

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 71/NO. 2

JANUARY 15, 2007

UN council imposes sanctions on Iran

BY CINDY JAQUITH

The United Nations Security Council imposed economic sanctions on Iran December 23 on the pretext that it has not ended its uranium enrichment program as part of developing nuclear power. Tehran responded swiftly, declaring the enrichment program would be accelerated.

Washington has been demanding an end to Iran's nuclear program for years, charging that its government is enriching uranium in order to make atomic weapons. Uranium enrichment is necessary to produce fuel for nuclear reactors slated to generate energy. Enriched at higher levels uranium can also be used for nuclear arms. Tehran insists its enrichment program is aimed at developing nuclear power for peaceful purposes, in order to provide sufficient energy for economic development.

The UN sanctions resolution instructs all states to cease supplying Iran with materials or technology that can aid its nuclear or missile programs. It also freezes the assets of several companies and individuals connected to these programs. And it threatens to increase nonmilitary

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Ethiopian military intervenes in Somalia with U.S. support

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

In the last two weeks of December, thousands of Ethiopian troops routed Islamist forces from Somalia's capital, Mogadishu. Washington and other imperialist governments, which back the intervention, are now seeking to stabilize the newly dominant forces in Somalia with African "peacekeeping" troops.

The Ethiopian offensive shifted the balance of forces in Somalia. For the past six months the Somalia Islamic Courts Council (SICC) had ruled Mogadishu and much of the south while a besieged "interim" government, backed by the Ethiopian government and imperialist powers, had a foothold only in the town of Baidoa. Washington opposes the SICC, saying it has links with al-Qaeda.

Since 1991 there has been little central governmental authority in Somalia, as warring clan leaders have vied for power. The crisis in that country, located in the Horn of Africa, is a result of more than a century of colonial rule and underdevelopment by successive imperialist powers—especially London, Rome, and

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Workers condemn immigration raids

Describe brutal impact of arrests



Militant photos by Carlos Samaniego

Worker in Worthington, Minnesota, points to damage to his front door (shown in inset) after immigration agents pounded on it while trying to enter his home following December 12 raids at six Swift packing plants across the United States.

BY CARLOS SAMANIEGO AND HELEN MEYERS

WORTHINGTON, Minnesota—Workers in this southwest Minnesota town are still trying to find relatives and friends arrested in the massive December 12 immigration sweep at plants here and

in five other states owned by the giant meatpacking firm Swift & Company. Many are preparing for immigration hearings. Expressing outrage, they described to *Militant* reporters how they are responding to the brutal impact of

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N.Y. marchers protest cop brutality, efforts to turn victims into criminals



Militant/Dan Fein

1,000 march in Manhattan's Wall Street December 21 against killing of Sean Bell.

BY DAN FEIN

NEW YORK—Protests demanding justice for a 23-year-old worker gunned down by the cops November 26 continue here as police officials step up their campaign to turn the victims into the criminals.

More than 1,000 people marched in Manhattan's financial district December 21 to protest the shooting. Chants included, "Who's the number one enemy? NYPD!" and "50 shots—jail the cops!"

Sean Bell, an African-American who was unemployed at the time, was killed when cops opened fire as he and two friends left a Jamaica, Queens, night-

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U.S. rulers press brutal Iraq war

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, January 3—In a rare opinion column published in today's *Wall Street Journal*, U.S. president George Bush said, "We now have an opportunity to build a bipartisan consensus to fight and win the war" in Iraq. He made a similar point at a White House press conference the same day, following his first cabinet meeting of the year. Bush said he will present a new plan for the war in Iraq

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Chilean gov't decision on contraceptive is controversial

BY RÓGER CALERO

Chile's social democratic government headed by President Michelle Bachelet approved in September the free distribution of emergency contraceptives in public health centers to those over the age of 14. The measure has sparked controversy.

Prior to the decision, the contraceptive, known as the "morning-after pill" was available for free only in cases of rape. For the last five years, it has also been available at private pharmacies for those who could afford it.

The morning-after-pill can be taken up to three days after intercourse and can prevent pregnancy in most cases, according to medical journals.

"We applaud the decision of the Chilean Health Ministry, because we believe it safeguards the rights of women," said Ximena Rojas, assistant director of the Center for the Development of Women, reported the Inter Press Service (IPS) news agency.

Opponents of a woman's right to choose abortion have attacked the government's decision.

According to IPS, Francisco Errázuriz, the Catholic archbishop in Chile's capital, Santiago, considered "the decision by the center-left government a blow to marriage, the birth rate, and

the Chilean family."

The national conference of bishops condemned the government's decision for attempting "to regulate the intimate lives of its citizens."

Mayors in districts controlled by opposition parties have rejected the decision, and have threatened to ban distribution of the pill in their areas.

The government has defended the measure. Ricardo Lagos, a government spokesman, said that sales of the pill "are perfectly legal today, in the eyes of the court." But only those who can afford it have access to it.

Abortion is illegal in Chile. Those undergoing the procedure can be penalized with three to five years in jail; those performing it, 15 months to five years. An estimated 160,000 abortions are performed every year there, and nearly 10 percent of women involved die of complications, according to Chile's Health and Sexual and Reproductive Rights Network.

Government officials have said that decriminalizing abortion is not on the agenda. "We are not going to do absolutely anything in this area, which is not part of our governing program," said Health Minister María Barría, according to the December 17 *New York Times*. When asked why, Barría replied, "We are in a coalition." She was referring to the governing alliance made up of Bachelet's Socialist Party and the Christian Democrats.

In November, Chile's National Congress voted 61-21 not to discuss a bill that would have allowed abortions when the pregnancy put a woman's life at risk or in cases of rape.

Throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, abortion is legal only in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Guyana.

New Jersey: Protesters condemn cop brutality



Militant/Sara Lobman

NEWARK, New Jersey—One hundred people marched and rallied here December 15 to demand justice for Warren Lee, beaten to death October 12 by Newark cops. Demonstrators also carried signs calling for justice for Sean Bell and other victims of police brutality in the area.

—NANCY ROSENSTOCK

Florida cops kill young Black man

BY DEBORAH LIATOS

MIAMI—In the fourth fatal shooting by police in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, over the last six months, cops fired on two African-American youth November 28 killing Troy Eddines and wounding Travis Jackson in the back. Both were 21 years old and unarmed when they were shot, after the SUV vehicle they were driving was pulled over, according to the December 2 *Miami Herald*.

More than 200 people attended a meeting November 30 at a community center in Fort Lauderdale, located in Broward County just north of Miami, to express their outrage and demand an investigation. Marsha Ellison, president of the Fort Lauderdale NAACP, said people are often intimidated about filing complaints with the police department. "When we file a complaint, the one we file a complaint on comes back and harasses us," Sharanda Morgan said.

The NAACP requested a federal investigation into the string of police shootings, and the FBI is now conducting a probe in the killing of Eddines, the *Miami Herald* reported.

Some 350 people attended the funeral for Eddines on December 9 and a vigil was held a few days earlier near the site where the youth was killed.

The local media and the police have tried to paint both men as criminals. The cops have not given an official statement.

Eight people have been killed by police in Broward County in 2006.

For further reading

Abortion is a woman's right!

by Pat Grogan and Evelyn Reed

Why a woman's right to choose abortion is central to forging a united and fighting labor movement. Also available in Spanish. \$5.00



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THE MILITANT

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Ethiopia invades Somalia

Continued from front page

Washington—which have perpetuated clan and ethnic divisions to maintain their domination.

