

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

International conference  
on women's rights held in Caracas

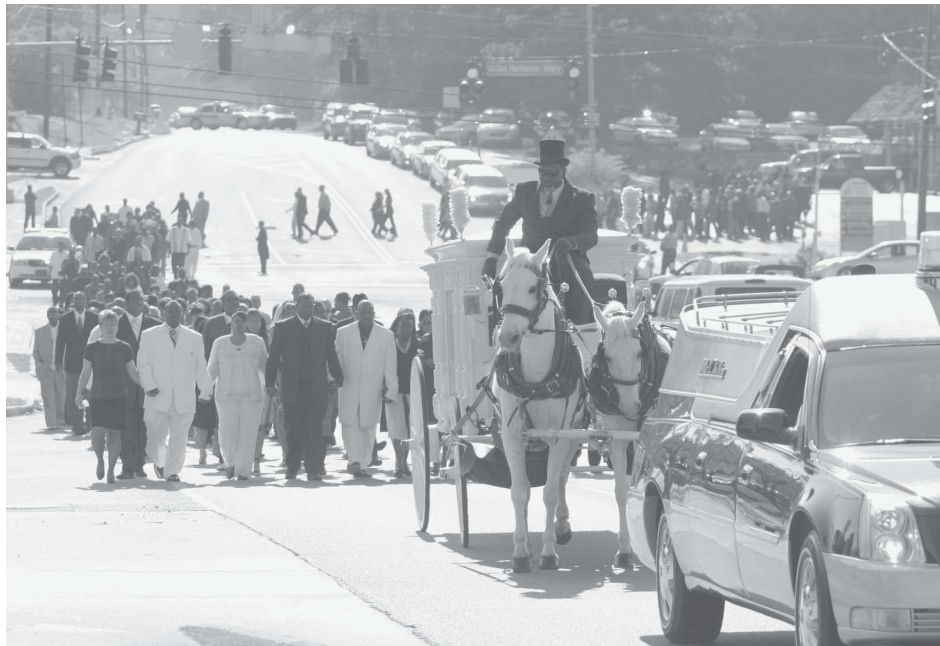
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 71/NO. 18

MAY 7, 2007

## Protesters in Georgia demand justice for youth killed by cops



Jessica McGowan/Special

**Horse-drawn hearse carries body of Ron Pettaway in funeral procession and protest march April 21 in College Park, Georgia, a suburb of Atlanta. Pettaway, 26, an African American, was killed by cops April 15 at the Frozen Palace nightclub, seen in background to right.**

BY BILL ARTH

COLLEGE PARK, Georgia, April 21—More than 200 people marched here today behind the horse-drawn hearse carrying the body of Ron Pettaway, a young African American.

His remains were carried from the parking lot of the Frozen Palace nightclub, where he had been killed by Fulton County police the previous Sunday morning, and where his brother Roy was also shot but survived, to the Liveoak Baptist Church, where the funeral was held.

Hundreds of others were already at the

church, swelling the crowd to 500.

Billed as a “unity march,” the gathering was organized to show support for Pettaway’s family and to protest the killing, one of a rash of deaths from cop shootings here. Pettaway was the 14th victim of the police in metropolitan Atlanta in the last 15 months.

“He was unarmed,” said Johnny Jones, 19, a friend of the deceased. “This was murder. I have seen this an enormous amount of times.”

Dirk White, 50, a used car salesman in

**Continued on page 2**

## Congress to send bill to Bush with \$100 billion for Iraq, Afghan wars Democrats keep portraying it as ‘antiwar’

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, April 24—Democratic leaders of the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate agreed on a bill approved by a congressional conference committee yesterday to provide \$100 billion for Washington’s wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Democrats insist

on portraying the measure as “antiwar” because of a “nonbinding” provision suggesting U.S. troops in Iraq be redeployed out of combat roles by March 2008.

U.S. president George Bush has made it clear he will veto any bill that contains deadlines for troop withdrawal. Leading

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## ‘We’re workers, not criminals!’

