

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Labor defense effort grew out of Utah miners' union drive

—PAGE 7

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 71/NO. 5

FEBRUARY 5, 2007

Protesters seek justice in killings by Houston cops

BY JACQUIE HENDERSON

HOUSTON, January 20—"It's you, Chief Hurtt! It's not just the officer who killed my son, it's you!" Danita McIntosh cried out as she confronted Houston police chief Harold Hurtt at a meeting in the Greater Lighthouse Church here January 17. The Sunnyside neighborhood church is less than a block from where her son, Robert McIntosh, 23, was shot dead at a traffic stop January 8 by police officer Leonard Smith.

"You don't show us any respect and you have the nerve to come here and expect it from us," she said.

The meeting, which drew more than 100 people, was the latest in a series of vigils, demonstrations, and press conferences.

Continued on page 4

Gov't targets meat packers with criminal indictments

BY HELEN MEYERS

DES MOINES, Iowa—U.S. attorney general Alberto Gonzales announced January 16 that federal authorities have issued criminal indictments against 148 of the nearly 1,300 workers arrested in the December 12 immigration raids at Swift meatpacking plants in six states.

The workers are accused of acquiring other peoples' Social Security numbers and personal information with the purpose of gaining employment at Swift and Co. Of those indicted, 108 workers have been accused of "aggravated identity theft," which carries a mandatory minimum prison sentence of two years.

In addition state indictments are being issued in Utah and Colorado.

Five weeks after the raids by Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Continued on page 3

Imperialist war in Iraq escalates

More U.S. troops sent to Baghdad
Bipartisan support for war strong



Reuters/Ceerwan Aziz

U.S. convoy in Baghdad January 22. Another 3,200 U.S. soldiers have been deployed in Iraqi capital as part of Washington's plan to send 21,500 more troops to Iraq.

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, January 24—More U.S. troops have begun moving into Baghdad, as part of Washington's plan to escalate the war in Iraq by deploying an additional 21,500 troops to the Iraqi capital and nearby Anbar province. The first brigade, some 3,200 members of the 82nd Airborne Division, has arrived.

Despite partisan rhetoric of "opposition" to the White House plan, bipartisan support for the imperialist wars in Iraq

Troops out now from Iraq, Afghanistan!
U.S. hands off Iran!

—Editorial, p. 9

and Afghanistan remains strong.

Over the last week, U.S. forces and Iraqi government troops arrested a top Iranian official.

Continued on page 3

All out to Washington Jan. 27!

Join Young Socialists/Socialist Workers Party contingent in demanding:

Not one penny, not one person for Washington's wars!
Bring the troops home now!

Join the Young Socialists for an open house after the march

2:30 - 5:00 p.m. Political presentation at 3:30 p.m.

Lincoln House Restaurant, 504 10th St. NW, Washington DC (between E & F)

For more information: (845) 706-4811; www.themilitant.com; or *Militant* distributors (see p. 8)

NEW YORK CITY » SUNDAY, JANUARY 28

Imperialism's Spreading Wars and Financial Disorder in Face of Irreversible Strengthening of U.S. Working Class

Launch Pathfinder's new book,
The First and Second Declarations of Havana
Available for first time at the meeting!

Speakers include:

Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party

Mary-Alice Waters, editor of *New Internationalist* and editor of *The First and Second Declarations of Havana*

Reception 2 p.m. ~ Program 3 p.m.
Dinner, Refreshments, Talk and Music: 6 p.m. till...

SEIU Local 32BJ building, 101 Sixth Ave. (Avenue of the Americas)
Between Grand and Watts streets, Manhattan
(2 blocks north of Canal St. stop of A, C, and E trains and east of Canal St. on 1 line)

Suggested donation: \$10 program/\$10 dinner

Sponsored by the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists
For more information: (212) 736-2540 or (973) 481-0077

April 7 actions to demand: 'Hands off Cuba, Venezuela! Free Cuban 5!'
Int'l youth campaign calls for release of framed-up Cubans in U.S. prisons

BY RÓGER CALERO
AND JACOB PERASSO

NEW YORK—Actions have been called for April 7 in New York and Los Angeles to demand an end to Washington's threats and hostile moves against Cuba, Venezuela, and Bolivia, and freedom for the Cuban Five—Cuban revolutionaries framed-up and imprisoned in the United States.

The demonstrations are taking place during an international youth campaign to help educate and broaden support for the Cuban Five.

Continued on page 2

'Militant' sub renewal drive off to good start

BY OLYMPIA NEWTON

January 24—A five-week campaign to expand the *Militant's* long-term readership is off to a running start. More than 60 readers have renewed or bought new long-term subscriptions in the first five days of the effort.

The drive, which runs from January 20 through February 25, aims to win Continued on page 4

Also Inside:

Toys 'R' Us restores prize to child of Chinese immigrants 2

Soldier fights court-martial for refusing to go to Iraq 3

YS: Socialist revolution only way to end imperialist wars 4

Connie Harris: six decades of class-struggle activity 6

After protests, Toys ‘R’ Us restores prize to child of Chinese immigrants

BY MARTIN KOPPEL

After protests by Asian-American rights organizations, Toys “R” Us announced January 6 that it would award a Chinese-American infant a \$25,000 prize for being the first U.S. baby born in 2007, reversing its decision to disqualify the girl because her parents are undocumented immigrants.

The giant toy chain had said it would grant the prize, a savings bond, to the winner of its “First Baby of the Year Sweepstakes” and encouraged all “expectant New Year’s mothers” to apply. At the stroke of midnight, three infants were tied for being the first newborns. Yuki Lin, born at New York City’s Downtown Hospital, won a runoff drawing.

After announcing that the girl’s parents had won, Toys “R” Us withdrew the prize from Han Lin and Yan Zhu Liu, 22-year-old restaurant workers in New York’s Chinatown. It said the contest was open only to legal U.S. residents. Although Yuki Lin is a U.S. citizen by birth, her parents reportedly are not legal residents.

The decision sparked outrage in Asian-American communities. “She was deprived of \$25,000 intended to be used for her college education because of who her parents are,” said Albert Wang, a New York lawyer who launched a protest campaign.

“Toys ‘R’ Us is sending a message to Yuki and to all Americans born in the United States that she is a second-class citizen,” said Vicki Shu Smolin, president of the New York chapter of the Organization of Chinese Americans (OCA).

“This incident only perpetuates the myth that if you look different, you must have come from somewhere

else and are not entitled to the rights inherent to all Americans,” said OCA executive director Michael Lin.

“How does a company like Toys ‘R’ Us stick it to a baby on the first day of her life?” said New York City councilman John Liu, the first and so far only Chinese-American elected official in the city. His district, Flushing, Queens, has a large Chinese and Korean immigrant population.

The company quickly backed down and said it would award a \$25,000 savings bond to all three babies.

Besides Yuki Lin, the other two recipients are babies born to a Salva-

doran couple in Bay Shore, New York, and to a Black family in Gainesville, Georgia.

“We regret deeply that this sweepstake became a point of controversy,” Toys “R” Us said in a statement. “We love all babies.”

The company opened its first mainland China store a month ago.



New York restaurant workers Han Lin (left) and Yan Zhu Liu, parents of Yuki Lin, whom company had initially denied \$25,000 award.

April 7 actions will demand: ‘Free the Cuban Five!’

Continued from front page
the case of the Cuban Five, called for January 10 through April 30.

This worldwide campaign was initiated by the Union of Young Communists (UJC), Federation of University Students, and other youth organizations in Cuba. It will culminate with an April 29–30 International Youth Solidarity meeting in Havana.

Its aim is “to break the wall of silence about the case imposed by Washington on public opinion, to denounce the manipulation and the lies about an impartial and fair trial, and to demand the immediate release of the Cuban Five,” reads the call for the campaign issued in early January by the Cuban youth groups.

The five men are Gerardo Hernández, Antonio Guerrero, Ramón Labañino, Fernando González, and René González. They have been incarcerated for eight years in U.S. prisons, serv-

ing draconian sentences after being convicted on trumped-up charges by the U.S. government. At the time of their arrest in 1998 they were on an internationalist mission to defend their country’s sovereignty. They had entered and obtained information on counter-revolutionary groups based in Florida that have a record of violent attacks against Cuba carried out from U.S. soil with Washington’s complicity.

Unable to provide convincing evidence, U.S. prosecutors framed up the five men and won convictions against them on charges that included “conspiracy to commit espionage” for Havana and “conspiracy to act as an unregistered foreign agent.” Hernández was also charged with “conspiracy to commit murder.” The five were convicted in a federal court in Miami in June 2001 and were given sentences ranging from 15 years to a double life term.

The April 7 actions will also demand freedom for all Puerto Rican political prisoners held in U.S. prisons for advocating their country’s independence. The rallies in New York and Los Angeles will kick off a month of activities to demand their release.

According to the call issued by sponsoring organizations, the demands of the April 7 actions include: “An end to Washington’s economic and political war against Cuba,” “An end to threats and sanctions against Venezuela and Bolivia,” and “An end to U.S. colonial-

ism in Puerto Rico.”

Initiating organizations for the April 7 actions are the Venezuela Solidarity Network, Alberto Lovera Bolivarian Circles, National Network on Cuba, and U.S./Cuba Labor Exchange. Another 20 organizations are co-sponsors of the April 7th New York Organizing Committee.

For more information contact the Young Socialists at (212) 629-6649 or youngsocialists@mac.com; *Militant* distributors near you (see information on page 8); or the initiating coalition for the April 7 actions at (917) 887-8710 or (718) 759-8668.