In 1993–94 the Clinton administration sent U.S. marines to Somalia in the name of fighting “warlords.” It failed to impose a stable regime, however, and withdrew its occupation troops, widely despised by Somalis. In 2004 Washington backed an agreement among clan leaders to set up a new, interim government.

In 2006 “the CIA began a covert operation to arm and finance the warlords” against the Islamist forces, the *New York Times* reported December 26. “The operation backfired. When the payments to the warlords shifted the military balance of the country in their favor, the Islamists started a strike against the American-backed coalition and ran it out of Mogadishu.”

In June, SICC troops took over the capital and much of the south. They gained some support with their pledge to bring peace and “order,” through establishing sharia (Islamic) law, and by opposing foreign intervention. “But some of their hardline practices—like closing cinemas and holding public executions—angered some Somalis,” a Reuters news dispatch reported December 31.

After the interim regime retreated to Baidoa, the Ethiopian government, claiming to protect its sovereignty against the “Islamists,” sent troops into Somalia with U.S. encouragement. On December 12 the SICC gave Ethiopian forces a one-week deadline to leave Somalia. Fighting broke out December 19.

Ethiopian troops counterattacked, deploying thousands of soldiers and shelling Mogadishu with planes and tanks. Within a few days, the SICC forces were driven out of the capital and took refuge in Kismayo and other southern towns. Soon afterward the port of Kismayo “was overrun by [interim] government troops backed by Ethiopian tanks and MiG fighter jets,” the Associated Press reported January 2.

U.S. State Department officials

justified the Ethiopian intervention, calling it a response to “aggression” by Islamists. The U.S. military has for years been training Ethiopian troops at bases near Somalia.

U.S. warships from the Djibouti-based U.S. counterterrorism Joint Task Force are patrolling the waters off Somalia’s southern coast, supposedly to block escape by SICC militants. The Kenyan government sealed off its border with Somalia. “The Islamists could bring their war into Kenya,” said Chese Ruto, a Kenyan immigration officer, according to Reuters.

Ethiopian prime minister Meles Zenawi said January 2, “We will stay in Somalia for a few weeks, maybe for two weeks.”

In Mogadishu the new authorities called on people to turn in their weapons or be forcibly disarmed. Supporters of the SICC have been promised amnesty. “Mogadishu residents have greeted the joint Ethiopian and gov-



Reuters/Sahal Abdulle

Ethiopian troops backing Somalia’s “interim” government in Somali capital Mogadishu, December 29, after ousting forces loyal to Council of Islamic Courts.

ernment force with a mix of jubilation, fear, and protests,” Reuters reported.

Many Somalis resent the Ethiopian military presence. Washington, knowing the interim government may not be able to survive by itself, has been push-

ing for “peacekeeping” troops from African countries, a proposal ratified December 7 by the United Nations Security Council. The Ugandan and Nigerian governments have offered to be part of such a military contingent.

UN Security Council slaps sanctions on Iran

Continued from front page

sanctions if Iran does not comply.

The U.S. government had pressed for more severe sanctions, such as a travel ban on Iranians associated with the nuclear program. This was rejected by the representatives of China, Russia, and Qatar, all of which have substantial trade with Iran. The final resolution did include a call for all governments “to exercise vigilance” if any of 12 Iranians who head the country’s nuclear and missile programs travel to, or through, their territory and to report their whereabouts to the Security Council.

Moscow succeeded in amending the document to allow it to continue collaborating with Iran in building an atomic power plant in Bushehr, currently expected to go online in late 2007.

The resolution calls on the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to submit a report to the UN Security Council within 60 days on whether

Iran is complying with its demands.

Iran’s ambassador to the UN, Javad Zarif, pointed to the Security Council’s double standard of sanctioning his country for its nuclear program while doing nothing to Israel, whose prime minister recently admitted it has nuclear weapons.

In Tehran, Ali Larijani, head nuclear negotiator for Iran, announced that in response to the UN action, “we will drive at full speed” to accelerate uranium enrichment at Natanz, site of the country’s main nuclear complex.

The Iranian parliament adopted a bill December 27 requiring the government to “revise” its relations with the IAEA and to speed up efforts to conquer nuclear technology. It gives Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad the power to end IAEA inspections of the country’s nuclear facilities.

While the U.S. government claims Iran does not need nuclear power because of its vast oil reserves, a new study released December 26 by the National Academy of Sciences suggests otherwise. The study found that there has been a big increase in domestic demand for energy in Iran, while investment in oil production has been too low to adequately maintain the nation’s oil fields.

The study’s author, Roger Stern of Johns Hopkins University, wrote that Iran’s supply of oil for export could be used up within the next eight years. Within the next five years, he estimated, Iran’s oil exports, which account for 70 percent of state revenue today, could be half their current size. “It therefore seems possible that Iran’s claim to need nuclear power might be genuine,” Stern wrote.

Meanwhile, Washington is also continuing a unilateral campaign of pressure on Iran to abandon nuclear power. The House International Relations Committee announced that it is opening an investigation into a trade agreement between Iran and the China National Offshore Oil Corp. to develop Iranian gas fields. Committee head Thomas Lantos, a Democrat from California, claimed the agreement could violate recent additions passed by the U.S. Congress to the

Iran Sanctions Act.

U.S. officials have also indicated they are using the UN Security Council resolution to press other governments to end a range of bank and other business deals with Iranian institutions, including the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), which reportedly has extensive business operations.

“This resolution will be a big step forward in getting governments and financial institutions to pay more attention to Iran’s use of deceptive financial practices to facilitate its dangerous conduct and to stop doing business with the IRGC,” said Stuart Levey, U.S. under secretary of the treasury for terrorism and financial intelligence.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

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—CALENDAR—

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Students in Iran protest president’s talk

BY CINDY JAQUITH

Students protested the policies of Iran’s president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, at Amir Kabir University in Tehran in mid-December. Ahmadinejad was addressing students when a small group of youth reportedly started chanting “Death to the dictator!” and “Forget about the Holocaust—do something for us!”

The latter was in reference to a conference Ahmadinejad spearheaded to

promote the idea that the Holocaust—in which 6 million Jews were murdered by the Nazis—is a myth created to justify the existence of Israel.

According to the *New York Times*, some demonstrators burned the president’s picture and Ahmadinejad was forced to cut his speech short.

Unemployment is high in Iran, including for students graduating from college, which was apparently part of what fueled the protests. There is also unrest over the recent firings of university professors who hold political views at variance with the government.

The campus protest was featured on the nightly news by state television and by conservative newspapers, which is unusual.

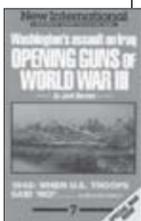
Shortly thereafter, municipal elections took place in Iran. In the Tehran city council race, candidates associated with Ahmadinejad lost out to those of Tehran mayor Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf, who is considered a conservative. Qalibaf’s slate won eight of the 15 seats. Candidates backing Ahmadinejad won three, and “reformers”—supporters of former president Mohammed Khatami—won four.