At Iowa meeting, workers denounce plan to turn local cops into ‘la migra’

BY SETH GALINSKY

MARSHALLTOWN, Iowa—The hall at the Salvation Army headquarters here overflowed April 17 with 175 people opposed to a plan to turn local police into enforcers of federal immigration laws.

Most of those at the meeting were current or former employees of the huge Swift pork plant on the outskirts of town. Entire families attended. The program took place primarily in Spanish, with simultaneous translation for a handful of people who spoke only English. Shouts of *¡Sí se puede!* (Yes we can!) filled the hall.

“We are workers, not criminals,” said

**End raids, deportations!  
Residency for  
undocumented now!**

—editorial, p. 9

Samuel Carvajal in opening the gathering. “We can stop this plan.” Carvajal is a leader of Latinos en Acción de CCI (Latinos in Action), which organized the event.

Erica Palmer, an organizer of the group, told the crowd that last November—more than a month before the

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Latinos en Acción de CCI

**April 17 protest meeting in Marshalltown, Iowa, organized by Latinos in Action to press City Council to cancel plan to turn local police into *la migra*.**

## May Day actions across U.S. to demand legalization of immigrants

BY ERNEST MAILHOT

CHICAGO, April 24—A range of trade unions, immigrant rights groups, and other organizations have come together to back the May Day march here calling for legalization of all undocumented immigrants. They include the March 10 Movement Coalition, Midwest Regional Joint Board of UNITE HERE,

**Continued on page 8**

## U.S. high court ruling deals blow to women’s right to choose abortion

BY DAN FEIN  
AND OLYMPIA NEWTON

NEW YORK, April 19—“It’s a woman’s right and her decision to terminate a pregnancy,” Suzanne Theberge, 29, a public health professional, told the *Militant*. Theberge was one of 200 people

who rallied here last night to protest yesterday’s Supreme Court decision upholding a federal ban on the intact dilation and evacuation (D&E) abortion procedure.

The 5–4 ruling upheld the constitutionality of the 2003 federal “Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act,” which banned a specific method of abortion for the first time since the medical procedure was

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## Celebrate the life and political contributions of Harry Ring, a communist militant for 71 years



Militant

**Harry Ring, in late 1960s, during the movement to oppose the U.S. war against Vietnam.**

**Saturday, May 19  
Los Angeles \* New York**

Harry Ring, an internationalist cadre and leader of the Socialist Workers Party, died in Los Angeles April 17. Join us in celebrating his life and political contributions to the building of the Socialist Workers Party and the fight for a new communist international—to which Ring dedicated 71 years. Speakers, locations, and times to be announced.

For more information on West Coast event call: (323) 233-9372 or (415) 584-2135

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Messages can be sent to: laswp@sbcglobal.net

Sponsors: Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists

## Coal miners in Southwest sign up for ‘Militant’

Three weeks into the eight-week *Militant* circulation drive, more than 850 people have subscribed to the paper. Below is a report on the results of a sales team in the coal mining areas of the Navajo Nation in Arizona and New Mexico.

BY DEAN HAZLEWOOD

WINDOW ROCK, Arizona—A team of *Militant* supporters visiting the coalfields of the Navajo Nation April 19–22 sold 108 copies and eight subscriptions

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## Also Inside:

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# Gutierrez-Flake bill: anti-immigrant, antilabor

BY ROLLANDE GIRARD  
AND ERNEST MAILHOT

CHICAGO—An “immigration reform” proposal by U.S. president George Bush says that some undocumented immigrants could be eligible for a three-year work visa at the cost of \$3,500 each time they renew it. It includes stiff restrictions on eligibility and requires applicants to pay a \$10,000 fine and return to their country of origin to apply for residency.

Bush’s plan also calls for extending a border wall, more border cops, and a special ID for immigrants.

The White House proposal is overwhelmingly opposed by immigrant

workers using false documents. It adds at least 20 detention centers with the capacity to hold 20,000 individuals. It criminalizes anyone who “encourages, directs, or induces a person to come to or enter the United States” or “to reside in the United States” without proper documents.

STRIVE’s residency eligibility portions apply only to those who entered the United States before June 1, 2006, can provide proof of employment, pay a \$500 fine, and receive a security clearance. These immigrants would then need to work in the United States for six years, during which they would need to learn English before applying for residency.