2006 ‘Militant’ index, bound volume ready; Order now!

The 2006 *Militant* index is now printed and all of last year’s issues are now being bound in volumes along with the index. Copies of the index can be ordered for \$3 each. The bound volumes cost \$50 each.

To order, send your check or money order to the *Militant* at 306 W. 37th St., 10th Floor, New York, NY 10018.

THE MILITANT

‘Teaches to stay united to fight’

“The ‘Militant’ is a newspaper that helps us stay informed about problems affecting us as Hispanics, because it is written in English and Spanish. It teaches us to stay united to fight against all of our problems.”

—Leonel Flores
Carrollton, Georgia



Leonel Flores is a garment worker in Carrollton, Georgia.

SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

NEW READERS

☐ \$5 for 12 issues

RENEWAL

☐ \$10 for 12 weeks

☐ \$20 for 6 months

☐ \$35 for 1 year

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

UNION/SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION

PHONE

CLIP AND MAIL TO THE MILITANT,
306 W. 37TH ST., 10TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10018.

12 weeks of the Militant outside the U.S.: Australia and the Pacific, A\$8 • United Kingdom, £4 • Canada, Can\$6 • Caribbean and Latin America, \$10 • Continental Europe, £12 • France, 12 Euros • Iceland, Kr500 • New Zealand, NZ\$7 • Sweden, Kr60 (Send payment to addresses listed in business information box)

The Militant

Vol. 71/No. 5

Closing news date: January 24, 2007

Editor and circulation director:
Argiris Malapanis

Washington correspondent: Sam Manuel
Editorial volunteers: Róger Calero, Maura DeLuca, Martín Koppel, Olympia Newton, Paul Pederson, Jacob Perasso, and Brian Williams.

Published weekly except for one week in January and two weeks in June.
The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Telephone: (212) 244-4899

Fax: (212) 244-4947

E-mail: themilitant@mac.com

Website: www.themilitant.com

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: United States: for one-year send \$35 to above address.

Latin America, Caribbean: for one-year subscription send \$65, drawn on a U.S. bank, to above address. By first class (airmail), send \$80.

Africa, Asia, and the Middle East:

Send \$65 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

Canada: Send Canadian \$45 for one-year subscription to the Militant, 2238 Dundas St. West, Suite 201, Toronto, ON. Postal Code: M6R 3A9.

United Kingdom: £25 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London, First Floor, 120 Bethnal Green (Entrance in Brick Lane), London, E2 6DG, England.

Republic of Ireland and Continental Europe: £50 for one year by check or international money order made out to CL London at above address.

France: Send 76 euros for one-year subscription to Diffusion du Militant, P.O. Box 175, 23 rue Lecourbe, 75015 Paris.

Iceland: Send 4,200 Icelandic kronur for one-year subscription to the Militant, P.O. Box 233, 121 Reykjavik.

Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark: Send 400 Swedish kronor for one year to Bildhuggarvägen 17, 12144 Johanneshov, Stockholm, Sweden.

New Zealand: Send NZ\$50 to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand.

Australia: Send A\$50 to P.O. Box 164 Campsie, NSW 2194, Australia.

Pacific Islands: Send NZ\$50 to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand.

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

U.S. soldier fights court-martial for refusing to deploy to Iraq

BY EDWIN FRUIT
AND CECELIA MORIARITY

TACOMA, Washington—The U.S. Army will begin a court-martial February 5 against Lt. Ehren Watada for his outspoken opposition to the U.S.-led war in Iraq. Defenders of the rights of citizen-soldiers have been organizing public events in his defense. Watada, 28, faces dishonorable discharge and up to six years in military prison. He is the first commissioned officer to refuse to be deployed to Iraq.

Some 340 people turned out here January 20–21 for a “Citizens Hearing on the Legality of U.S. Actions in Iraq: The Case of Lt. Ehren Watada.” It was held at Evergreen State College, which hosted the event.

Watada, who enlisted in 2003, has

been stationed at Fort Lewis, Washington, as part of the army’s 4,000-member Stryker Brigade. In January of last year he asked to resign his commission, writing, “It is my conclusion as an officer of the Armed Forces that the war in Iraq is not only morally wrong but a horrible breach of American law.” Watada’s request was denied. On June 7 he publicly announced he would refuse any order to participate in the Iraq war.

The army has charged Watada with “missing movement” to Iraq and “conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman.” The latter charge is based on his public statements against the war.

On January 16, Army judge Lt. Col. John Head denied Watada’s motion to defend himself on grounds that the Iraq war is illegal and that his speech

against it is constitutionally protected.

Watada’s attorney, Eric Seitz, said, “The import of his ruling is that the military services may prosecute and punish everyone who merely expresses criticism or disagreement with official policy.” A January 9 editorial in the *Seattle Times* called on the military court “to convict him of both charges and issue a dishonorable discharge.” It asserted, “Once one joins the military, one loses the freedom to speak in ways that could damage soldiers’ morale.”

At the citizens hearing, Geoffrey Millard, an eight-year veteran of the Army National Guard who joined Iraq Veterans against the War after serving 13 months in Iraq, testified that it was the policy of the military high command to “racially dehumanize” Iraqis.

Daniel Ellsberg, the former military analyst who in 1971 released the secret Pentagon Papers, which publicly exposed some of Washington’s conduct during the Vietnam War, accused President George Bush of war crimes that could be prosecuted under international law. “Our country is engaged in clear-cut aggression,” he said.

Also speaking were Eman Khammas, an Iraqi human rights advocate; Richard Falk, a Princeton University professor of international law; and De-



thankyoult.org/Jeff Paterson

Lt. Watada faces court-martial for refusing to go to Iraq

nis Halliday, a former United Nations official who coordinated UN aid in Iraq. Watada, who remains on desk duty at Fort Lewis, spoke briefly, thanking the conference organizers. He condemned the military judge’s decision as “a travesty of justice.”

The panel hearing the testimony was composed of veterans, members of military families, students, academics, local government officials, and representatives of religious groups. It will send members of Congress a report on the hearing’s findings.

Supporters of Watada distributed flyers urging people to attend the January 27 antiwar march in Seattle to demand all U.S. troops be brought home and funding for the war stopped. Watada’s defenders have called for a National Day of Action and Support for Lt. Watada on February 5, the day of the court-martial, including a protest outside Fort Lewis.

Workers, union protest raids

Continued from front page

migration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) police, scores of workers remain in jail. Of the 262 arrested at the Swift plant in Greeley, Colorado, 74 are still locked up, most in an immigration jail in El Paso, Texas. It took the federal government until January 19 for all the workers to gain access to an attorney and have a bond hearing.

“This is something ICE should have done within 48 hours. It took five weeks,” said Dave Minshall, a spokesperson for United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 7. The fact they did it at all was because the union sued ICE for violating workers’ right to due process, he said. After the government accounted for all those arrested in Greeley, U.S. district judge John Kane terminated the lawsuit.

Lawyers for the arrested workers have filed court documents protesting the fact that ICE will not release the detainees even if they have had a hearing, according to attorney Jim Salvator.

Judge Kane ordered ICE not to deport those who had signed papers agreeing to leave the country and giving up legal rights, and to withdraw those orders if the detainees want. Seventy-five of the 262 workers arrested at the Swift plant in Greeley were deported to Mexico the night of the raid.



BY JOE SWANSON

OSCEOLA, Iowa—At Osceola Meats, a nonunion plant owned by Hormel in south-central Iowa, the *Militant* interviewed one of the meat packers there, who asked that his name not be published. He said that starting the previous week, about “40 people were fired for having bad Social Security numbers.”

When these workers reported to their jobs, “the card they use to enter the plant didn’t work,” he said. “The guards told them they had to go straight to the office. The company just told them they were fired.”

“In previous weeks, production at the plant had been slow and workers were often sent home early. But after the mass firings, they started working the plant six days a week,” he said.

The worker told the *Militant* about renewed interest among coworkers in joining the UFCW. He said Osceola Foods called a company meeting with employees in December to discourage them from joining the union. “The man-

ager told us, ‘Why do you want to pay someone else to come talk to me, when you can just come talk to me directly? All the union wants is your money.’”

He said some were convinced by the bosses’ arguments, but many others are for the union. The biggest complaint “is the mistreatment. Supervisors yell at people, they make threats, and sometimes when you go into the office they cuss people out.” He noted that in early January the company raised wages about 50 cents an hour, and that he saw this as a ploy to undercut support for the union.

Washington escalates imperialist war in Iraq

Continued from front page

aide to Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr during a raid in eastern Baghdad. Some 600 members of al-Sadr’s militia, the Mahdi Army, have been reportedly arrested in similar raids. Washington is targeting the group along with Sunni militias and others it considers obstacles to establishing a stable regime in Iraq that’s subservient to U.S. interests in the region.

As we go to press, Iraqi and U.S. troops conducted a series of raids on Haifa Street and elsewhere in Baghdad aimed at such militias. This is the same area where U.S. forces said they killed 50 people in a similar January 9 raid.

The bloodshed caused by the imperialist occupation, and fighting among Iraqi bourgeois factions vying for a bigger share of power, has escalated. At least 100 Iraqis died in car bombings January 22 in two markets near Baghdad in predominantly Shiite neighborhoods. Iraqi health minister Ali Hussein al-Shamari estimated that 150,000 Iraqi civilians have died as a result of the war since the 2003 U.S.-led invasion. A United Nations report said that more than 34,000 Iraqi civilians were killed last year.