For Further Reading

**New International no. 7
Opening Guns of World War
III: Washington’s
Assault on Iraq
by Jack Barnes.**

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Coal miners' widows in W. Virginia sue Massey

BY VED DOOKHUN

PITTSBURGH—The widows of two coal miners killed on the job at the Aracoma Alma No. 1 mine in Logan County, West Virginia, filed a lawsuit December 19 against Massey Energy and its president, Donald Blankenship. The women's husbands, Don Bragg, 33, and Ellery Hatfield, 46, were both killed Jan. 19, 2006, after a fire erupted at the mine.

In the suit Delorice Bragg and Freda Hatfield accuse Blankenship and Massey of having "a long history of negligence." They say Massey "created and/or knowingly allowed to exist numerous egregious unsafe working conditions that were likely to cause serious injury and death to its miners."

The lawsuit cites a memo Blankenship issued in October 2005 to all Massey deep mine superintendents. "If any of you have been asked by your group presidents, your supervisors, engineers or anyone else to do anything other than run coal (i.e., build overcasts, do construction jobs, or whatever), you need to ignore them and run coal," it said. "This memo is necessary only because we seem not to understand that coal pays the bills."

This memo, the suit notes, is proof that the company president conveyed "the message to the supervisors that A.T. Massey, Massey Energy, and Don Blankenship personally demanded that the miners produce more coal, and not devote necessary time to safety-related construction projects."

The suit draws largely on evidence presented by the West Virginia Office of Miners' Health, Safety, and Training in a report the agency issued in November. Its findings indicated that Bragg and Hatfield would be alive today had Massey, the biggest coal producer in West Virginia, followed basic safety practices.

Echoing the findings of the report, the lawsuit blames a poorly maintained conveyor belt storage system for the fire. The report said the cause of the fire at Alma No. 1 mine was bad alignment in the head drive and storage area of a coal conveyor belt, which caused the belt to rub against a bearing. That created friction, which ignited coal dust or spillage.

According to the report, state and federal records show the mine had numerous citations for dust accumulations in the year leading up to the disaster. Between October and December 2005, the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) had cited the mine 25 times for safety violations, seven related to ventilation and three with accumulations.

Miners also testified in the state investigation that two fires were extinguished in the two weeks leading up to the fatal fire. No records exist, however, to show whether the company reported these fires to MSHA or state officials.

Brandon Conley, a belt man, testified that on Dec. 23, 2005, the same events happened as those that sparked the Jan. 19, 2006, fire. The belt in the storage area was misaligned, causing a fire. Conley said he tried hooking up a hose, but found the valve did not match the hose. Unable to get enough water pressure, he battled the flame for 30 minutes before he got it under control. Conley reported the fire to foreman Fred Horton who instructed him "not to say fire over the phone, just to say smoke or getting hot or something like that so you don't scare everybody else."

Another belt man, Wyatt Robinson,

testified that a fire broke out Dec. 29, 2005, at the tail piece of a belt. Robinson said a bottom roller had gotten hot and spit flames onto belt shavings next to a coal rib, causing the shavings and rib to catch fire. He said it took 20 minutes working with foreman Dave Meade to extinguish with water hoses the flames that were "three and a half feet wide and three feet high." Robinson expressed concern that the foreman did not order an evacuation despite the size of the fire.

The lawsuit says Massey bosses waited too long to warn Bragg, Hatfield, and others who were further into the mine from the belt where the fire erupted.

The fire broke out on second shift. Belt examiner Bryan Cabell was the first to discover it. He tried unsuccessfully to put it out with extinguishers. In his testimony, Cabell described grabbing the fire hose and trying to connect it, but it did not fit the water valve. He then turned the valve on, but the water had been turned off. The water to the automatic sprinkler system was also off. The state report says, "The two men were lost because more effort was expended in fighting the fire than evacuating the mine."

Bragg and Hatfield were working on a production crew of 12 in a deep section of the mine. The company had not installed a smoke alarm there. The fire burned for more than half an hour before the section crew was notified that something was wrong. They were warned only because a dispatcher outside the mine turned off



Logan Banner/Michael Browning

Delorice Bragg, widow of deceased coal miner Don Bragg, and her son, Lawrence Billy Copley II, at December 19 news conference in Logan, West Virginia, announcing suit against Massey Energy filed by families of two miners killed in the Aracoma Alma No. 1 mine.

the belt line to get their attention.

The miners got into a vehicle and started driving out on an established escape way. But they encountered smoke so thick that they could no longer see. They had to abandon the mine vehicle and proceed by foot in total darkness toward a secondary escape route, feeling their way along the mine walls. When workers reached clean air and could do a head count, they saw that Bragg and Hatfield were no longer with them. Rescue crews found their bodies two days later.

The lawsuit says that ventilation walls, called stoppings, had been removed "at least five weeks before the fire to expand mining operations" and "had not been replaced." The state investigation cited this fact as the main reason why smoke traveled up the intake tunnel into the affected section of the mine and compromised the primary escape

way. "If the stoppings had been in place as required, the miners would have had a clear escape route, and no lives need have been lost," the lawsuit says.

The Coal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1969, won after strikes and other battles by coal miners, prohibited running fresh air into the mine along the conveyor belt that carries coal out. But in 2004 the government issued new regulations allowing this hazardous practice. Many companies now use the tunnel carrying out coal as an air intake to cut costs.

The state report charged 16 mine employees, mostly bosses, with violating safety rules. The state mine safety agency later revoked the licenses of five managers and suspended those of two others.

A criminal investigation is proceeding simultaneously because data in the company's computer were erased sometime before March 2, 2006.

Workers condemn immigration raids

Continued from front page

the raids, in which 1,282 workers were arrested.

Militant reporters interviewed members of a dozen families affected by the raid at the Worthington plant, where 230 people were arrested. Twenty of these workers have now been indicted by a federal grand jury on criminal charges, including 15 for "aggravated identity theft" for supposedly using false IDs.

One of those arrested was Catalina Rodríguez Pérez. She was locked up in the Nobles County Jail here despite the fact she has a 14-month-old child.

On December 17 her coworkers, United Food and Commercial Workers union Local 1161, local churches, and others organized a vigil outside the jail to demand that she be freed. The next day she was released.

Rodríguez Pérez now faces a February hearing. Deprived of an income as she awaits the court date, her family is receiving help from friends and coworkers.

Alberto Ramos, a construction worker, told *Militant* reporters that the factory raid was conducted to intimidate workers. "If you ask the bosses for what you think you deserve, they will say, 'If you don't like what you are getting you can leave.' They know many people don't have documents.

"The union can help," added Ramos, a U.S. citizen born in Mexico. "They don't ask if you have papers or not."

Despite having documents to prove his legal residence status, a Swift worker who requested that his name not be used said cops kept him handcuffed for 10 hours without food or water. "We need the union" to defend workers against these attacks, he said.

A high school student, Blanca, told

the *Militant*, "The day after the raids many people wore white T-shirts in school to show solidarity. Black, white, and Latino students took part. The school principal said we had to take the T-shirts off, but we didn't, and they didn't do anything to us."

Blanca's 15-year-old brother Juan said some classmates wrote protest letters to the governor and to President George Bush saying, "You can deport us, but we will be right back."

The day of the factory sweep, Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents also conducted raids that evening in two trailer parks in Worthington. *Militant* reporters visited one home whose front door still showed dents where the cops pounded on it, demanding to be let in. They banged so hard that several pictures fell off the wall.

A worker living there, who also asked that his name not be published, said that at first they shouted in English, "This is the police." Receiving no response, they yelled in Spanish, "Immigration!"