Those who jump over these hurdles would then have to leave the country, pay another \$1,500 and any back taxes for all years of employment in the United States, and go to the end of the line to have their application considered. In the case of a family, only the head of the household must leave the country. With the backlog of residency applications today, this process would take many years.

The STRIVE Act includes a “guest

worker” program allowing 400,000 immigrants to enter the United States every year and work on a temporary basis. This provision would institutionalize a super-exploited part of the workforce. These workers can be fired at the whim of their boss and, if they don’t find another job within 60 days, they will be deported.

The Gutierrez-Flake bill also gives local police and other cop agencies powers to enforce immigration laws.

Last year’s mass mobilizations for immigrant rights defeated the Sensenbrenner bill, which would have criminalized all the undocumented and those who aid them. They showed how immigrant workers, who have become part of the hereditary proletariat in this country—workers who can expect that they and their children will remain part of the permanent working class in the United States—have added renewed strength to the working class as a whole.

Gutierrez, who spoke at rallies last year opposing the Sensenbrenner bill, and groups like the ICIRR that helped build last spring’s actions, including the May



Militant/Rollande Girard

**April 24 protest in Chicago after *la migra* surrounded La Vallita shopping center.**

Day strike, demanding legalization for all, describe the STRIVE Act as a realistic proposal for immigration reform.

It may be realistic for safeguarding the bosses’ interests, but it is antilabor to the core. Working people and the labor movement should oppose it, just like Bush’s plan, and instead organize and back actions demanding unconditional legalization of all undocumented—now.

*Rollande Girard is a garment worker and member of UNITE HERE. Ernie Mailhot is a meat packer.*

## AS I SEE IT

workers and their supporters.

Another equally antiworker proposal, however, is being hailed as “progressive” by a number of immigrant rights groups such as the Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (ICIRR). That’s the Security Through Regularized Immigration and a Vibrant Economy Act (STRIVE), introduced in the House of Representatives by Luis Gutierrez, a Democrat from Illinois, and Jeff Flake, Republican from Arizona.

Purportedly offering a path to citizenship, the Gutierrez-Flake bill would not be implemented until border surveillance, with new technology and more border patrols, are put in place. While speaking for this bill at an April 14 public meeting here, Gutierrez said the ID it would require for qualifying immigrants “is better than a license. It has your picture on the front and your fingerprint on the back and it is a visa to enter the country.”

Besides this federal ID, which will be used to keep tabs on and control workers, STRIVE calls for harsher penalties for

## 500 protest killing by cop of young African American

**Continued from front page**

Marietta, did not know Ron Pettaway or his family but said he came because he has seen enough. “I’m tired of looking in the paper every month and seeing that another Black man has been killed, that all the witnesses say he was unarmed, and that nothing ever comes of it,” he told the *Militant*. “The police department does the investigation, and the conclusion is always that the officers were justified in their actions. It’s every month, and not just in Atlanta. It’s New York or wherever. All Black men aren’t violent. We don’t deserve it. It could have been me. I’ve been seeing this my whole life.”

“His father has been back and forth to Iraq,” said Angela Marion who came from Conyers and had been a neighbor of the Pettaways for three years. “He moved from Jacksonville, Florida, to make a better life for his kids and this is what happened.”

Roy Pettaway Jr., Ron Pettaway’s father and a sergeant in the U.S. Army, told those at the service, “We need to solve this problem. We know what the problem is. The world knows what the problem is. But, every time we turn the other cheek, there’s not another cheek to turn. We don’t hate anyone. We just want justice.”

According to the Fulton County medical examiner, Ron Pettaway, 26, who was a self-employed carpet cleaner, was fatally shot in the back of the head by two officers who had been called to the club to break up a fight. His brother, Roy Pettaway III, 27, was also shot and wounded when he went to check on Ron. Neither of the two brothers was armed.

LaShonda Daniels, an eyewitness, said Ron Pettaway had walked calmly out of the club with the cops. “He was no criminal, no gun, nothing like that,” she told the *Militant*. “Neither one of them. They judged him as a thug because he had a

gold tooth and was having a good time.”