Meanwhile, two nonbinding resolutions being discussed in the Senate critical of the troop escalation highlight how strong bipartisan support for the war is. The latest by Republican John Warner is cosponsored by Republican Susan Collins and Democrat Benjamin Nelson.

“The purpose of this resolution is not to cut our forces or to set a timetable for withdrawal, but, rather, to express the genuine concerns of a number of Senators from both parties about the President’s plan,” said Warner. The resolution states that “the Senate disagrees

with the ‘plan’ to augment our forces by 21,500, and urges the President instead to consider all options and alternatives for achieving the strategic goals with reduced force levels than proposed.”

The goals Warner describes are similar to those of the White House: “Maintaining the territorial integrity of Iraq; denying international terrorists a safe haven; conducting counterterrorism operations; . . . and training and equipping Iraqi forces.”

The main clause of another resolution submitted in the Senate by Democrats Joseph Biden and Carl Levin, and co-sponsored by Republicans Charles Hagel and Olympia Snowe, states: “It is not in the national interest of the United States to deepen its military involvement in Iraq, particularly by escalating the United States military presence in Iraq.”

Democrats Hillary Clinton and Evan Bayh, and Republican John McHugh, have offered a proposal in the Senate to “cap” U.S. troops in Iraq at about their

current number of 130,000.

Clinton and Bayh also sent a letter to U.S. defense secretary Robert Gates requesting that Washington dispatch an additional 2,300 troops to Afghanistan.

Shortly after returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, Clinton told the PBS News Hour January 18 that she doesn’t support cuts in funding for the troops and opposes setting timetables for withdrawal because “I do believe we have vital national security interests in Iraq.”

Senator Barack Obama, who, like Clinton, is a front-runner for the Democratic presidential nomination in 2008, released a statement calling for “capping” the number of U.S. troops in Iraq and beginning a “phased redeployment.”

In another sign of how firm the bipartisan support for the war is, the *Washington Post* reported today that “one point of agreement seems to be that Lt. Gen. David Petraeus is the right commander for U.S. forces in Baghdad. . . . Petraeus

Continued on page 8

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CALIFORNIA

San Francisco

The Struggle to Defend Abortion Rights Continues! Film Showing of “Motherhood by Choice, Not Chance.” Speakers: Destiny Lopez, executive director of Access; Barbara Bowman, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Feb. 2. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 3926 Mission. Tel. (415) 584-2135.

NEW YORK

Manhattan

The Legacy of the Civil Rights Movement and its Relevance to Working-Class Struggles Today. Speaker: Osborne Hart, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Feb. 2. Dinner, 7:00 p.m.; program, 8:00 p.m. Donation: \$5. 306 W. 37th St., 10th Floor (use north set of elevators) Tel.

(212) 629-6649.

PENNSYLVANIA

Pittsburgh

Film Showing and Discussion of “Deacons for Defense: How Black Workers Defended Themselves against Klan Violence.” Fri., Feb. 2, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5. 5907 Penn Ave., Room 225. Tel. (412) 365-1090.

WASHINGTON

Seattle

Malcolm X: Why His Ideas Are Important for Today’s World. Speaker: Edwin Fruit, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Feb. 2. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5 dinner, \$5 program. 5418 Rainier Ave. S. Tel. (206) 323-1755.

Young Socialists: ‘Socialist revolution is only way to end imperialist wars’

BY ROSS HOGAN

Following the January 10 announcement by U.S. president George Bush of Washington’s plans to escalate the war by deploying 21,500 more troops to Iraq,

YOUNG SOCIALISTS IN ACTION

much has been made in the bourgeois press of the “debate” in Congress regarding the plan.

A number of capitalist politicians, Democratic and Republican, have put forth their own “proposals” criticizing the White House plan. These include a nonbinding resolution introduced by senators Joseph Biden, Democrat from Delaware; Carl Levin, Democrat from Michigan; and Charles Hagel, Republican from Nebraska opposing the plan

for additional troops.

Despite its anti-war facade, the proposed resolution plainly states that “the United States strategy in Iraq must not compromise the ability of the United States to address other vital national security priorities, in particular global terror networks . . . the nuclear program of Iran, the nuclear weapons of North Korea, and stability and security in Afghanistan.” This reflects the general sentiment in the bipartisan rhetoric against Bush’s proposal: how can Washington best fight the “war on terror” and succeed in safeguarding and advancing its imperialist interests abroad.

The *People’s Weekly World*, which reflects the views of the Communist Party USA, published a January 16 statement by the party’s peace and solidarity commission. It says that these debates are “the first of many congressional

standoffs with the Bush administration. The fight to stop the escalation is the first step toward congressional action to bring the troops home.”

But any reliance on Congress, that is the Democratic Party or other capitalist politicians, to end the war in Iraq and “bring the troops home” is an illusion.

The war in Iraq is caused and perpetuated by the need of the U.S. capitalist rulers and their allies to compensate for declining profit rates by competing among themselves on how to divide the world’s markets and resources. The U.S. rulers, whose interests are represented and protected by both major capitalist parties, the Democrats and Republicans, seek to safeguard U.S. finance capital and one-up their imperialist rivals.

Imperialism is not a policy of a particular president or Congress, but represents general laws of capitalist development; it is the highest stage of capitalism. Today we are experiencing the repercussions of a crisis that has its roots in the end of the post-World War II capitalist expansion. The world situation is marked by the economic downturn of the early and mid-1970s, and the collapse of the Stalinist apparatuses in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in the late 1980s and early 1990s. What we face today was not caused by 9/11, but is simply the acceleration of that earlier crisis. We live in an epoch of imperialist decay, where the ruling classes will resort to the most extreme forms of violence to compensate for their historically outmoded system at the expense of working people.

The Young Socialists demands the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq, Afghanistan, and all other countries where they conduct brutal military assaults. We are for the unconditional defeat of U.S. imperialism throughout



Militant/Ben Joyce

YS contingent at September 2005 march in Washington against U.S. war in Iraq.

the world. We help build and participate in actions to advance such demands.

At the same time, we give no *political* support to reactionary native-bourgeois forces that front as a “popular resistance.” None of these forces—such as Muqtada al-Sadr’s Mahdi Army, or Sunni-led death squads in Iraq, or the Taliban in Afghanistan—have a class interest in uniting the workers and peasants to advance a fight for national sovereignty, end the U.S.-led occupation, and defend the interests of the toiling majority.

We in the Young Socialists, along with the Socialist Workers Party, seek to build a movement led by, and in the interests of, workers, farmers, and their allies. The Young Socialists is the only revolutionary communist youth organization that is committed to the working-class line of march toward state power and the inevitability of that struggle.

The only way to end imperialist war is to put an end to the system that perpetuates it, capitalism, and replace it with a society based on human solidarity, not the dog-eat-dog reality and morality of the profit system. That’s why we encourage all youth who are serious about ending the U.S. rulers’ wars to *Join the Young Socialists!*

For more information, contact the YS at 306 W. 37th St., 10th floor, New York, NY 10018; Tel: (212) 629-6649; e-mail: youngsocialists@mac.com.

Houston cop brutality protest

Continued from front page

ences over the last week protesting the recent killing by cops of two unarmed young men, one Black and one Latino.

Yolanda Perry, an eyewitness to McIntosh’s death, spoke to the press January 9 and was subpoenaed to testify before a grand jury the following day. Perry said she saw Smith stun McIntosh in the back with a Taser gun after stopping the car he was riding in and arresting the driver. According to Perry, Smith then handcuffed McIntosh and shot him three times. Police officials contend that they cuffed McIntosh after he was shot.

At the January 17 meeting, Perry’s husband, Rev. George Perry, said that his wife has been getting threatening phone calls since she spoke up. A young man told the audience he witnessed the shooting and was harassed into silence after trying to come forward.

On January 7, two cops killed Omar Esparza, 21, at his family’s home in Houston’s east end.

The next day, Esparza’s father, José Valle, told a press conference that he had called the cops seeking help to get his son, who was mentally ill, to the hospital. The police officers entered

the house armed with Taser stun guns, pellet rifles, and hand guns drawn.

Minutes later Valle and his wife heard five gunshots coming from inside. The cops kept the family outside and gave them no information about their son’s condition for four or five hours. No ambulance arrived until three hours after the shooting.

“If I had known what the police would do, I would have never called them,” Valle said. The outrage at these police killings comes in the midst of growing opposition to cop brutality here, including the widespread use of Taser guns. Two years ago local cops and capitalist politicians introduced the Tasers, promoting them as a way to reduce the number of deadly cop shootings after public outcry against police violence. A *Houston Chronicle* study published January 14, however, reported that Houston cops have shot, wounded, and killed as many people since the introduction of the stun guns as before.

Police data shows that in almost 1,000 Taser shootings since December 2004, some 63 percent of those shocked were Black. A quarter of Houston’s population of 1.95 million is African American.

Renewal drive

Continued from front page

people to renew their subscription or sign up for the first time for six months or longer. Local quotas already add up to 523, surpassing the international goal.

In Newark, New Jersey, *Militant* supporters attended The People’s Peace Conference at Rutgers University the day the drive began. “Two people at the conference each renewed for six months, on the spot,” reported Sara Lobman, a garment worker and member of UNITE HERE Local 169. “Two others said they will renew.”