"I was sure I was not going to open the door," the worker said. "I reinforced the front door with chairs and put anything I could find against the window. Then I began phoning everyone I knew to say that *la migrá* was here. I took my family to the rear bedroom and stayed there until they left." Four people were taken away from his trailer court.

Maura DeLuca from New York and Joe Swanson from Des Moines, Iowa, contributed to this article.



BY JOE SWANSON

GRAND ISLAND, Nebraska—*Militant* reporters visited workers here

affected by the December 12 immigration raid at the Swift beef plant, where federal cops arrested 261 people. At least 15 have been charged with "identity theft" for supposedly using false IDs in order to get a job.

Michelle Lopez, a U.S.-born worker, said her friend was arrested in the raid and is locked up in a prison near Atlanta even though he signed a "voluntary departure" form. To contact him, Lopez has to pay around \$60 for an hour of calls.

Another worker, whose brother was arrested, joined a vigil of more than 200 December 17 to protest the raid. "Many other people arrested with him have been sent back to Mexico," she said. "But they won't let my brother go." They are holding him at a jail south of Omaha on charges of identity theft.

Some of those arrested had documents proving they were legal residents. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officials shipped them to the National Guard's Camp Dodge near Des Moines, Iowa, more than four hours away. Upon release, they were given 30 days to prove their legal status and told to find their own way home.

United Food and Commercial Workers Local 22 here rented vans to bring back these workers, which included mothers who had no one to care for their children.

"By the end of this week, ICE's Air Transportation Unit will have facilitated the removal of more than 4,500 illegal aliens in 14 days," said Julie Myers, assistant secretary of Homeland Security for ICE, according to the December 22 *Grand Island Independent*.

— ON THE PICKET LINE —

New Zealand: hospital workers strike for a national contract

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—More than 100 hospital workers, including cleaners, orderlies, and food service workers, rallied outside south Auckland's Middlemore hospital December 13 to demand a national contract and improved wages.

The 90-minute strike was part of a nationwide action by 2,800 members of the Service and Food Workers Union (SFWU) employed in public hospitals. Currently more than 40 separate agreements exist between the union and contracting companies or the District Health Boards that run the hospitals. Many workers make around the minimum wage of NZ \$10.25 (NZ \$1=U.S. 70 cents).

SFWU delegate (shop steward) Wayne Johnson told the *Militant* the employers are refusing to discuss the union's demand for a Multi-Employer Collective Agreement (MECA). "We are trying to get common conditions throughout the country for orderlies, kitchen workers, and cleaners," he said.

Around 150 workers protested at the central Auckland hospital. Union delegate Sarah Williams said, "More people have been joining the union as a result of this campaign. We need a MECA to help us win better pay and conditions. We should have a nine-hour break between shifts and extra pay for

overtime and weekend work."

—Mike Tucker

Arbitrator imposes pact on New York transit workers

Eleven months after New York transit workers narrowly rejected a contract with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), an arbitrator imposed a virtually identical pact upon the 34,000-member Transport Workers Union (TWU) Local 100 December 15. Under the 37-month agreement, workers must pay for health insurance for the first time ever. The contract also includes yearly wage increases and \$132 million in pension refunds to workers for previous overpayments.

The unionists conducted a three-day strike in December 2005 against MTA's concessionary demands. In April 2006, TWU members approved the pact they had rejected three months earlier, but the MTA refused to recognize the vote. It demanded instead that binding arbitration settle the contract dispute.

—Brian Williams

Steelworkers end strike against Goodyear Tire with new contract

Steelworkers at 16 Goodyear Tire plants in the United States and Canada ended their three-month strike December 29. A three-year agreement, approved by a 2-to-1 margin, will cover 14,000 members of the United



Militant/Catharina Tirsén

Contingent of members of the Municipal Union march at a December 14 demonstration of 5,000 in Stockholm, Sweden, to protest cuts in unemployment benefits.

Steelworkers union at 12 plants in 10 states. The pact creates a \$1 billion health-care fund for retirees, higher than the company's previous \$660 million offer. It also stipulates the closing of the company's factory in Tyler, Texas, by the end of 2007. Unionists at Goodyear's plants in Canada approved separate contracts for each of four locations in Ontario.

—Brian Williams

Unionists in Sweden rally against unemployment benefit cuts

STOCKHOLM, Sweden—More than 40,000 people participated in rallies and demonstrations nationwide December 14 protesting cuts in unemployment benefits. The national trade

union federation, LO, called the actions in 24 places. The largest was in Stockholm, where a midday rally drew 12,000 people, and a late afternoon march, 5,000. In both Gothenburg and Malmö, 5,000 rallied.

Among those joining the action in Stockholm were members of the Print Workers Union, Municipal Workers Union, and Construction Workers Union. The featured speaker was LO national chairperson Wanja Lundby-Wedin. She handed Labor Minister Sven Littorin petitions with 250,000 signatures protesting the cuts. He politely accepted the petitions but said that "chances that we withdraw the proposal are zero."

—Anita Östling

U.S. rulers press Iraq war; Hussein hanged lynch-mob style

Continued from front page

soon, likely before his State of the Union address scheduled for January 23.

According to a Reuters dispatch, Bush "is considering a short-term increase of thousands of U.S. troops to try to bring stability to Baghdad." The U.S. rulers' goal with such a "temporary surge" of their forces is to establish a stable capitalist regime they can rely on in a country torn by sectarian fighting among bourgeois forces vying for a bigger share of power. The bloodletting resulted in the deaths of 16,273 Iraqis last year, according to Iraqi government officials.

The state of the Iraqi regime was highlighted by the lynch-mob style execution of former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein. The leader of Iraq's Baath party police regime, who was overthrown by the U.S.-led invasion in 2003, had been sentenced to death following a lengthy trial. He was being held in a U.S. military prison. Hussein was hanged December 30 in a way that violated even elementary bourgeois standards of justice.

During the execution, Hussein was taunted by guards and a number of the witnesses present, who shouted "Muqtada!" as he was stood at the scaffold. The chant was referring to Muqtada al-Sadr, the leader of a Shiite militia that has carried out indiscriminate murders of Sunnis, including working people, much like pro-Baathist Sunni-led death squads.

Constitutional provisions requiring the three-member presidency council to approve hangings, and a prohibition on carrying out executions on the Muslim holiday of Id al-Adha, were ignored.

At least two Iraqi government officials attending the execution filmed it with cell phone cameras. Those recordings are the likely source of graphic footage now appearing on the internet. As Hussein faces a barrage of derision, including by someone who yells "Go to hell!" the voice of Judge Munir Haddad

can be heard saying, in vain, "Please no! The man is about to die."

Reacting to growing criticism of this degrading mob atmosphere, a U.S. military spokesman claimed U.S. forces had no role in the execution. Gen. William Caldwell said all security matters at the hanging, including searching witnesses for mobile phones, was left to Iraqi authorities, according to Reuters.

Prosecutor Munkith al-Faroon, however, said U.S. soldiers searched those attending the hanging and took mobile phones, including his. The atmosphere was so raucous that al-Faroon threatened to leave, which would have halted the hanging. Iraqi law requires that at

least one prosecutor be present during an execution.

This thuggish conduct has sparked outrage among Sunnis and others, and prompted the Iraqi regime to announce the arrest of a guard who filmed the macabre scenes without authorization.