DeKalb County cops killed 12 people last year. These shootings are under investigation. Atlanta cops also killed 92-year-old Kathryn Johnston in a drug raid on her house in November. In the latter case, a Fulton County grand jury was convened April 25 to consider murder charges against three narcotics officers.

Many of those who turned out for Pettaway’s funeral said they came to protest all these killings.

Sheila Spivey came from Chamblee with her son. She did not know the Pettaways. “This is 2007 and it’s still happening,” she said. “I have a 14-year-old son. We have to show that we stand for righteousness. They [police] have no compassion, no value for human life.”

At the service, Rev. Markel Hutchins, a spokesman for the affected families, said, “The family of Ron Pettaway has made a determination that they are the last family to go through this. We are going to call for a major march in the city of Atlanta. We are going to shut this town down to make them stop killing our young men.”

*Rachele Fruit, Maceo Dixon, and Wesley Lewis contributed to this article.*

THE MILITANT

*‘Gives news other papers won’t print’*

*“The ‘Militant’ gives me the news the other papers don’t want to print.”*

—Steven Parfitt  
Auckland, New Zealand

Steven Parfitt is a student at the University of Auckland in New Zealand and a postal worker.

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



# Afghanistan execution by Swedish troops stirs controversy in Sweden

BY DAG TIRSÉN

STOCKHOLM, Sweden—The disclosure on the TV show “Plain Facts” that Swedish troops in Afghanistan carried out a targeted killing of Matou Nematullah, a commander of the group Hezb-e Islami, has caused a debate here.

The March 8 show reported that a Swedish force, reinforced by some troops of other nationalities, launched an attack against a village called Boka in the northern part of the country. According to Lt. Patrik Berge, who took part in the operation, the troops were given photos of Nematullah.

The battle lasted two hours. Afterward Nematullah was found dead. According to a document shown on TV, “Colonel Bengt Sandström, who commanded the operation, reported back to the base: ‘no casualties, main target down.’”

The Swedish Armed Forces was pursuing Nematullah for allegedly organizing a bomb attack last November that killed two Swedish soldiers. A few days after they got confirmation that the Afghan justice system was not going to act against Nematullah, the assault on the village took place.

The increasingly aggressive role of Swedish forces abroad has caused discomfort among some bourgeois politicians here.

Maj-Britt Theorin, a former Social Democratic minister of disarmament, said such “preemptive attacks” are “against international law.”

But many are pressing ahead to make the Swedish military a more effective tool to participate in wars abroad.

Minister of Defense Mikael Odenberg questioned the accuracy of the TV program. “Swedish troops had to defend themselves,” he said. “It is probably not the last time Swedish troops will be involved in combat in Afghanistan.”

There are currently 330 Swedish troops in Afghanistan, but the government is backing a proposal to raise the upper limit of the force that can be deployed there from 375 to 600. Over the next two years, the military is also pressing to add an air component, the fighter attack plane JAS 39 Gripen, to Sweden’s force in Afghanistan.

Recruiting 2,000 soldiers to be part of the Nordic battle group—which includes

Swedish, Finnish, Norwegian, and Estonian troops—is right now the central effort of the Swedish military. The 2,400-strong force will be one of two rapid deployment forces that the European Union (EU) will be able to deploy within 10 days anywhere in the world.

Responsibility for coordinating this force will rotate among the EU member states. The Swedish Armed Forces will be mainly responsible for one of these EU forces in service the first half of 2008. So within a few months, the number of Swedish soldiers deployed abroad—currently 1,000—will be tripled.

In January, a discussion started in the press among leading military figures and experts. They argued that the

## Pentagon advances Army ‘transformation’

BY PAUL PEDERSON

As he pledged to do when he was sworn in, U.S. secretary of defense Robert Gates is pushing to advance what the Pentagon calls the transformation of Washington’s military from its former Cold War structure to “a more agile, more lethal, and more expeditionary force” fitted for U.S. imperialism’s “long war on terrorism.” This process was spearheaded under Gates’s predecessor Donald Rumsfeld.