“We also sold two renewals at the Militant Labor Forum, one to a student and one to an immigrant rights activist,” Lobman said.

Those renewing their subscriptions or signing up for a new long-term sub can take advantage of special offers on Pathfinder books and pamphlets and *New International* magazine; *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning* for \$1; *The First and Second Declarations of Havana* and *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution*, for \$5 each; and *New International* issues 12 and 13, for \$25 together.

Join the effort! Contact the *Militant* directly or distributors listed on page 8 to get involved.

‘Militant’ Subscription Renewal Drive Jan. 20 – Feb. 25, 2007

Country	Quota	Sold	%
NEW ZEALAND	20	7	35%
CANADA	25	4	16%
AUSTRALIA	15	2	13%
U.S.			
Boston	20	6	30%
New York	50	13	26%
Newark	25	6	24%
Philadelphia	30	4	13%
Washington, DC	25	3	12%
Atlanta	17	2	12%
Twin Cities	27	3	11%
Chicago	20	2	10%
Birmingham	23	2	9%
Los Angeles	30	2	7%
Houston	20	1	5%
Seattle	20	1	5%
Des Moines	35	1	3%
Miami	36	1	3%
Albany, NY	5	0	0%
Pittsburgh	15	0	0%
San Francisco	20	0	0%
U.S. Total	418	47	11%
ICELAND	4	0	0%
SWEDEN	13	1	8%
UK			
Edinburgh	8	0	0%
London	20	2	10%
UK Total	28	2	7%
Int’l totals	523	63	13%

SPECIAL OFFER

With a ‘Militant’ sub renewal or long-term sub

The First and Second Declarations of Havana
Manifestos of revolutionary struggle in the Americas adopted by the Cuban people
(Regular price \$10)

\$5

Cuba and the Coming American Revolution
by Jack Barnes
(Regular price \$13)

\$5

The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning
The Fraud of Education Reform Under Capitalism
by Jack Barnes
(Regular price \$3)

\$1

‘New International’ nos. 12 and 13
(Regular price \$30)

www.pathfinderpress.com

\$25 for both

— ON THE PICKET LINE —

Janitors in Minneapolis vote to authorize a strike

MINNEAPOLIS—Chanting “Yes, we can” in Spanish, English, and Somali, more than 500 janitors meeting at the United Labor Center here voted overwhelmingly to authorize a strike January 13. Their contract expired December 31.

The workers are members of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 26, which represents 4,200 janitors. Negotiations broke off in late December after 18 building contractors refused to provide adequate health-care coverage. The bosses are offering a 20-cent pay raise.

“Out of 2,100 full-time employees, only half can afford the companies’ medical insurance and only 14 members are on the family plan,” said SEIU Local 26 president Javier Morillo.

“We have to be ready to fight now against this lack of respect,” said Cecilia Garcia, a member of the union bargaining committee. “We deserve to be treated like human beings.”

In November Morillo and other members of the union traveled to Houston to support the 1,700 janitors who were on strike there. He and 40 others were arrested on charges of obstructing a busy Houston intersection.

—Nelson Gonzalez



Hundreds of janitors in Minneapolis wave signs January 13 saying “Sí se puede” in English, Spanish, and Somali. They overwhelmingly voted to authorize a strike for a new contract.

Striking Machinists in Arizona approve contract with Raytheon

LOS ANGELES—Production workers at Raytheon Missile Systems in Tucson, Arizona, voted 766-186 to accept a new three-year contract January 14, ending their 10-week strike.

International Association of Machinists (IAM) Local 933 represents 1,900 production workers at Raytheon, 1,400 of whom are union members. About 40 percent of the workers either never struck or had gone back

to work.

One key issue in the strike was the company demand to nearly double health insurance premiums, while leaving the door open for unlimited increases in co-payments and other costs. According to press reports, the new contract will cap medical cost increases in the range of 12 percent to 19 percent. The pact includes a 3 percent annual wage increase and a \$1,000 bonus for each worker.

—Naomi Craine and Michael Ortega

Philadelphia-area meat packers stop work to protest bonus cut

SOUDERTON, Pennsylvania—More than 100 workers from the kill floor department at the MOPAC meatpacking plant outside Philadelphia refused to return to work after first break December 15. They were protesting rumors that the company would not pay a Christmas bonus.

MOPAC, a cattle processor employing 1,000 workers, is owned by industry giant Smithfield Foods. In recent years, the company has defeated two union-organizing drives.

Workers took their protest to the cafeteria. One manager pleaded with them to return, saying the company couldn’t afford a bonus. The pleading turned into threats as police from 22 local agencies were called in to force workers back. By lunch, more than 70 cops, including some armed with shotguns and a SWAT team with dogs, were patrolling the cafeteria and the area outside the plant.

The meat packers returned to work. Two were grabbed by cops and arrested. By December 18, the company had fired six, including the two arrested. Later the bosses announced they would pay a bonus based on 10 hours pay, half the amount of previous years. Efforts are now under way to press for reinstatement of the fired workers.

—John Staggs

Pentagon expands domestic spying operations

BY PAUL PEDERSON

The Pentagon has been expanding its spying operations within the United States. Over the past five years, the U.S. military has demanded and received thousands of financial records of U.S. citizens from banks, credit card companies, and other financial institutions, the *New York Times* reported January 13.

This is the latest in a series of such revelations made public over the past year.

Under the Patriot Act the FBI has the power to use a secret subpoena, known as a “national security letter,” to demand companies and institutions provide financial and other personal records on individuals. In 2005, the FBI issued 30,000 such letters, gaining records on more than 3,500 U.S. residents.

Recipients of these secret subpoenas are subject to criminal prosecution if they make them public. In 2005, the Library Connection, a Connecticut-based library network, refused to comply with an FBI national security letter. The group successfully fought to have this gag order lifted so that it could wage a public campaign against such government snooping.

While the Pentagon and CIA were not granted the same power, they began issuing a “noncompulsory” version of the national security letter. Records obtained through this process by the Pentagon were then added to a growing network of databases used to follow the activities of many people.

Four military spy agencies—the U.S. Army Counterintelligence Center, the Criminal Investigation Service of the Army and of the Navy, and the Air Force Office of Special Investigations—are authorized to issue these letters. All four are part of the Counterintelligence Field Activity (CIFA), a Pentagon spying program established in 2002.

CIFA has become massive, with nine separate directorates under its purview.

In the first four years of its existence, the military spent more than \$1 billion on the program.

Officially, the military is not supposed to be in the business of spying inside U.S. borders. However, since the establishment of the Northern Command in 2002—which opened the continental United States to military operations for the first time since the U.S. Civil War—the Pentagon has asserted its “right” to do so in the name of “fighting terrorism.”

“The Department of Defense has legitimate authority in this area,” U.S. vice president Richard Cheney asserted when asked about the program during a Janu-

ary 14 interview on “Fox News Sunday.” “It’s a perfectly legitimate activity. . . . It doesn’t violate people’s civil rights.” The military can do domestic spying, Cheney said, because “we’ve got hundreds of bases inside the United States that are potential terrorist targets.”

The latest revelations add to a string of recent similar reports.

Last November, documents were released under the Freedom of Information Act that revealed spies under the jurisdiction of CIFA were snooping on the activities of individuals opposed to the U.S. war in Iraq. Those documents were part of CIFA’s Threat and Local Observation Notice (TALON) database.

— 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO —



February 5, 1982

Nine underground coal miners were killed in two accidents in Kentucky January 20 and 22. Since December 3, the underground slaughter has averaged one miner killed every workday.

These are murders, not accidents. The criminals sit in the White House, Congress, and the state governments. They take their orders from the energy barons who are pushing up coal production and attacking safety.

Nationally, 153 miners were killed in 1981, thirty more than in 1980. One hundred twelve miners were killed underground last year, up from ninety-four killed underground in 1980.

And the increase is even sharper when you consider that most underground coal miners were on strike for seventy-two days in 1981. Underground coal production was down 7.4 percent for the year, yet the rate of underground mine fatalities jumped more than 25 percent.



February 4, 1957

NEW HAVEN, January 26—Fire struck an 80-year-old structure in the old downtown section of this city two days ago leaving seven known dead and eight on critical lists in local hospitals. Firemen are still digging through the rubble of fallen walls in search of two missing.

Over 100 women worked in little garment shops in the ancient four story building. The fire flashed up the elevator shaft and stairwells and completely enveloped the tinder dry trap in a few minutes. Most of the known dead were women trapped on a side fire escape that had been pinned and would not lower to the ground. Before the pin was knocked out by onlookers, fire poured out of the windows around and under the escape.

The exact cause of the fire is uncertain but it is thought to have started in crates of trash piled in a lower hall. Regardless of the origin, the condition of the building made loss of life almost inevitable.



February 6, 1932

The capitalist regime of Greece is carrying a reign of terror against all revolutionary workers and is concentrating its efforts especially to exterminate by all means at its disposal, the comrades of the Opposition (Archia Marxist-Bolsheviks) on account of their valiant activities in the front ranks of the class struggle.

Now that the edifice of the capitalist system of Greece is enfeebled by the acute economic crisis, the bourgeoisie of Greece are desperately trying to suppress every workers’ resistance by exterminating the vanguard of the proletariat, the Communists. They imprison them for many years in dark cells, and they deport them to desert islands, and very often apply terrorist methods.

Many workers’ organizations have protested vigorously. The Leather Workers, the Cigarette boxmakers and Lithographers, Stevedores, Hotel Workers, Needle Workers Union are among these.