In order to reverse the ongoing instability, Pentagon officials said the White House may send up to 20,000 additional troops to Iraq, reported the December 29 *New York Times*. Others in the ruling class argue the number falls short of what's needed.

"Bringing security to Baghdad," said an opinion column in the December 27 *Washington Post*, "is possible only with

a surge of at least 30,000 combat troops lasting 18 months or so." Its authors are Jack Keane, a retired Army general, and Frederick Kagan, of the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), a conservative think tank. The two wrote an AEI study outlining the same point, which Bush is considering as an option for Iraq.

In a related development, Washington is sending 3,500 troops to Kuwait as an "on-call force" for the U.S. military's Central Command (CENTCOM), reported the *Armed Forces Press Service*. The troops will be available for use in Iraq and throughout the Middle East. CENTCOM is responsible for U.S. military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

— 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO —

35 CENTS
THE MILITANT
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY, PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

January 22, 1982

MILWAUKEE—After six months, homicide charges have finally been prepared against two cops guilty of murdering Ernest Lacy, a twenty-two-year-old Black youth. The cops, George Kalt and Thomas Eliopul, beat Lacy to death July 9 after they had arrested him on suspicion of a rape they later learned he didn't commit. As a result of technicalities, a third killer cop, James Dekker, faces similar charges from a special prosecutor.

The Black community scored another victory here December 16.

A federal jury upheld charges that Milwaukee cops and officials had violated the civil rights of Daniel Bell, a twenty-three-year-old Black youth killed in 1958. The jury awarded \$1.8 million in damages to Bell's family.

Milwaukee policeman Thomas Grady planted a knife on Bell after shooting him in the back.

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

January 14, 1957

The U.S. Senate on Jan. 4 voted 55-38 to make any effective civil rights legislation impossible for the next two years. This was accomplished by voting to retain Rule 22 under which the Southern Democrats can filibuster to death any bill they really want to stop.

The fight to amend Rule 22 liberal Democrats have been promising since the election returns revealed major Negro dissatisfaction with the Democratic Party, turned out to be a fight in name only. In fact it was carried on not only without harsh feeling on either side but even without harsh words. The whole show took place in the frame of a "unanimous consent" agreement. Senate Majority leader Lyndon Johnson (D-Tex.) got all the Senators from liberals Humphrey (D-Minn.) and Douglas (D-Ill.) to white-supremacists Eastland (D-Miss.) and Talmadge (D-Ga.) to agree unanimously to his plan.

THE MILITANT
Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America (Opposition)

January 16, 1932

Ghandi, V. Patel, J. Nehru have been arrested by the Indian authorities. As a protest, the cotton, the bullion, the piece goods, the seed and the stock exchanges in Bombay and other cities have been closed. For the time being, the nationalist bourgeoisie still holds the reins firmly.

In a recent interview with Parisian newspapermen, Ghandi expressed the opinion that in the event of "sudden" emancipation, a free India would not very well be able to dispense with a regular standing army. The newspapermen showered questions on the saintly man and he answered nearly all with saintly patience and serenity. There was one question, however, which he evaded with the sleekness of an eel. That question was in regard to his attitude toward the Russian revolution. The "Mahatma" did not appear pleased at all by the suggestion of a comparison between the Indian revolution and the Russian.

Manifestos of revolutionary struggle in Americas adopted by Cuban people

The following is the preface to the new book *The First and Second Declarations of Havana*, which will be published by Pathfinder Press this month. Mary-Alice Waters, the author of the preface, is the book's editor as well as the editor of the *New International Magazine*. Copyright © 2007 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the Militant.

BY MARY-ALICE WATERS

This new expanded publication of the First and Second Declarations of Havana, issued simultaneously in Spanish and English, was born at the November 2006 Venezuela International Book Fair. It is the product of wide-ranging political discussions surrounding the presentation in Caracas of the two most recent issues of *Nueva Internacional*, a magazine of Marxist

PREFACE TO NEW BOOK

politics and theory, and of several books published by Pathfinder Press.

Today in Venezuela substantial numbers of workers, farmers, and student youth, as well as oppressed national minorities of many origins—African, indigenous, Chinese, Indian, Arab, and more—are being politicized by popular struggles that have been a driving force in Venezuelan politics the last decade. Struggles for land, for greater workers control over the safety, pace, and conditions of work, for access to education, health care, water, electricity, and housing. Struggles to retake control over the country's vast patrimony of natural resources. Defense of Venezuela's sovereign right to extend a hand of solidarity to oppressed and embattled peoples throughout the Americas and the world, including collaboration with the revolutionary government and people of Cuba. Resistance to economic sabotage by entrenched capitalist owners of industry, financial institutions, land, and means of communication, as well as their multiple attempts to oust the popularly elected government of Venezuela. Struggles marked by a growing popular awareness of the powerful

'Nowhere are the questions of revolutionary strategy that today confront men and women on the front lines of struggles in the Americas addressed with greater truthfulness and clarity than in the First and Second Declarations of Havana, adopted by million-strong assemblies of the Cuban people in 1960 and 1962...'



Front page of Sept. 3, 1960, *Revolución*, daily newspaper of the July 26 Movement, following approval of the First Declaration of Havana by the National General Assembly of the Cuban People. It reads, "In the world's largest assembly THE PEOPLE DECIDED: To approve the 'Declaration of Havana'; to reject the declaration of Costa Rica; to accept aid from the USSR and China; to break the military treaty with the U.S.; to establish relations with People's China; to challenge the governments in Latin America to likewise convene their peoples; to proclaim the rights of man in Latin America."

imperialist interests inextricably intertwined with, and ultimately calling the shots for, Venezuela's capitalist class.

More than once since 1998, these conflicts have surged and ebbed and surged again over various issues and in different parts of the country, both exposing and

being driven by deep social and political contradictions. Among the most committed of the popular forces, especially the youth, the thirst for a class perspective—a revolutionary socialist perspective—has grown, and along with it the thirst for a broader knowledge of the

modern history of popular revolutionary movements. Why have some succeeded while others have failed?

This thirst was evident in the crowds thronging the stands and other events at the book fair. It marked the hours of nonstop political discussion and debate at the booth featuring books, pamphlets, and magazines distributed by Pathfinder Press, where the best-selling titles were the newest issues of *Nueva Internacional* featuring "Capitalism's Long Hot Winter Has Begun" and "Our Politics Start with the World" by Jack Barnes.

Significant strategic questions

The questions debated were not insignificant.

Are the program and strategic course that resulted in the victory of workers and farmers in the Bolshevik-led 1917 October Revolution, as well as the debates that led to the formation in 1919 of a new revolutionary international—explained with such clarity by V.I. Lenin—still worth studying a

century later? Or are the class forces shaping the world of the twenty-first century so fundamentally different that the Russian Revolution and the trajectory of the first five years of the Communist International are largely irrelevant? Are the political foundations of revolutionary activity today the same as those presented by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels?

Has the decreasing proportion of often landless rural toilers throughout Latin America relative to the growing size of the urban proletariat and layers of small traders and the jobless made the worker-farmer alliance an anachronism? Or does that alliance remain central to the very possibility of a successful revolutionary strategy for the working class?

Can capitalism be made to serve the interests of the toilers by establishing manufacturing cooperatives, comanagement ventures, and similar schemes? Or do the workings of capital, explained by Marx almost a century and a half ago, continue to dominate social relations so long as the working class has not taken power?