The Pentagon is placing greater value on combat experience. On March 1, the U.S. Army established a policy that soldiers must first fight in one of the two current theaters of Washington’s “war on terror,” Iraq or Afghanistan, before being eligible for an extension of service in south Korea, where there has been no combat for decades.

The Pentagon is also beefing up its spy capacities as it is reorganizing the military into “modular combat units.”

“The number of enlisted soldiers in intelligence jobs will grow by 25 percent in the next six years to fill billets in the Army’s modular units and to feed the critical need for information to fight insurgent forces in war zones,” the *Army Times* reported March 29.

There has been a steady decline in the number of troops stationed at the once-massive U.S. bases in Central Europe built during the Cold War.



Photo from Swedish Military

Swedish troops on patrol in Afghanistan

military forces available in Sweden have been weakened by the emphasis on international missions, and need to be reinforced. Many pointed to the threat of a strengthened Russian military.

“We can see a changed strategic situation developing in northern Europe,” Maj. Gen. Michael Moore, head of the Swedish military research institute, wrote in

the Swedish paper *Dagens Nyheter*.

Col. Stefan Gustavsson, head of strategic analysis for the Swedish Armed Forces, highlighted the building of a gas pipeline along Sweden’s coast and the efforts by Russia to rebuild its military. This calls for a “regional dimension,” he said, to be added to “the present priority of the international operations.”

A March 29 *Army Times* article headlined “Is the U.S. prepared for conflict in Europe?” said that in Europe, “if a major regional conflict broke out today, the [U.S. European] command—its ranks drawn thin by deployments to Afghanistan and Iraq—would have to ask for reinforcements.”

“At the height of the Cold War in the

## CALENDAR

### CALIFORNIA

#### Berkeley

**Presentation of *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*.** Wed., May 2, 5:00 p.m. Speakers: Mary-Alice Waters, editor of *Our History Is Still Being Written* and president of Pathfinder Press; Harvey Dong, lecturer, Asian American Studies; Loni Ding, filmmaker and lecturer, Department of Ethnic Studies; Alex Saragoza, associate professor, Department of Ethnic Studies and Chicano/Latino Studies Program; Wesley Ueunten, Asian

American Studies; Miriam Solis, U.C. Berkeley student, Department of Geography and Department of Ethnic Studies. *U.C. Berkeley, Multicultural Center, Heller Lounge, Martin Luther King Student Union. For more information, call (510) 642-9077.*

### TEXAS

#### El Paso

**Extradite Luis Posada Carriles. Free the Cuban Five!** Fri., May 11, 11:00 a.m. *Federal Courthouse, 700 E. San Antonio Ave. For more information, contact: freethethefive.org*

### MAY DAY ACTIONS

#### Stop raids and deportations! Legalize all immigrants now!

### CALIFORNIA

#### Los Angeles

May 1, 12 noon, gather at Olympic Blvd. and Broadway. *For information: www.mayday-movement.blogspot.com; (323) 702-6397.*

### FLORIDA

#### Immokolee

May 1, 2:00 p.m., gather 112 W. Main St. and First St. *For more information: Asociación Campesina, (239) 657-2500.*

#### Miami

May 1, 4:00 p.m., gather at Government Center, 111 NW First St., march to Bayfront Park.

### ILLINOIS

#### Chicago

May 1, 10:00 a.m., gather at Union Park at Ashland Ave. and Washington St. 1:30 p.m., march to Daley Plaza, at Washington St. and Dearborn St.

May 1, 11:00 a.m., gather at the Haymarket Memorial, Des Plaines Ave., between Randolph St. and Lake Street.

### MINNESOTA

#### Minneapolis

May 1, 4:00 p.m., gather at Lake St. and Nicollet Ave. *For more information: Minnesota Immigrant Rights Action Coalition, www.mnimigrantrights.net; (651) 389-9174.*

### NEW JERSEY

#### Elizabeth

May 1, 11:30 a.m., gather at Warinanco Park,

near Roselle Park and Elizabeth train stations. *For more information: New Jersey May 1 Coalition, www.njmay1.org; (973) 736-0522.*

#### Morristown

May 1, 5:00 p.m., gather at Morristown Park. *For more information: www.windofthespirit.net; (973) 538-2035.*

