battle cry against imperialism and a call for the unity of the peoples against the great enemy of the



Members of guerrilla unit led by Ernesto Che Guevara in Bolivia at their camp, Dec. 2, 1966. From left: Urbano Tamayo (partially obscured), Miguel Hernández, Che Guevara, Marcos Pinares, Juan Pablo Chang (Chino), Alberto Fernández (Pacho), Harry Villegas (Pombo), Guido Alvaro Peredo (Inti), and Roberto Peredo (Coco).

human race: the United States of North America."

This deep conviction of the Heroic Guerrilla concerning the role played by the United States was rooted in the innumerable acts of imperial aggression that make up the history of contemporary colonialism and neocolonialism in this hemisphere. To mention only a few examples of bloody interventions in our century, there are the cases of Mexico, Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, Panama, Haiti, and Cuba.

The continent as a whole has experienced the varied forms through which this imperialist policy has been systematically implemented. Neocolonialism has left its imprint of economic and political domination and deep social crisis, with its resulting hunger, poverty, unemployment, marginalization, and devastation. An entire region has been ravaged by foreign control over its natural resources and products, the exploitation of its workers, and the sharp impoverishment of its economies. Tribute is exacted in ways

that violate the sovereignty of the nations of Latin America, pillage their material and spiritual patrimony, deepen their dependence and subjugation to imperialism, and close off possibilities of development and progress.

Together with a handful of heroic Bolivian, Peruvian, and Cuban combatants who accompanied him to Bolivia, Che fought to change this reality of the 1960s—a reality whose cruel mechanisms of plunder have since been deepened and refined. Che's death resounds vividly in his stirring message to revolutionaries around the world:

"Wherever death may surprise us, let it be welcome if our battle cry has reached even one receptive ear, if another hand reaches out to take up our arms, and other men come forward to join in our funeral dirge with the rattling of machine guns and with new cries of battle and victory."

With the new century virtually upon us, this image of Che remains present in the revolutionary dreams of Latin Americans. Among them are receptive ears.

The apostle of Cuba's independence, José Martí, also conceived of a continent-wide anti-imperialist struggle. On the eve of his death in combat, in his last letter to a Mexican friend, Martí was unambiguous:

"I am in danger each day now of giving my life for my country and for my duty—because I understand that duty and am eager to carry it out—of preventing the United States, as Cuba obtains her independence, from extending its control over the Antilles and consequently falling with that much more force upon our countries of America. Whatever I have done till now, and whatever I shall do, has been with that aim."

Simón Bolívar, Miranda, O'Higgins, San Martín, and other great figures of Latin America's independence struggle also raised the ideal of a free and united Latin America.

Che's dream was the dream of Martí and Bolívar. In elaborating his strategy, given the struggles already under way in different countries of the continent, Che envisioned the possibility of forming a guerrilla nucleus, a mother column that would pass through the necessary and difficult stage of survival and development. Later on it would give birth to new guerrilla columns extending outward toward the Southern Cone of Latin America, giving continuity to a battle that would become continent-wide in scope. He took into account the experience of the mother column in Cuba's Sierra Maestra mountains, which gave rise to new guerrilla columns and fronts, culminating in the defeat of the Batista dictatorship and the victory of the Cuban revolution. ...

Never has such a small group of individuals undertaken an enterprise of such gigantic proportions. That small detachment of heroic combatants was Che's "sling of David." As our commander in chief pointed out, Che did not outlive his ideas, he enriched them with his blood.

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The working-class alternative

The recently issued government report on the deadly January 19 fire at a Massey Energy mine in West Virginia confirms what working people have been saying all along: the bosses' refusal to follow even the most basic safety procedures killed coal miners Don Bragg and Ellery Hatfield. This brutal consequence of the employers' profit drive is part of the reality that millions confront today—and will continue to confront regardless of whether Democratic or Republican politicians won office.

The only candidates that addressed this reality are those of the Socialist Workers Party. The socialists put forward, as a central question for working people everywhere, the need to use union power—or to organize unions where we don't have them—as the only road to defend the interests of workers and farmers.

The profit drive is killing not only miners—45 this year alone, including two killed on the job November 4–5 in Arizona and Kentucky. In New York, Klever Ramiro Jara fell to his death from a scaffolding November 1 at a building site where the company had not met several basic requirements. He was the 17th New York construction worker killed on the job in the past year—mostly immigrants—as the city's big contractors rake in millions from the building boom.