Connie Harris: six decades of class-struggle activity

London meeting celebrates life of cadre of int'l communist movement

BY TONY HUNT

LONDON, January 13—About 110 people attended a meeting here today to celebrate the life and political contributions of Connie Harris, a 60-year veteran of the international communist movement who died Dec. 8, 2006, at age 85.

An international panel of speakers addressed the meeting, which was cosponsored by the Communist League and Young Socialists. Participants came from Belgium, Canada, France, New Zealand, Sweden, and the United States, as well as from across the United Kingdom.

Harris's long-time companion and comrade Alan Harris took part in the meeting. Also attending were her daughter Sue, granddaughter Emma, and other family members and several of their friends.

An attractive four-panel display, telling the story of Harris's political life through six decades of the class struggle, drew a crowd before and after the presentations. A buffet dinner followed the program.

Born in 1921 just north of London, Harris became politically active during World War II. Alex Xezonakis, a Young Socialist from Leeds who had worked on the displays for the meeting, was one of the panelists. "Growing up in the 1930s, Connie was deeply marked by the first world imperialist slaughter and the devastating capitalist depression, which saw millions forced out of work, including her father, who was a rubber factory worker at the time," Xezonakis said. Harris's father had been a soldier in the First World War, returning "shell shocked" like many others.

Conscripted in 1941, Harris opted for the Women's Land Army and soon discovered the British bosses' war at home—low and unequal pay, and poor conditions. She joined the Agricultural Workers Union, organized other women to do the same, and began drawing broader political conclusions, Xezonakis said. "Get that bloody communist off my estate," was the reaction of press owner Baron Beaverbrook, a member of Churchill's war cabinet, after he spotted Harris's political books when she was assigned to work on his land.

Won to communism

While active in the labor movement, Harris was won to communism toward the end of the war, in the middle of a strike wave involving tens of thousands. From then on "Connie was on a consistent course, building a communist party as part of the international communist movement," said Jonathan Silberman, one of the event's cochairs and a member of the Central Committee of the Communist League (CL).

Revolutionary minded young people like Harris eagerly turned towards developments in Yugoslavia from the mid-1940s as working people there overthrown capitalism. Many joined work brigades, and Harris was among them in 1950. The revolutionary opening in that country, however, closed when the Stalinist leadership of Tito supported the imperialist war against Korea.

In 1956 Harris joined others in Britain championing the workers and farmers of Hungary in their uprising against Stalinist tyranny. The triumph of the Cuban Revolution in 1959 had a lasting impact on her political activity. She em-



Militant/Dougie Gordon

Above: Jack Barnes, national secretary of Socialist Workers Party in the United States, speaks at January 13 meeting in London. Seated from left are: Alex Xezonakis of the Young Socialists; Mary-Alice Waters, member of SWP National Committee; Jonathan Silberman, Central Committee of Communist League; Jo O'Brien, member of the organizing committee of first national women's liberation conference in the U.K.; and Peter Clifford, CL Central Committee. Inset: Connie Harris helping to build Sarajevo railway as part of work brigade to Yugoslavia in 1950.

braced that revolution and helped build solidarity with it in the coming decades. She visited Cuba in 1994.

From the early 1960s, and for the next 30 years, Connie and Alan Harris ran a book distributorship in London. It began as the Pioneer Book Service and is today called Pathfinder Books.

Pete Clifford, speaking on behalf of the CL Central Committee, described working with Harris in the late 1980s in the London Pathfinder office. He said he learned from her the importance of reaching out to workers and youth with revolutionary books and pamphlets, as well as of a proletarian attitude to administrative work and professional bookkeeping.

The international communist movement was now oriented to building parties rooted in the industrial unions and more deeply involved in working-class struggles. There were expanding opportunities for sales of Pathfinder books, said Clifford. He described joining picket lines as steelworkers, engineers, and others fought the bosses' assaults on jobs, wages, and conditions, culminating in the yearlong coal miners' strike of 1984–85.

"I can remember her enthusiasm as new generations began to thirst for books like *The Struggle for a Proletarian Party* and *History of American Trotskyism* by James P. Cannon," Clifford said.

Citizen of time, internationalist

Connie Harris was a "citizen of time," Silberman said. "She didn't worry if she would live to see the conquest of power by the working class and its allies in the United Kingdom in her lifetime. What mattered was that when objective conditions ripened, the forces that could lead the working class and its allies in a revolutionary struggle for power would be ready."

Silberman explained that on many occasions in the 1970s he had held different views from Harris during political debates within the International Marxist Group (IMG), the organization in Britain of the communist movement at the time. "Connie and Alan Harris never wrote me off," Silberman said. "Instead, confident in the communist program, they sought out discussion as new political developments unfolded. At every leadership meeting they had the latest new Pathfinder title to sell to me and to others."

"Connie was a real internationalist in

the best working-class sense of that term," said Mary-Alice Waters, who cochaired the meeting. Waters is a member of the National Committee of Socialist Workers Party in the United States, and president of Pathfinder Press. Both Waters and SWP national secretary Jack Barnes, who also addressed the meeting, got to know Harris well from the late 1960s on, working closely together with her as part of the international leadership of the communist movement.

This internationalism was registered in "messages from comrades all over the world whose political understanding and course of action was affected by meeting Connie, working with her, getting to know her, and learning from her," Waters said. "A real product of the British working class and of her time, she was totally comfortable working with fellow workers and revolutionary-minded fighters wherever they came from and however she met them—bridging the cultures and the generations, leading by example, and rarely seeing herself at center stage."

Harris "had unshakable confidence in the capacities of ordinary men and women—she saw human beings at the center of everything," Waters said.

Fight for women's liberation

In 1943, some 90 percent of single women in Britain between the ages of 20 and 30 were conscripted to work in factories, on the land, or in the armed forces. Harris came from "that generation of women who were drawn into industry and into an active social and economic life in a qualitative new way by World War II," Waters said. That experience laid the foundations and created the social and economic conditions out of which arose the women's liberation movement of the 1960s and '70s, which deeply affected Harris, she noted.

Jo O'Brien, an active participant in that movement, and one of the organizers of the first women's liberation conference in the United Kingdom in 1970, said that as millions of young people radicalized in the late 1960s under the impact of the movement against the Vietnam War, "we knew what we were *against*. Finding out what we were *for* was more difficult."

Harris, a founding member of the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign and a leader of the IMG, threw herself in to the new political openings, helping to win O'Brien

and others to the communist movement and clarifying a working-class perspective on the fight for women's liberation.

At the same time, "Connie encouraged young women not to let the personal struggles of everyday life prevent them from being political," Waters added.

Political leader

Jack Barnes was the final speaker. "As good an organizer as Connie was, and she was a good one, as good a teacher of administrative detail and its importance, as kind and generous as she was as a person, Connie was above all a *political leader*," Barnes said. "Her capacity to do many of the things she did came from an understanding of why they were necessary."

Harris didn't have a "natural instinct" to distribute books for much of her life, said Barnes. "She and Alan would have preferred being part of the political cadre of a mass revolutionary movement trying to seize power and end the horrors of capitalism and imperialism on the face of this earth . . . like working people did in Russia in 1917 and in Cuba in 1959. That's what she was working toward her whole life."

What Harris had understood, however, was the centrality of the distribution and use of revolutionary literature to achieving that goal. "Communists are not defined by their ideas but their *practice*, and Connie was a good example," he said.

Connie displayed an unusual political ability to be objective, the SWP leader noted, exemplified by her conduct at a 1985 public meeting of 400 of an organization she had been expelled from in the late 1950s. The Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP) had just kicked out its long-time leader. Harris caused a stir when she spoke, herself having been a victim of the "regime" in that group.

Rather than condemn its horrors, she concentrated on explaining the two political roots of the WRP's break from a communist course, Barnes said, turning its back on the Cuban Revolution, and a years-long slander campaign against the SWP leadership that cut it off from the continuity of the communist movement. "It's hard not to get even," Barnes said, but at this meeting "Connie resisted that temptation, to offer instead a political future to 400 people."

Barnes recalled hearing Harris speak eloquently in 1992 at a CL congress, on the shattering of the ruling Stalinist apparatuses in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Four decades earlier, Harris explained, communists had wrongly anticipated that the Yugoslav revolution would signal other advances by workers and farmers in the states where capitalism had been overthrown under Stalinist leadership. Now, the obstacle that Stalinism had posed for some 70 years to working people worldwide seeking a road to ending imperialist domination and capitalist exploitation had been dealt a crushing body blow. Harris said at the time she was beginning to understand the new opportunities and responsibilities communists would have in the coming years in response to this historic change.

In response to an appeal to aid the promotion of Pathfinder books, those present donated or pledged nearly £3,000 (US\$6,000).

Record of labor defense campaign now public

Case grew out of Utah coal miners' union-organizing battle

BY OLYMPIA NEWTON

The record of the Militant Fighting Fund—a successful labor defense campaign growing out of a three-year battle by coal miners in Utah to organize themselves into the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA)—is now available to anyone who wants to study and learn from it. Organized and prepared by the *Militant* for donation to a research library, the complete record of this defense effort was taken in January by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin in Madison.

Select material on this significant chapter in the battles of working people in the United States is also available on the *Militant's* web site beginning this week.