### NEW YORK

#### Hempstead

May 1, 10:00 a.m., gather at Washington St., between Fulton Ave. and Front St. *For more information: Workplace Project, (516) 565-5377.*

#### New York

May 1, 4:00 p.m., gather at Union Square Park, 14th St. and Broadway. March to Federal Plaza/Foley Square. *For more information: NYC May 1 Coalition, (646) 291-2778.*

### TEXAS

#### Houston

Sat., April 28, 2:00 p.m., gather at Immaculate Conception Church, 7250 Harrisburg Blvd., march to Mason Park, 75th St. and Tipps. *For more information: (281) 748-8775.*

#### San Antonio

May 1, 12 noon, gather at Milam Park (in front of Santa Rosa hospital), march starts at 6:00 p.m. *For more information: Southwest Workers Union, (210) 299-2666.*

### WISCONSIN

#### Madison

May 1, 12 noon, gather at the Capitol, march to Brittingham Park. *For more information: Union de Trabajadores Inmigrantes, (608) 446-3656; www.uniondetrabajadores.org*

## MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

### ALABAMA

#### Birmingham

**Speakout to Defend Abortion Rights!** Speaker: Kim Adams, president, Greater Birmingham NOW; Tamar Rosenfeld, Socialist Workers Party; others. Fri., May 4, Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. *3029A Bessemer Rd. Tel.: (205) 780-0021.*

### CALIFORNIA

#### San Francisco

**The Meaning of the Recent Supreme Court Decision on Abortion.** Fri., May 4, 7:30 p.m. *3926 Mission St. Tel.: (415) 584-2135.*

### ILLINOIS

#### Chicago

**Che Guevara and Cuba’s Socialist Revolution.** Fri., May 4, Dinner, 7:00 p.m.; program, 8:00 p.m. *3557 South Archer Ave., Tel.: (773) 890-1190.*

### NEW YORK

#### New York

**Abortion: A Woman’s Right to Choose!** A panel of speakers. Fri., May 4, Dinner, 7:00 p.m.;

program, 8:00 p.m. *307 W. 36th St. 10th floor (use north elevators). Tel.: (212) 629-6649.*

### TEXAS

#### Houston

**Defend a Woman’s Right to Choose Abortion.** Speakers: Amanda Ulman, Socialist Workers Campaign; others. Fri., May 4, 7:30 p.m. *4800 W. 34th St., Suite C-51A. Tel.: (713) 688-4919.*

### CANADA

#### Toronto

**The French Elections: Which Way Forward for Workers and Farmers.** Speaker: Michel Prairie, Communist League, recently returned from France. Sun., May 6. Program 3:00 p.m., to be followed by a dinner to raise funds for the *Militant*. *2238 Dundas St. West, Suite 201. Tel.: (416) 535-9140.*

### SWEDEN

#### Stockholm

**Malcolm X and His Importance Today.** Speaker: Anita Östling, Communist League. Fri., May 4, 7:30 p.m. *Bildhuggarvägen 17. Tel.: 08 316933.*



Event to defend Cuban Five held at New York University

This column is written and edited by members of the Young Socialists, a revolutionary socialist youth organization. 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.

YOUNG SOCIALISTS IN ACTION

BY LINDSEY MANGERI NEW YORK, April 17—"I saw pictures of the Five everywhere in Cuba, but now I know what their story is," said Kate Oberdorfer, 21, a junior at the Gallatin School of Individualized Study who just returned from a three-month study in Cuba.

Oberdorfer was among 50 students and others gathered at New York University's (NYU) Kimmel Center today to discuss the case of the Cuban Five at "Debunking the Myths," a panel presentation sponsored by Omega Phi Beta Sorority and

Phi Iota Alpha Fraternity. Many of those present had heard of the Cuban Five but were interested in learning more about what triggered the exceedingly hostile treatment of these five revolutionaries by the U.S. government.

The five—Gerardo Hernández, René González, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, and Fernando González—were arrested by the FBI in 1998 and convicted three years later on frame-up charges that included conspiracy to spy for Havana. They are serving sentences ranging from 15 years to a double-life term.