As the Socialist Workers Party candidates put forward in their platform, “Working people face an unrelenting offensive by the employers, who—driven by the need to reverse their declining profit rates—are intensifying speedup, closing plants, slashing jobs, lengthening work hours, eroding job safety, cutting pensions and health-care coverage, and seeking to

undermine Social Security and break down class solidarity.”

In face of these assaults, the SWP candidates called for unionizing all workers and unconditional legalization of all immigrants. For socializing health care to provide universal, federally guaranteed, lifetime medical coverage for everyone. For government-funded, affordable credit for working farmers and price supports to cover production costs. For nationalizing the energy monopolies under workers' control of industry. For defending a woman's right to choose and opposing all restriction on access to abortion. And other demands aimed at uniting workers and farmers in struggle against the ruling exploiters.

To defend our interests, working people must start with the world: from the defense of Korea against threats by Washington and its allies, to opposition to the imperialist drive to prevent semicolonial nations from developing nuclear power and other energy sources needed to bring much of humanity out of darkness.

The socialist candidates point to the living example of the Cuban Revolution, which shows the road forward both in the United States and worldwide: to build a revolutionary movement that will lead a fight by working people and our 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.

This is the perspective the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialists are continuing to campaign for 365 days a year. If you agree with it and want to be part of bringing it about, join today!

Socialist Workers campaign: ‘On to next 365 days!’

Continued from front page

for unions in order to respond to the bosses' attacks on wages and working conditions.

In New York City, at an October 30 event sponsored by a campus group at the College of Staten Island, SWP gubernatorial candidate Maura DeLuca debated the Green and Libertarian candidates. In contrast with her opponents, who discussed politics in a New York framework, DeLuca said, “Our campaign begins with the interests of working people in the world.” She opposed U.S. threats against both Korea and Iran, defending the right of these and other countries oppressed by imperialism to develop nuclear power and other energy sources needed to make social and economic advances.

Beyond Election Day, the socialist candidates have invited their supporters to join them in continuing to campaign for the revolutionary working-class perspective—365 days a year.

Below are reports from California and Texas on the Socialist Workers Party's wind-up canvassing efforts.



BY ARLENE RUBINSTEIN

LOS ANGELES—In the home stretch, Socialist Workers Party candidates here and in the San Francisco Bay Area campaigned at factory gates, in workers districts, and on campuses, and took part in debates.

Here in Los Angeles, Michael Ortega, the SWP candidate for U.S. Congress in District 35, joined immigrant workers from Oaxaca, Mexico, and their supporters at a protest outside the Mexican consulate. Daily vigils at the consulate have condemned police attacks against striking teachers in Oaxaca.

Naomi Craine, a sewing machine operator and socialist candidate for Congress in the 34th District, campaigned in Koreatown, a largely Korean and Latino working-class area.

“Our platform starts by pointing to the importance of struggles by workers to organize unions and to mobilize union power to defend ourselves from the bosses' assaults. We also join with other workers in calling for legislation providing unconditional, immediate legalization of all undocumented immigrants. This fight helps strengthen all working people,” Craine told workers and others at the Assi market who stopped to talk. Workers at this market have been fighting for union recognition for several years.

The Socialist Workers Party ran James Harris for governor of California and Lea Sherman for U.S. Senate. On October 27 they were certified as official write-in candidates, along with SWP congressional candidates Naomi Craine and David Argüello.

In San Francisco, Joel Britton, the SWP candidate for the Board of Education, took part in a candidates debate before the editors of the *San Francisco Chronicle* and in a candidates forum sponsored by the San Francisco Alumnae Chapter of the Delta Sigma Theta sorority.

On November 5 Chauncey Robinson, SWP candidate for California secretary of state, joined Britton and Sherman at a “Socialist Candidates Speak Out” sponsored by the Militant Labor Forum in San Francisco. Robinson reported on rallies she had joined at the University of California in Los Angeles to protest the fact that the freshman class of nearly 5,000 there includes only 96 African American students. She also called for ending the denial of diplomas to high school students who fail new “exit exams” but have otherwise met all graduation requirements.