The Militant Fighting Fund grew out of a hard-fought effort by coal miners at the Co-Op mine near Huntington, Utah, to win UMWA representation, beginning in 2003. Supporters of the *Militant* established the Fund in 2004 to defend the paper from a harassment lawsuit filed against scores of supporters of the union-organizing struggle by C.W. Mining Company, Co-Op's owner, and by the International Association of United Workers Union (IAUWU), described by miners as a company union.

Co-Op miners fight for a union

In August 2003, coal miners at Co-Op began discussing how to fight for better pay, safer conditions, and dignity on the job. Like many other miners in the United States, they faced unsafe working conditions and had no recourse in face of company abuse. Starting wages for underground miners there were about \$5.50 an hour, compared to a nationwide hourly average of \$17. The miners, overwhelmingly immigrants from Mexico, began organizing a union to fight for their goals. The UMWA pledged its backing.

On Sept. 22, 2003, some 75 Co-Op miners were locked out after stopping work to demand the company reverse the firing of union supporter Bill Estrada. His dismissal came on the heels of other victimizations of union backers.

The workers turned the lockout into a strike. They won support across the country and the world. Local unions, especially in the West, along with community and labor organizations, lent solidarity in the form of food and monetary donations. Support came from as far away as New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

From the outset, the *Militant* was the main voice of the miners' cause, presenting the facts week in and week out and rallying support for the struggle across North America and the world—similar to what the paper has done with other labor battles over decades. In three years, the *Militant* ran 150 articles and 9 editorials on the struggle and related events.

The strike lasted nearly 10 months. By standing up to defend themselves, the Co-Op miners struck a chord with working people, and their actions had influence across the region. Nonunion miners visited the picket lines to bring support. Coal truck drivers approached the UMWA about organizing. Members of rail and electrical workers unions began discussing how to stop the sale and transport of struck coal.

Ground shifts in the struggle

As a result of the strike, in July 2004 C.W. Mining was forced to offer the strik-

ers their jobs back and agreed to a union representation election. The agreement followed a decision by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) ruling that the 75 miners had been fired illegally and ordering the company to reinstate them.

About half the miners returned to work; others had already gotten new jobs. As returning miners organized to win coworkers who had crossed the picket line to vote for the UMWA, union supporters faced a virtual war with the company inside the mine.

"It was at that point in the struggle that conditions were the best for . . . pressing toward a UMWA local at Co-Op," Alyson Kennedy, a former Co-Op miner, told the *Militant* in a May 2006 interview.

"That's what was opening up for us," she said, "if labor action both in this area, the region, and nationally had been strong enough to reinforce what was being done on the picket line and then when we were back in the mine." But that kind of help from the broader union movement was never organized, she noted. While C.W. Mining "couldn't defeat us," the fight for a union in the mine turned into a standoff.

Days before the union representation election in December 2004, C.W. Mining fired 30 workers. The company claimed it had just learned these miners did not have proper documents to work in the United States, even though many of them had worked there for years.

Bosses use courts to retaliate

Unable to defeat the miners on the picket line or in the mine, C.W. Mining tried to shift the focus of the struggle into the courts. In September 2004 the company and IAUWU filed a defamation lawsuit in Federal District Court in Salt Lake City, Utah, against more than 100 individuals and organizations.

The coal operator's aim was to thwart the miners' determination to win a union of their choice and deal blows to all those speaking out and organizing solidarity with the miners.

Among the defendants were 16 leaders of the unionization drive at Co-Op, the UMWA and its international officers, the Salt Lake City diocese of the Catholic Church, the Socialist Workers Party, and the *Militant*. The coal bosses' complaint falsely described the *Militant* as "a newspaper owned and/or controlled by the Socialist Workers Party." Other newspapers were also targeted—including Utah's largest-circulation dailies, the *Salt Lake Tribune* and *Deseret Morning News*, and the *Intermountain Catholic*, newspaper of Salt Lake's Catholic diocese—as well as a number of individuals, organizations, and trade unions.

Broad labor defense effort

As C.W. Mining's campaign against the organizing drive developed, the company used its lawsuit to concentrate its fire on the miners, the UMWA, and the *Militant*. It asserted that miners who spoke out publicly about their organizing struggle, and anyone who supported them or reported what they said, was guilty of defaming the company. Defendants were also charged with a litany of other alleged offenses.

UMWA attorneys represented the miners cited in the suit.

The *Militant* and the Socialist Workers Party retained Salt Lake City attorneys



Militant photos by Alyson Kennedy (above) and Tom Baumann (right)

Above: Striking miners picket Co-Op mine in October 2003, at the start of their three-year battle for union representation. Right: Bernie Hesse, an officer of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 789 in Minnesota, speaks in St. Paul at a May 27, 2006, celebration of the defeat of coal company's harassment lawsuit.



Randy Dryer and Michael Petrogeorge to represent them. The SWP's general counsel, Michael Krinsky, collaborated throughout the case with the Utah attorneys. Although the SWP and several other defendants were dropped by C.W. Mining and the IAUWU from a second amended complaint in July 2005, the company could have asked the court at any time to reinstate any of the initial defendants.

The *Militant* organized the Militant Fighting Fund to raise money to pay attorneys' fees and court expenses, and to ensure the paper could continue its labor coverage and socialist editorial policy undeterred, including remaining a consistent voice of the Co-Op miners' battle. Spurred by this struggle and by the growing political weight in the U.S. working class of immigrants from Mexico and elsewhere in Latin America, the *Militant* in June 2005 published its first bilingual issue and has appeared in English and Spanish ever since.

Some 1,470 individuals and organizations from 17 countries endorsed the Militant Fighting Fund. These included 10 international unions; 26 local unions; 230 union officers; and hundreds of defenders of free speech and freedom of the press, backers of labor rights, and others. Material on the case was translated into French, Spanish, and Swedish.

Of the \$122,000 donated to the Fund, union locals and labor organizations contributed more than \$6,000. The *Militant* provided the defense effort \$23,000 at the outset to cover initial expenses. After all attorneys' fees and other costs were paid, \$37,925 was returned to the *Militant*.

On July 6, 2006, nearly three years after the Co-Op miners were locked out, a federal judge in Salt Lake City dismissed the C.W. Mining lawsuit. The UMWA, the *Militant*, and the 16 miners had reached a settlement with C.W. Mining and the IAUWU to end the lawsuit and outstanding NLRB issues. Coming amid a massive proletarian movement for legalization of immigrants and during what was to become the deadliest year for coal miners in more than a decade, the judge's decision registered that the miners had stood off the bosses once again.

In an article published in the Aug. 7, 2006, *Militant*, its editor, Argiris Malapanis, noted that the dropping of the lawsuit was a victory for the working class and

union movement. "The victory registered in defeating this harassment lawsuit—one of the most important labor defense cases in many years—is cause for celebration by all working people," he said.

On our web site

The Militant Fighting Fund material posted on the *Militant's* web site includes a table of contents of items now at the Wisconsin State Historical Society; a summary and chronology of the union-organizing struggle and fight to defeat the bosses' retaliatory court action; several articles from the *Militant* and *New International* magazine explaining the place of the fight and the significance of its outcome for the labor movement; the Fund's wrap-up financial statement; and the final published endorsers' list.

The record at the historical society also includes, among other things, press coverage of the union battle and defense effort from the *Militant*, the *UMW Journal*, and newspapers in Utah and elsewhere, as well as public legal documents from the bosses' court action. The latter includes the judge's 2006 order dismissing C.W. Mining's complaint against the two Salt Lake City dailies.

The Militant Fighting Fund record at the Wisconsin State Historical Society complements others there on labor and political defense efforts. The society holds the record of the Civil Rights Defense Committee, which campaigned on behalf of leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and Minneapolis Local 544-CIO (formerly Teamsters), who were framed up in 1941 and subsequently sent to federal prison for their activity organizing labor opposition to Washington's entry into the imperialist Second World War.

Other collections include the records of defense cases for frame-up victims of the class struggle, from the Kutcher Civil Rights Committee, formed in 1948, which successfully fought the dismissal of James Kutcher, a legless World War II veteran, from his federal job because of his membership in the SWP; to the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, which supported the 1988–96 legal defense of framed-up packinghouse worker and socialist Mark Curtis; and the Róger Calero Defense Committee, which successfully fought government efforts in 2002–03 to deport Calero, a *Militant* reporter.

Cuba and the U.S. struggle for Black freedom

Below are excerpts from *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* by Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party in the United States. The French translation of the title is one of *Pathfinder's Books of the Month* for January (see ad below). Copyright © 2001 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY JACK BARNES

As Cuban workers and farmers pressed forward their socialist revolution and U.S. aggression mounted in reaction to their gains, the lessons transformed the way we looked at the battle for Black rights in the United States as well. The mass proletarian struggle to bring down the Jim Crow system of statutory segregation throughout the South, with its various forms of discrimination extending throughout the country, was marching toward bloody victories at the same time that the Cuban Revolution was advancing. We could see in practice that there were powerful social forces within the United States capable of carrying out a revolutionary social transformation like the working people of Cuba were bringing into being.



Bohemia
Members of First Company, 134th Militia Battalion, celebrate victory at Playa Girón, Cuba, April 1961. Inset: Members of NAACP in Monroe, North Carolina, organized for self-defense against Ku Klux Klan terror raids against the Black community.

The core of the activists defending the Cuban Revolution were young people who had cut their political eyeteeth as part of the civil rights battles, supporting the Woolworth lunch counter sit-ins and joining or supporting marches and other protests in Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, and elsewhere in the South.