"Debunking the Myths" was part of an international youth campaign in solidarity with the Cuban Five. The Young Socialists have stepped up efforts to broaden support for the five.

"These five men are no different than any other Cuban willing to defend the revolution," said Emily Paul, a Young Socialist who spoke from the panel that also included Ben Becker, a representative of the National Committee to Free the Cuban Five. Paul said the case of



Militant/Ben Joyce Emily Paul, a Young Socialist in New York, speaking at April 17 meeting on the Cuban Five at New York University. Seated next to her is the other panelist, Ben Becker, a representative of the National Committee to Free the Cuban Five.

the Five is another instance of the long-standing imperialist attacks against the Cuban Revolution. She pointed out that the aggressive treatment of these prisoners aims to break their spirit.

"But the Cuban Five are not victims," Paul said. "They have now joined the working-class struggle in the United States." This includes extending solidarity to workers on strike in the United States

and sharing revolutionary literature behind bars. Paul stressed the significance of the event as part of the international campaign to free the five and press for allowing visits by their families.

Becker described the campaign in the early 1990s of violent attacks against Cuba by counterrevolutionary groups functioning from U.S. soil with Washington's complicity. The Five entered these groups to gather information on their plans, he said.

"I didn't know of the plot to bomb the Tropicana [nightclub in Cuba]," said Francisco Guzmán, an NYU senior. "This event gives us more reason to follow up on the case of the Five."

After the meeting, students picked up information on the Five and the Cuban Revolution, including the video *Mission Against Terror*, the book *Che Guevara Talks to Young People* and other Pathfinder titles. Two students also subscribed to the *Militant*.

Lindsey Mangeri is a student at State University of New York at Albany.

Coal miners in Southwest subscribe to 'Militant'

Continued from front page to the paper. At several shift changes at the McKinley mine in Tse Bonito, New Mexico, 48 miners bought the *Militant* and two others subscribed. Several said the company is pushing them to work 12-hour days and out of classification.

The McKinley mine, owned by Pittsburgh and Midway Coal (P&M), is organized by United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) Local 1332. P&M's parent company, Chevron, has announced it will close the mine in 2009. The miners said the company is on a speedup campaign and, in an attempt to increase production, is cutting corners on safety. After P&M laid off 38 miners December 31, and oth-

ers retired or resigned, the workforce has been reduced from 242 to 174.

The mine, located on Navajo land, is important for the economy of the Navajo reservation, where unemployment exceeds 40 percent. UMWA Local 1332 has a clause in the union contract that calls for preferential hiring of local Navajos.

*Militant* supporters were invited to attend UMWA Local 1332 meetings. Alyson Kennedy, one of the *Militant* supporters, was asked to say a few words. She described the immigration raids across the United States and the resistance to these attacks. The fight to legalize all immigrants is a life-and-death question for the labor movement, she said. After the



Militant/Gerardo Sánchez David Argüello and Alyson Kennedy sell Militant April 20 at New Mexico McKinley mine.

meetings three miners renewed their *Militant* subscriptions and one signed up for the first time. Workers also bought issue no. 12 of the *New International* magazine and the pamphlet *Genocide Against the Indians*.

Two *Militant* supporters visited the Peabody mine in Kayenta, Arizona, on another part of the reservation. Miners on their way to work said their contract is up in September and there are no negotiations yet, which they were concerned about. Twenty miners bought the *Militant* and a woman on the way in to pick up her husband subscribed. A year ago Peabody closed the Black Mesa mine, located next to Kayenta, throwing hundreds on the street.

Another 34 people bought the *Militant* at the local Wal-Mart in Gallup, New Mexico. Many objected to the attempt by uranium mining companies to reopen mines on Navajo land. In 2005, the Navajo Tribal Council banned uranium mining. More than 1,200 such mines operated there from the 1940s through the 1980s, extracting 13 million tons of ore. Many Navajos have died or suffer from cancer from working in these mines. A teacher, who subscribed to the *Militant* and bought *New International* no. 13, said the water at the school where she teaches is contaminated from uranium seeping into the water table.

On to close gap in 'Militant' fund

BY OLYMPIA NEWTON

April 25—*Militant* supporters sent in nearly \$16,000 toward the paper's \$100,000 spring fund drive last week. That's the highest amount collected in a single week, as we head toward the half-way mark in the eight-week campaign.