Are there progressive layers of the capitalist class in underdeveloped countries capable today of leading the militant toilers in struggle against imperialist domination? Or do these exploiters, no matter how rankled by the fetters of the imperialist masters, recoil from the revolutionary masses and act to suppress their struggles?

Has imperialism changed its spots? Or is a violent and bloody assault on the conquests of the working classes inevitable when the owners see a weakness that offers an opportunity to roll back inroads on their privileges and prerogatives?

Is socialism a set of ideas? Or is it—as Marx and Engels pointed out in the Communist Manifesto, and as has been confirmed in blood and sweat over a century and a half of popular struggles—the line of march of the working class toward power, a line of march "springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes"?

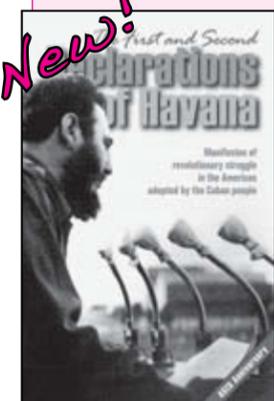
Clarity of two declarations

Nowhere are these kinds of questions that today confront men and women on the front lines of struggles in Latin America addressed with greater truthfulness and clarity than in the First and Second Declarations of Havana, presented by Cuban prime minister Fidel Castro and adopted by million-strong General Assemblies of the Cuban People on September 2, 1960, and February 4, 1962. That is why Pathfinder decided these declarations need to be broadly available today, presented in a way that helps make them and their interconnections more transparent and accessible to new generations of militants who did not live the tumultuous revolutionary events in the heat of which these documents were forged and signed on to by millions.

Included in this new Pathfinder book are more than a dozen pages of photos bringing those days alive and making them more understandable for readers

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These uncompromising indictments of imperialist plunder and "the exploitation of man by man," adopted by million-strong assemblies of the Cuban people in 1960 and 1962, affirm the power of the great mass of toiling humanity that "has begun to march." They continue to stand as manifestos of revolutionary struggle by working people the world over. Also in Spanish. \$10

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Bohemia

Presenting the First and Second Declarations of Havana together makes it possible “to place ourselves inside the historical turning points that linked them,” says Waters. Above, left: Cuban telephone worker removes name from formerly U.S.-owned telephone company after it was nationalized, August 1960. Above, right: Police attack demonstrators with firehoses during the 1963 Battle of Birmingham, a battleground in the U.S. civil rights movement. Right: Mass demonstration in Algiers welcomes soldiers of the Algerian National Liberation Army, July 5, 1962. Algeria’s newly independent government was the first recipient of Cuba’s internationalist aid in Africa.



Bob Adelman

today; a chronology situating in history the declarations themselves and the events they talk about, explaining references and inferences that those who heard or read these words nearly half a century ago understood without need of further comment; a glossary and notes identifying people and historical events otherwise unfamiliar to many readers today; and an index to aid those who will study and reread these declarations with close attention.

While the Second Declaration of Havana has been more widely known since it was adopted some forty-five years ago, putting the First and Second Declarations together in the order they were presented is what makes it possible to place ourselves inside the historical turning points that linked them.

First Declaration of Havana

The first National General Assembly of the Cuban People was convoked on September 2, 1960, during the most intense period of mass mobilization the revolution had yet known. In the weeks before and after that outpouring, in response to the imperialists’ increasing

acts of armed terror and economic sabotage, hundreds of thousands of workers were taking control of more and more industrial enterprises in Cuba—factory after factory was “intervened,” as Cuban workers termed it, and then nationalized by the revolutionary government.

In June 1960 three major imperialist-owned oil trusts in Cuba had announced their refusal to refine petroleum bought from the Soviet Union. Cuban workers responded by taking control of refineries owned by Texaco, Standard Oil, and Shell and refining the oil themselves. Within days U.S. president Dwight D. Eisenhower ordered punitive action, slashing by 95 percent the quota of sugar Washington had earlier agreed to import during the remaining months of 1960. Within seventy-two hours, the Soviet Union announced it would purchase all Cuban sugar the U.S. refused to buy.

Across the island, Cubans responded by defiantly proclaiming “*Sin cuota pero sin bota*”—without the U.S. market, but with the imperial boot no longer on our neck.

On August 6, as the capitalists’ economic sabotage escalated, the revolutionary government adopted a decree expropriating the “assets and enterprises located on national territory . . . that are the property of residents and nationals of the United States.” The following days and nights became known in Cuba as the Week of National Jubilation. Tens of thousands of Cubans celebrated by marching through the streets of Havana bearing coffins containing the symbolic remains of U.S. companies such as the United Fruit Company and International Telephone and Telegraph, tossing them into the sea.

By the end of October, Cuban workers and peasants, supported by their government, had expropriated virtually all imperialist-owned banks and industry, as well as the largest holdings of Cuba’s capitalist class, including such icons as Bacardi rum. Together with the 1959 agrarian reform, which expropriated millions of acres of the largest landed estates and issued titles to some 100,000 landless peasants, property relations in city and countryside had been transformed, definitively establishing the character of the revolution as socialist—the first in the hemisphere—and making clear to all that state power now served the historic interests of working people.

‘Road pointed out by Marx’

Participating alongside the Cu-

ban people in the events of this historic turning point were many of the nearly one thousand young people from across Latin America, as well as the United States, Canada, the Soviet Union, China, and elsewhere, who had traveled to Cuba to take part in the First Latin American Youth Congress that opened July 26, 1960, in the Sierra Maestra mountains. Among those who that summer were convinced of the

necessity, and the possibility, of emulating the revolutionary road traveled by the Cuban people were a good many of the future leaders of revolutionary struggles throughout the Americas. This included young leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance in the United States.

It was Che Guevara, in his welcoming speech to the youth congress delegates on July 28, who explained to them—and to the world—that “if this revolution is Marxist—and listen well that I say ‘Marxist’—it is because it discovered, by its own methods, the road pointed out by Marx.”

As this tumultuous transformation was unfolding, the foreign ministers of the member countries of the Organization of American States met in San José, Costa Rica, at the end of August. Under the guiding hand of Washington, they adopted a resolution that, while never mentioning Cuba by name even once, condemned “energetically the intervention . . . by an extra-continental power in the affairs of the American republics”; rejected the “attempt of the Sino-Soviet powers to make use of the political, economic, or social situation of any American state,” as a course endangering “the peace and security of the hemisphere”; declared that the “inter-American system is incompatible with any form of totalitarianism” [one could only wish!]; and proclaimed that “all member states . . . are under obligation to submit to the discipline of the inter-American system.”



Corbis/Bettman

This was the “Declaration of San José” answered September 2 by the “Declaration of Havana.” Extending “the hand of friendship to the people of the United States—including Black people subjected to lynching, persecuted intellectuals, and workers forced to accept the leadership of gangsters,” the National General Assembly of the Cuban People searingly replied that imperialist domination of Latin America and the policies of the U.S. government were the reason “the peace and security of the hemisphere and the world” were endangered.

The assembly affirmed “that the unsolicited offer of the Soviet Union to aid Cuba if our country is attacked by imperialist military forces cannot be considered an act of intervention, but rather a clear act of solidarity.” And it proclaimed openly and publicly “before the Americas and the world that it accepts with gratitude the help of rockets from the Soviet Union should our territory be invaded by military forces of the United States.”