The many faces of reaction, some in Ku Klux Klan hoods, others with sheriff's uniforms and FBI jackets protecting them; the lynchings and murders on isolated country roads; the dogs and water cannons unleashed on protesters—all were burned in our consciousness as part of the lessons we were learning about the violence and brutality of the U.S. ruling class and the lengths to which it will go to defend its property and prerogatives.

And we were learning lessons, too, from the armed self-defense organized by Black veterans in Monroe, North Carolina, and elsewhere in the South. Immediately following the U.S. defeat at the Bay of Pigs, during a debate in the Political Committee of the United Na-

tions General Assembly, Cuban Foreign Minister Raúl Roa read a message that former Monroe NAACP president Robert F. Williams had asked him to convey to the U.S. government.

"Now that the United States has proclaimed military support for people willing to rebel against oppression," Williams wrote, "oppressed Negroes in the South

urgently request tanks, artillery, bombs, money, use of American air fields and white mercenaries to crush racist tyrants who have betrayed the American Revolution and Civil War."

We rapidly came to see that the legal and extralegal violence directed against those fighting for their rights and dignity as human beings here in the United States was one and the same as the mounting overt and covert aggression against the people of Cuba. We placed the struggle for Black rights in the world. It became totally intertwined for us with the stakes in defending the Cuban Revolution.

This was exemplified above all by the convergence of the Cuban Revolution and Malcolm X, whose voice of uncompromising revolutionary struggle—by any means necessary—was then increasingly making itself heard. Malcolm welcomed Fidel Castro to the Hotel Theresa in Harlem during the Cuban delegation's trip to the United Nations in 1960. Malcolm invited Che Guevara to address a meeting of the Organization of Afro-American Unity during Che's trip to New York in 1964.

For us, these and other expressions of the growing mutual respect and solidarity that marked relations between Malcolm X and the Cuban leadership were further confirmation of our own developing world view.

Imperialist war in Iraq escalates

Continued from page 3

will tell Congress whether he needs more troops, which may prove to be the case."

In a January 19 raid, U.S. and Iraqi government forces arrested Abdul-Hadi al-Darraj, a top aide to al-Sadr. A spokesman for Iraqi prime minister Nouri al-Maliki criticized the raid. "Coordination with the Iraqi political leadership is needed before conducting such operations that draw popular reactions," stated Sadiq al-Rikabi. The premier has a major base of support

among al-Sadr's forces.

The U.S. military said it has carried out 52 operations against al-Sadr's militia in the last month. Another 42 attacks have targeted Sunni militias.

In his January 23 State of the Union speech, U.S. president George Bush said such assaults also target alleged Iranian activities inside Iraq. "Shi'a extremists," Bush said, "receive support from Iran." Bush also asked Congress to authorize an increase in the size of the Army and Marines by 92,000.

IF YOU LIKE THIS PAPER, LOOK US UP

Where to find distributors of the *Militant*, *New International*, and a full display of Pathfinder books.

UNITED STATES

ALABAMA: Birmingham: 3029A Bessemer Rd. Zip: 35208. Tel: (205) 780-0021. E-mail: swp@bham.rr.com

CALIFORNIA: Los Angeles: 4229 S. Central Ave. Zip: 90011. Tel: (323) 233-9372. E-mail: laswp@sbcglobal.net **San Diego:** Tel: (619) 253-1396. E-mail: sdyoungsocialists@gmail.com **San Francisco:** 3926 Mission St. Zip: 94112. Tel: (415) 584-2135. E-mail: swpsf@sbcglobal.net

FLORIDA: Miami: 8365 NE 2nd Ave. #206. Mailing address: P.O. Box 380846. Zip: 33138. Tel: (305) 756-4436. E-mail: miamiswp@bellsouth.net **Tampa:** Tel: (813) 774-1059. E-mail: youngsocialists813@gmail.com

GEORGIA: Atlanta: 2791 Lakewood Ave. Zip: 30315. Mailing address: P.O. Box 162515, Zip: 30321. Tel: (404) 768-1709. E-mail: swpatlanta@bellsouth.net

ILLINOIS: Chicago: 3557 S. Archer Ave. Zip: 60609. Tel: (773) 890-1190. E-mail: Chicagoswp@sbcglobal.net

IOWA: Des Moines: 3707 Douglas Ave. Zip: 50310. Tel: (515) 255-1707. E-mail: swpdesmoines@qwest.net

MASSACHUSETTS: Amherst: 114 Rolling Green Dr. Zip: 01002. Tel: (914) 466-6772. E-mail: AmherstYS@hotmail.com **Boston:** 13 Bennington St., 2nd Floor, East Boston. Zip: 02128. Tel: (617) 569-9169. E-mail: swpboston@verizon.net

MICHIGAN: Detroit: 695 Gullen

Mall Apt. 408. Zip: 48360. Tel: (248) 860-9341. E-mail: youngsocialistsdetroit@gmail.com

MINNESOTA: St. Paul: 113 Bernard St. E, West St. Paul. Zip: 55118. Tel: (651) 644-6325. E-mail: tcswp@qwest.net

NEW JERSEY: Newark: 168 Bloomfield Ave., 2nd Floor. Zip: 07104. Tel: (973) 481-0077. E-mail: swpnewark@optonline.net

NEW YORK: Albany: Tel: (518) 929-4786. E-mail: YoungSocialists518@gmail.com **Manhattan:** 306 W. 37th St., 10th Floor. Zip: 10018. Tel: (212) 629-6649. E-mail: newyorkswp@mac.com

PENNSYLVANIA: Philadelphia: 188 W. Wyoming Ave. Zip: 19140. Tel: (215) 455-2682. E-mail: philaswp@verizon.net **Pittsburgh:** 5907 Penn Ave., Suite 225. Zip: 15206. Tel: (412) 365-5080. E-mail: PittsburghSWP@verizon.net

TEXAS: Houston: 4800 W. 34th St., Suite C-51A. Zip: 77092. Tel: (713) 688-4919. E-mail: swp.houston1@sbcglobal.net

WASHINGTON, D.C.: 3717 B Georgia Ave. NW, Ground Floor. Zip: 20010. Tel: (202) 536-5080. E-mail: swp.washingtondc@verizon.net

WASHINGTON: Seattle: 5418 Rainier Ave. South. Zip: 98118-2439. Tel: (206) 323-1755. E-mail: seattleswp@speakeasy.net

AUSTRALIA

Sydney: 1st Flr, 3/281-287 Beamish St., Campsie, NSW 2194. Mailing address: P.O. Box 164, Campsie, NSW 2194.

Tel: (02) 9718 9698. E-mail: cl_australia@optusnet.com.au

CANADA

ONTARIO: Toronto: 2238 Dundas St. W., #201, Postal code M6R 3A9. Tel: (416) 535-9140. E-mail: cltoronto@bellnet.ca

FRANCE

Paris: P.O. 175, 23 rue Lecourbe. Postal code: 75015. Tel: (01) 40-10-28-37. E-mail: milpath.paris@laposte.net

ICELAND

Reykjavik: Skolavordustig 6B. Mailing address: P. Box 0233, IS 121 Reykjavik. Tel: 552 1202. E-mail: kb-reykjavik@simnet.is

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland: Suite 3, 7 Mason Ave., Otahuhu. Postal address: P.O. Box 3025. Tel: (9) 276-8885. E-mail: clauack@xtra.co.nz

SWEDEN

Stockholm: Bildhuggarvägen 17, 12144 Johanneshov. Tel: (08) 31 69 33. E-mail: kfstockholm@tele2.se

UNITED KINGDOM

ENGLAND: London: First Floor, 120 Bethnal Green (Entrance in Brick Lane). Postal code: E2 6DG. Tel: 020-7613-3855. E-mail: clondon@onetel.com

SCOTLAND: Edinburgh: Second Floor, 105 Hanover St. Postal code: EH2 1DJ. Tel: 0131-226-2756. E-mail: cl.edinburgh@btinternet.com

January BOOKS OF THE MONTH

PATHFINDER
READERS CLUB
SPECIALS

25%
DISCOUNT

Cuba et la révolution américaine à venir

(Cuba and the Coming American Revolution, in French) by Jack Barnes
This is a book about the class struggle in the U.S. It is about the example set by the people of Cuba that revolution is not only necessary — it can be made. \$13. **Special price: \$10.00**

Israel: A Colonial-Settler State?

by Maxime Rodinson
Examines how the State of Israel was formed. \$13. **Special price: \$10.00**

The Eastern Airlines Strike

by Ernie Mailhot, Jack Barnes, Judy Stranahan
The story of the 686-day strike in which a rank-and-file resistance by Machinists prevented Eastern's union-busting onslaught from becoming the road to a profitable nonunion airline. \$17. **Special price: \$13.00**

Puerto Rico: Independence Is a Necessity

(also in Spanish) by Rafael Cancel Miranda
Puerto Rican Nationalist jailed by Washington for more than 25 years speaks out on the brutal reality of U.S. colonial domination. \$5 (English); \$4 (Spanish) **Special price: \$3.50/ \$3.00**

The German Revolution and the Debate on Soviet Power

A day-to-day account of the 1918–19 German revolution. \$36. **Special price: \$27.00**

Join Pathfinder Readers Club for \$10 and receive discounts all year long

ORDER ONLINE AT
WWW.PATHFINDERPRESS.COM
OFFER GOOD UNTIL JANUARY 31, 2007

Troops out of Iraq, Afghanistan now!