AsianWeek, a newsweekly widely distributed in San Francisco, ran a feature in its November 3 issue, “School Candidates Size Up Gwen Chan.” Chan is the acting superintendent of the San Francisco public school system and described by *AsianWeek* as “the first APA [Asian Pacific American] superintendent” in a city where more than half the students are Asian American.

The paper quotes from a response by Britton to a question posed by *AsianWeek* to all the candidates on Chan's performance:

“The solution to the deep ongoing educational problems faced by working people,” it quoted Britton as saying, “will not come from superintendent Chan's office or whoever succeeds her. Questions of inequalities... need to be addressed by the kind of massive mobilizations that took place last spring demanding ‘Legalization Now!’ for all the undocumented immigrants.”



BY JACQUIE HENDERSON

LUFKIN, Texas—Taking a message of solidarity with striking Goodyear workers and Houston janitors, Socialist Workers Party candidates Amanda Ulman and Anthony Dutrow and their supporters traveled to four eastern Texas cities during the final week of the campaign. Ulman and Dutrow are the party's nominees for U.S. Senate and U.S. Congress in District 18.

Baghdad makes overtures to Sunnis, sentences Hussein

BY SAM MANUEL

The day after Saddam Hussein and two codefendants were sentenced to death for “crimes against humanity,” the Iraqi government announced plans to amend its laws that could result in the reinstatement of thousands of purged Baath party members to their former jobs.

The measures are part of a “national reconciliation” plan launched in June by the U.S.-backed government of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki. It aims to convince wealthy Sunnis to end their support of armed groups that have carried on a sustained campaign of bombings, kidnappings, and executions against U.S. and Iraqi troops, government officials, and Shiite civilians.

Hussein was put on trial in October 2005 for the torture and murder of 148 Shiites from the city of Dujail. Most of them had been executed after being convicted by a Baathist-run court of attempting to assassinate Hussein. About 50 actually died during interrogation.

Barzan Ibrahim and Awad Hamed al-Bandar were also sentenced to death. Ibrahim is Hussein's half-brother and was intelligence chief during the Dujail killings. Al-Bandar headed the court that issued the death sentences against Dujail residents.

Taha Yassin Ramadan, vice-president in Hussein's regime, was convicted of murder and sentenced to life in prison. Three others were sentenced up to 15 years in prison for torture and murder.

The sentences, which were applauded by the White House, now go to an appeals panel. The panel has unlimited time to review the case. If it upholds the sentences the executions are to be carried out within 30 days.

In Beaumont, workers at a Goodyear chemical plant stopped to talk with Ulman and Dutrow alongside the highway as they went into work early in the morning of November 2. The workers have no union and had heard only the company's side of the news on the strike by 15,000 union Goodyear workers in the United States and Canada until they met the socialist campaigners. Fourteen workers bought copies of the *Militant*, which has regularly covered and supported that fight.

On the campus of Angelina College in Lufkin, a student told socialist candidates that he and other students had collaborated with workers at the local Pilgrim's Pride chicken plant who organized walkouts May 1 to demand legalization for undocumented immigrants.

“We're for the unconditional, immediate legalization of all immigrants,” Ulman said on a visit to the Pilgrim's Pride plant, as dozens of workers stopped during shift change to talk with the candidates. Ulman and Dutrow, both meatpackers in Houston, explained that their campaign points to the need for workers to use union power to defend their interests and to organize unions where there are none.

Workers explained how on May 1 they had walked off the job, shut down the plant, and held a large pro-legalization march in the town.

At the Goodyear plant in Tyler, strikers welcomed Dutrow, a frequent visitor to their picket line, and greeted Ulman on her first visit. They confirmed that their strike was still going strong (see front-page article).

At the large Tyson Foods chicken plant in the town of Center, some workers coming off the day shift waved in support of the socialist campaign sign on the Goodyear strike and stopped their cars to find out more about the SWP ticket. Dozens took campaign brochures and 18 bought copies of the *Militant*.

CORRECTION

An article in the November 6 issue on the Goodyear strike did not accurately quote a striker at the Tyler, Texas, plant. The quote should have read: “Goodyear tells the local media we make \$103,000 a year—average pay!” said Rick Shields, a millwright. “Sometimes in maintenance we're forced to work four hours overtime or others decide to work six or seven days, but even then the overall average in the plant is \$45,000 to \$48,000 a year. They never mention the \$32 million the bosses got in bonuses.”