It rejected with indignation the self-serving, U.S.-instigated OAS document alleging that the Cuban Revolution was the product of Soviet or Chinese intervention in the Americas as opposed to “the just response of Cuba to crimes and injuries perpetrated by imperialism in Latin America.” It announced that the Cuban government would immediately establish diplomatic relations with the People’s

Continued on page 8

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Preface to Havana declarations

Continued from page 7

Republic of China and break all ties with Taiwan.

It condemned “the exploitation of man by man, and the exploitation of the underdeveloped countries by imperialist finance capital” as the real obstacle to democracy and freedom in the Americas and pledged that the Cuban people would not fail their brothers and sisters of Latin America who “take up the arms of liberty.”



“Politics begin where millions of men and women are; where there are not thousands, but millions. That is where serious politics begin,” Lenin reminded delegates to the 1918 congress of the Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik) a few months after the triumph of the October Revolution. That is the power that speaks through the First and Second Declarations of Havana, the power evident in the photos included here of those immense concentrations of confident, joyous, and determined toilers in the midst of deciding their own future.

Between the two declarations

The year and a half between the First and Second Declarations was marked above all by the “serious politics” of millions.

- Cuban prime minister Fidel Castro’s September 1960 presentation of “The Case of Cuba” before the General Assembly of the United Nations, which he ended by citing the closing portions of the First Declaration of Havana summarizing what the Cuban Revolution stands for;

- the mobilizations across the island accompanying the revolutionary government’s Urban Reform Law nationalizing housing, slashing rents to 10 percent of a family’s income, and thus putting an end, in the words of the Second Declaration of Havana, to “the abusive system that turned housing into a means of exploiting people”;

- Washington’s decision to break diplomatic relations with Havana;

- the mobilization of 100,000 young people to the furthest reaches of the countryside and working-class barrios in the massive, successful campaign that wiped out illiteracy in Cuba in less than a year (establishing the model for the hundreds of thousands of Cuban volunteer teachers and medical personnel who in coming decades would put their training to use among those oppressed by imperialism the world over);

- the U.S.-organized and -financed invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs in April 1961, which ended less than seventy-two hours later in ignominious defeat with the surrender of the invading mercenaries;

- the beginning of the first “Freedom Rides” across the U.S. South to challenge Jim Crow segregation in interstate public transportation;

- Che Guevara’s denunciation at Punta del Este, Uruguay, in August 1961 of the fraud of the U.S. government’s newly launched Latin American “Alliance for Progress”;

- Cuba’s first internationalist aid to Africa, sending arms and ammunition to Algeria’s National Liberation Front (FLN) fighting French colonial rule and providing treatment to wounded combatants as well as housing and education to orphans of the war;

- the imposition of a total trade em-

bargo against Cuba by the U.S. government on February 3, 1962.

Cuban people respond

What was the Cuban people’s response to the announcement that foreign ministers of the Organization of American States would meet in Punta del Este in late January 1962 to consider collective measures to counter “the threat to the peace and political independence of the American states” arising from intervention by “extra-continental powers”?

“Now that they’re preparing the stage to carry out the puppets’ farce,” Fidel announced to a mass rally on January 2 celebrating the third anniversary of the victory over the tyranny, “let’s mobilize!”

When is the foreign ministers meeting? The twenty-second? Very well then, on the 22nd we are also going to mobilize here at the Plaza of the Revolution! [*Prolonged applause*] On the 22nd we’re going to convene the Second General Assembly of the Cuban People! [*Applause*] And we are going to proclaim the Second Declaration of Havana! [*Applause*] The entire people. It will not just be the people of Havana, it will come from other provinces, anyone who is able to come, and it will be the most gigantic event of the revolution, of the people [*Applause*] to present to the world the Second Declaration of Havana, and to show the imperialists our readiness to fight, and to show the puppets what a revolutionary people is, what a free people is, what a heroic people is! [*Applause*]

On February 4 over a million Cubans answered that call to arms, effectively repudiating the resolutions adopted four days earlier by what they referred to as the “Yankee ministry of colonies.” The OAS foreign ministers meeting in Punta del Este unanimously condemned a supposed “subversive offensive of communist governments” whose aim “is the destruction of democratic institutions and the establish-



Bohemia

Peasants in Cuba sign the Second Declaration of Havana in 1962

ment of totalitarian dictatorships at the service of extra-continental powers”; declared that “the present government of Cuba, which has officially identified itself as a Marxist-Leninist government, is incompatible with the principles and objectives of the inter-American system”; expelled Cuba from the OAS; established an Inter-American Defense Council watchdog committee against “subversion,” with executive powers; and urged that appropriate steps be taken by member states for their individual and collective self-defense.

Fear of revolution

As the National General Assembly of the Cuban People clarified: “For the Yankee imperialists, ‘subversion’ means the struggle of hungry people for bread, the struggle of peasants for land, the struggle of the peoples against imperialist exploitation. A watchdog committee with executive powers within the Inter-American Defense Council means a continental repressive force against the peoples, a force under the command of the Pentagon. ‘Collective measures’ means the landing of Yankee marines in any country of the Americas.”

“What is it that is hidden behind the

Yankees’ hatred of the Cuban Revolution,” the assembly asked? What is it that unites

for the same aggressive ends the richest and most powerful imperialist power in the contemporary world and the oligarchies of an entire continent . . . against a small country of only 7 million inhabitants, economically underdeveloped, without financial or military means that could threaten the security or economy of any other country? . . .

What unifies them and incites them is fear. . . . Not fear of the Cuban Revolution, but fear of the Latin American revolution. . . . Fear that the plundered people of the continent will seize the arms from their oppressors and, like Cuba, declare themselves free peoples of the Americas.

This perspective of the revolutionary struggle to take political power from the capitalists and defend it arms in hand is what lies at the center of the Second Declaration of Havana. The affirmation of the courage and political organization necessary to accomplish that task. The vista opened by a rising wave of revolutionary struggles throughout the Americas, and the example of the Cuban workers and farm-

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Oppose sanctions on Iran

Working people should oppose the UN Security Council sanctions against Iran, engineered by Washington and its imperialist allies. They are a blatant violation of that country's sovereignty.

The measures, rationalized by unsubstantiated U.S. and allied claims that Iran's government is secretly trying to build atomic weapons, are aimed at pressuring Tehran to stop development of its nuclear industry. They have nothing to do with preventing the spread of war or of "weapons of mass destruction" in the region, as shown by Washington's support for India's nuclear arms program. From the occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq, to the unceasing threats against Iran and Syria, to the military conflict in Somalia, Washington, not Tehran, is the aggressor.

The sanctions are the latest move in a years-long U.S.-led campaign aimed at installing a more pliant regime in Iran. Washington and its allies lost a steady friend in that country when a popular revolution ended the brutal reign of the U.S.-backed shah in 1979. The current government, a bourgeois clerical regime whose anti-Semitism and other policies undermine the interests of Iran's toilers, is not one Washington can rely on to carry out its "long war" on "terrorism." A war whose ultimate target are working people around the world and any government that doesn't bow its head to the dictates of the masters of finance capital.

The demand by the billionaires who rule the United States that Iran end uranium enrichment, in effect abandoning its nuclear program, reeks of imperial arrogance. A third of the world's toilers do not have access to modern means of energy, including sections

of Iran's population. Electrification is a basic precondition for industrial and agricultural development of the semicolonial world—the majority of humanity. The governments of these countries have the sovereign right to develop the energy sources they need to bring their populations out of darkness.