As the U.S. government begins a major escalation of its nearly four-year war in Iraq and pursues other military assaults in the region, working people and youth should demand: Bring all the troops home now from Iraq and Afghanistan! U.S. hands off Iran! Not one penny, not one person for Washington's wars!

The U.S.-led war in Iraq is not the result of a policy of Bush and his party. It will not be reversed by the Democratic-led Congress or a future Democratic president. It is the result of an economic and political necessity for *imperialism*—as it was in the two world wars, Korea, Vietnam, and other imperialist wars.

Imperialism is the worldwide economic system based on rule by the billionaire class that owns major industry, banking, and land—from the United States to France to Japan—and appropriates the wealth produced by the majority: workers and farmers. All state institutions, from Congress to the armed forces, enforce the interests of that class at the expense of working people. The U.S. capitalists rule through their twin parties.

That is seen graphically in the charade in Congress, where Democratic “opposition” to the Republican White House over Iraq is simply tactical differences on how best to defend their common imperialist interests in the Mideast. Democrats push empty “nonbinding” resolutions criticizing the escalation but make it clear they will not pull the U.S. troops out of Iraq. Both

parties agree on stepping up the Afghanistan war and threats against Iran. This is part of the rulers' worldwide military drive—their “long war” on “terrorism.”

The capitalist class has no alternative to this course. Profit rates have been declining since the 1970s by the very workings of the system. The bosses must reverse that trend by the only means they have: cutting wages, rolling back social benefits, and brutally intensifying the pace of work, while going to war and competing with their rivals for markets, resources, and territory.

In the capitalists' war abroad and at home, working people are not helpless victims, as shown by the recent actions of meat packers at the giant Smithfield slaughterhouse in Tar Heel, North Carolina. To protest the firing of workers over their immigration status, 1,000 meat packers walked off the job November 16–17. Then hundreds took the day off January 15 to celebrate Martin Luther King Day, defying boss threats. These actions helped unite immigrant, Black, and other workers and strengthened their ongoing struggle to unionize.

This fight shows the potential power of working people and points to the only way to end imperialist wars. That is, to join these and other struggles along the road of building a movement of working people that can lead a revolution: to overturn the warmaking class, establish a workers and farmers government, and join with toiling humanity in the fight for a socialist world.

Build actions to free the Cuban Five

The widest possible support is needed for the international youth campaign, launched on January 10, calling on the U.S. government to release five Cubans imprisoned for the past eight years: Gerardo Hernández, Fernando González, René González, Antonio Guerrero, and Ramón Labañino. They were framed up by the FBI on charges of conspiring “to commit espionage” and “to commit murder.” Their “crime”? Informing Cuba of the activities of ultrarightist groups that, with Washington's complicity, have a history of launching bombing attacks against Cuba from U.S. soil.

The campaign also demands the U.S. government grant visas to relatives of the Cuban Five, ending its inhuman refusal to allow Gerardo Hernández and René González to see their loved ones.

Spearheaded by Cuban youth organizations, the campaign appeals to young people worldwide to organize demonstrations, educational events, and other broadly sponsored activities to get out the truth about the Cuban Five and expand support for demanding their release. Youth groups are urged to build the International Youth Solidarity Meeting in Havana April 29–30, the culmination of the four-month campaign.

The April 7 national actions in the United States, planned for New York and Los Angeles, will contribute to the success of this worldwide effort. Other such activities in North America include: A January 26 public forum at the Thurgood Marshall School of Law in Houston; a January 30 panel of speakers at the

Suffolk University Law School in Boston; a picket line at the U.S. consulate in Vancouver the same day; and a February 25 buffet and cultural evening in Montreal.

The facts about the unjust imprisonment of the Cuban Five, from their unfair trial to their jailers' failed attempts to isolate them and break their morale, can win support among broad numbers of workers, farmers, and democratically minded people.

The lifelong record of these five militants also shows what the Cuban Revolution is about. It shows why the wealthy U.S. rulers are so determined to stamp it out—and why they will continue to fail. Three of the five were among the 300,000 Cubans who volunteered to fight in Angola and helped defeat invasions of that country by the racist South African regime, contributing to apartheid's demise. And all five put their lives on the line to carry out their mission in the United States in defense of their country's sovereignty.

This selfless international solidarity, which Cuba has offered to those resisting imperialist domination the world over, is the result of the socialist revolution Cuba's working people made 48 years ago. They took power, overturning the political and economic rule of the capitalist class and beginning to reorganize society in the interests of the vast majority. For workers, farmers, small traders, and all exploited producers, as well youth in other countries fighting the brutal effects of capitalism, the Cuban Revolution is a living example that such a road is possible and necessary today.

Behind the war and divisions in Somalia

BY MARTIN KOPPEL

In her letter to the editor, Wendy Banen solicits further explanation of the situation in Somalia today, including references to “warlords” and clans. She asks, “How did they originate and develop and what do these groupings represent in the class struggle in Somalia?” How have the imperialist powers fostered divisions along these lines?

The capitalist media and politicians falsely attribute the conflict in Somalia to “ancient clan enmities” and portray the imperialist powers that have dominated Somalia as playing a “civilizing” role.

The big-business media often uses the term “war-

REPLY TO A READER

lords” to identify leaders of Somali armed groups that Washington opposes. But all sides of the conflict—including forces the U.S. government backs—involve “warlords,” that is, clan-based militias.

The conflict in Somalia today is rooted in more than a century of imperialist domination in the Horn of Africa. In the late 1800s, the Somali people's homeland was carved up into five colonial territories: British Somaliland, Italian Somaliland, French Somaliland (now Djibouti), a British-ruled area now part of Kenya, and the Ogaden region, now part of Ethiopia.

The defeat of the Italian invasion of Ethiopia during World War II and the rise of anticolonial struggles worldwide boosted the Somali national struggle. In 1960 British and Italian Somaliland united as independent Somalia. Kenya shook off British rule in 1963, and Djibouti became independent from Paris in 1977.

The imperialist powers did little to develop modern agriculture or industry in Somalia, today an impoverished semicolonial country. They have used the country primarily for its strategic position in the Horn of Africa. Somalia's economy remains largely nomadic cattle raising and trading in the ports; there is a very small working class. Because of the legacy of these precapitalist economic relations, the social and political structure remains based on clan family groups.

Stalinism too has helped perpetuate this situation. To gain a bargaining chip in its class-collaborationist dealings with Washington, Moscow initially financed and armed the Mohammed Siad Barre dictatorship, which took power in a 1969 military coup and falsely called itself “socialist.” Siad Barre gave privileges to some clans over others to weaken any opposition.

After the 1974 revolution in Ethiopia, which toppled the U.S.-backed monarchy of Haile Selassie, Moscow switched its support to the new government in Addis Ababa and dumped the Somali regime. The U.S. rulers, alarmed at the revolution, drew the Siad Barre government into their orbit and prodded it to invade the Ogaden in 1977–78 as a proxy attack on Ethiopia.

When Siad Barre was overthrown in a 1991 coup, the consequences of imperialist-fostered divisions came to the fore. Without a nationally cohesive ruling class—the capitalist-landlord class is fragmented among six major clans and numerous subclans—central authority collapsed. Fighting broke out among warring clan leaders over resources and territory. Clans in the north declared that region an independent Republic of Somaliland. Those in the northeast declared their region, Puntland, an autonomous state.

Since then Somalia has been ravaged by famine, civil war, a 1993–94 U.S. invasion, and a takeover by the Somalia Islamic Courts Council (SICC), which gained support through its appeals for order. This Islamist group had its main political base among some of the southern clans. Washington, stepping up its military presence in the region, patched together a “transitional” government based on other clan groups, which routed the SICC from Mogadishu through an Ethiopian invasion. This foreign military presence continues to reinforce divisions between Ethiopians and Somalis.

Imperialist domination and intervention, far from being a force for progress, has been the biggest obstacle in Somalia. The solutions to the social disaster confronting the Somali people will come only from the struggles of the emerging working classes in alliance with the peasants and other exploited producers, and with the solidarity of fellow workers and farmers worldwide.

LETTERS

Somalia

In reading Martín Koppel's articles on Somalia, I'm trying to arrive at some clarity in class terms and am curious if any further explanation would provide this.

Would it be possible to explain the religious and clan differences and “warlords” in clearer class terms? How did they originate and develop, and what do these groupings represent in the class struggle in Somalia? The *Militant* is very clear with similar differences in Iraq, but the recent developments in Somalia, the characterization of the SICC, and the Oromo Liberation Front Movement, are all difficult to understand without more explanation. Perhaps some reading materials or references would provide clarity.

Wendy Banen
New York, New York

Response to immigration raids

ACELA, the Latin American Cultural and Education Association in Utah, has stood at the forefront of organizing resources to help the victims and the families of the December 12 immigration raids at the Swift plant in Hyrum, Utah. They are an organization that is comprised mainly of working-class Latinos. They played an important role in organizing the march for legalization that drew 40,000 participants in Salt Lake City April 9.

John Langford
Park City, Utah

Hussein execution

I agree wholeheartedly with the point made by Sam Manuel in his article “U.S. rulers press brutal Iraq war” (January 15 issue) that the

hanging of Saddam Hussein was a “lynch-mob style execution that violated even elementary bourgeois standards of justice.” But it seems to me that a larger point has to be made that the U.S. client regime in Baghdad had no right to try, much less execute Hussein to begin with. The trial and execution of Hussein were as much a violation of Iraqi sovereignty as the imperialist invasion and occupation.

Bill Kalman
Richmond, California

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.