The imperialist powers have effectively nullified the 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty by barring "nonnuclear weapons states" from developing technology and facilities needed to produce enriched uranium, the required fuel for nuclear energy. Washington and its allies have established a nuclear club that includes governments they count on to do their bidding, while denying billions access to electricity that could improve their living conditions and broaden their political horizons.

Tehran insists its nuclear program is aimed at meeting the country's growing energy needs. While Iran's population has doubled since the 1979 revolution, its oil production is only 70 percent of the 1979 level. What's more, decades of imperialist domination have prevented Iran from developing modern industry. While an oil-rich nation, Iran lacks the refining capacity to turn the crude natural resource into a usable product. As a result, the country imports 43 percent of its gasoline.

Washington is the only government ever to have used nuclear weapons, when it unleashed them on the civilian populations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of World War II. It now has the audacity to claim it is safeguarding the world from a "nuclear threat" posed by Iran, north Korea, or other "rogue nations."

Let's demand: Hands off Iran! Lift the sanctions!

N.Y. protesters condemn cop brutality

Continued from front page

club. Five plainclothes policemen fired 50 shots at Bell, Trent Benefield, 23, and Joseph Guzman, 31, as the three sat in Bell's car after celebrating his bachelor party. Benefield, shot three times, was released from the hospital December 5; Guzman, shot 16 times, is still recovering at a Jamaica hospital. All three men were unarmed, and the survivors and witnesses insist that the cops did not identify themselves before firing.

"I came to show support. It could have been me," Ajani Tudor, 14, a student at John Dewey High School, told the *Militant* at the December 21 protest. "It's not right for Blacks to be killed like this."

"It's not over," said Jermaine, 25, who asked that his last name not be used. "We got to get the cops arrested and tried and a speedy conviction."

The day before, 100 people gathered near the shooting site. Many workers passing by on their way home joined the rally at the busy Jamaica intersection. Juanita Young, whose son Malcolm Ferguson was killed by cops in 2001, and Margarita Rosario, whose son and nephew were gunned down by police in 1995, both spoke at the action.

On January 1, several dozen of Bell's friends and relatives began a 50-day vigil outside the 103rd police precinct in Queens.

"We are looking to see an indictment," said Bell's cousin Kinglarry Crawford. "It doesn't matter if you have a badge . . . if you are a criminal, you need to be indicted."

As protests persist, cops have continued their slander campaign against the victims. Police officials an-

nounced December 22 that Bell's blood-alcohol level at the time of his death was above the 0.08 percent limit for driving in New York State. "If the reports are true, his judgment was impaired," said Michael Palladino, president of the Detectives' Endowment Association (DEA). "His behavior was reckless and life-threatening to the officer he hit."

Palladino was referring to the cops' claim that Bell's car hit a detective and then an unmarked police van before the cops began shooting. Eyewitnesses and a preliminary police report contradict this story, explaining that Bell began driving only after the cops opened fire on his car.

"No matter what his blood-alcohol level was, he is a victim," said Bell family attorney Sanford Rubenstein.

On December 29, a judge threw out a 2005 disorderly conduct and trespassing summons against Benefield due to lack of evidence. The day before, Benefield and five others were arrested in a police gambling raid in Harlem. Benefield denies he was gambling. Meanwhile, the DEA has launched a campaign asking the public to "withhold judgment" until an official investigation has been completed. A grand jury has been convened.

In a related development, a cop was suspended for 30 days without pay December 29 for "failing to safeguard his gun" when he killed 19-year-old Timothy Stansbury in January 2004. Phyllis Clayburne, Stansbury's mother, condemned the "very light penalty."

"That's why they do what they do, because they know they can get away with it," she said.

LETTERS

Pinochet I

Just a suggestion. How about an article on Pinochet? I was in Buenos Aires when he died, and the press there, as well as most people I talked with, seemed most interested in celebrating the death of a tyrant, with the implication that Chileans are now safe.

The other thing that might be worth pointing out is that despite the fact that Pinochet is now a bit of an embarrassment to most politi-

cal figures in Chile, including most spokespeople for big companies, they all revel in at least one part of his legacy: the destruction of the social "safety net" and the implementation of the "Chicago school" of economic strategy.

Gordon Fox
Tampa, Florida

Pinochet II

I think it would be useful to have something in the *Militant* about Pi-

nochet. Maybe a reprint of a *Militant* article from September 1973.

Dan Fein
New York, New York

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.

Preface to new book

Continued from page 8

ers proving, "Yes, it can be done."

The impact the Second Declaration of Havana had at the time is hard to appreciate without recalling that the necessity, and possibility, of the plundered peoples of the continent emulating the road to power of the Cuban workers and farmers was precisely what was denied—and feared—by the large majority of parties throughout Latin America that fraudulently wore the label worker, or communist, or socialist. "The duty of every revolutionist is to make the revolution," not "sit in the doorways of their houses waiting for the corpse of imperialism to pass by"—not to wait for supposedly unripe objective conditions to ripen, as many parties claimed to be doing. That ringing declaration was a fresh wind sweeping through the Americas.

As Fidel Castro, recalling the circumstances surrounding the First and Second Declarations of Havana, told CNN in a television interview on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the victory over the Batista tyranny, "Yes, we did want a revolution, and what's more, we believed that such a revolution was possible—we were absolutely convinced that it was possible in Latin America. And that would probably have changed the course of history."

What Second Declaration explains

Most important, the declaration effectively explained to the vanguard of workers, farmers, and revolutionary-minded youth increasingly engaged in struggles throughout the Americas, including the United States, why the possibilities of success were in their hands and none others.

- It explained why the national bourgeoisie is incapable of leading a struggle against imperialist domination "even when its interests are in contradiction to those of Yankee imperialism . . . for the national bourgeoisie is paralyzed by fear of social revolution and frightened by the cry of the exploited masses."

- It explained why no revolution could succeed unless the working class was capable of leading the struggle in the countryside as well, forging and continuously working to maintain a powerful alliance in struggle with the peasantry, with the oppressed indigenous peoples of the Americas, with the Blacks, the Chinese, and the other super-exploited sections of the population. Over and over, it pointed to the importance of the unfolding mass struggles by Blacks to bring down the system of Jim Crow segregation in the United States.

- It explained how unity in action of the toilers against imperialism and its agents, without which no revolutionary victory is possible, could be achieved only if sectarianism, dogmatism, and the deliberate fostering of division as opposed to common struggle could be eradicated.

- It explained the "bloody drama" Washington and its puppets were preparing for Latin America—one that soon became all too real—as the great masses of the continent began to rise in struggle, and the fatal illusion of believing in the possibility under such conditions of "wresting power by legal means, means that do not and will not exist, from the hands of ruling classes that are entrenched in all the state positions," a power they "will defend by blood and fire and with the might of their police and armies."

And it pointed to the revolutionary victory at Playa Girón—Washington's first military defeat in the Americas—as the example that the Cuban people gave to the world "that revolution is possible."



These were lessons the Cuban people themselves were writing in blood with their own struggles in the months that linked the First and Second Declarations of Havana. They remain as true today as they were nearly fifty years ago, as true as they have been since 1848.

It is in that spirit that this new presentation of the First and Second Declarations of Havana is being published.

And it is to those who will use it in that manner that it is dedicated.

January 2007