If such a steady increase in the pace of collections keeps up, the \$3,175 shortfall from being on target can be closed by next week. Making up that gap, and then sending in \$12,500 per week for the last four weeks, is crucial in helping the *Militant* meet its operating expenses.

Militant Labor Forums focused on fund-raising boosted collection last week. Supporters of the paper held such events in Chicago, New York, San Francisco, and the Twin Cities.

Ernest Mailhot, a packinghouse worker in Chicago, sent the following description of the event there:

"Thirty people, including a number of youth, attended a Chicago Militant Labor Forum given by veteran Socialist Workers Party leader Tom Leonard. He discussed the lessons of the Cuban Revolution today and his experiences as a merchant seaman sailing into Asian ports during and following World War II. This included China and Korea, where revolutionary struggles took place to liberate these countries from imperialist exploitation. A lively discussion followed the presentation and more than \$800 was raised for the Militant Fund Drive."

Supporters of the paper in Philadelphia just increased their quota—a much needed initiative, since the total

of local quotas are \$6,000 shy of the international goal.

Join the effort! Send checks payable to the *Militant*, earmarked "Fund Drive," to 306 W. 37th St., 10th Floor, New York, NY 10018.

Spring 'Militant' Subscription Drive March 31 – May 27 ♦ Week 3 of 8			
Country	Quota	Sold	%
UNITED KINGDOM			
LONDON	75	48	64%
Edinburgh	30	10	33%
UK Total	105	58	55%
NEW ZEALAND	60	25	42%
CANADA	130	54	42%
AUSTRALIA	45	16	36%
UNITED STATES			
San Diego	10	6	60%
Seattle	70	36	51%
Newark, NJ	120	57	48%
San Francisco	110	52	47%
Twin Cities	140	60	43%
Boston	85	35	41%
Albany, NY	10	4	40%
Birmingham	125	49	39%
Miami	170	64	38%
Philadelphia	120	45	38%
Pittsburgh	65	22	34%
Chicago	90	30	33%
New York	320	102	32%
Houston	100	28	28%
Detroit	8	2	25%
Los Angeles	120	27	23%
Des Moines, IA	125	28	22%
Washington, D.C.	105	22	21%
Atlanta	115	22	19%
Tampa, FL	5	0	0%
U.S. Total	2,013	691	34%
SWEDEN	35	9	26%
ICELAND	12	3	25%
Int'l totals	2,400	856	36%
Goal/Should be	2,400	900	38%

\$100,000 'Militant' Fund Drive March 31–May 27 ♦ Week 3 of 8			
Country	Quota	Paid	%
FRANCE	300	240	80%
AUSTRALIA	1,400	650	46%
UNITED STATES			
New York	14,000	8,826	63%
San Francisco	10,000	5,663	57%
Chicago	5,000	2,615	52%
Washington, D.C.	3,000	1,153	38%
Atlanta	6,000	2,185	36%
Philadelphia*	4,000	1,415	35%
Miami	3,200	1,120	35%
San Diego	500	150	30%
Los Angeles	8,000	2,320	29%
Pittsburgh	3,000	825	28%
Houston	3,000	785	26%
Boston	3,800	970	26%
Twin Cities	5,000	1,170	23%
Seattle	7,000	1,205	17%
Newark, NJ	3,500	575	16%
Des Moines, IA	2,000	296	15%
Birmingham	2,500	240	10%
Detroit	65	0	0%
Albany, NY	50	0	0%
U.S. total	83,615	31,513	38%
CANADA	3,500	940	27%
NEW ZEALAND	2,800	692	25%
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	1,500	235	16%
Edinburgh	400	0	0%
UK total	1,900	235	12%
SWEDEN	500	55	11%
ICELAND	450	0	0%
Int'l totals	94,165	34,325	34%
Goal/Should be	100,000	37,500	38%
*increased quota			



# — ON THE PICKET LINE —

## Canadian parliament passes bill forcing end to rail workers strike

TORONTO—Yard workers and conductors April 11 resumed their walkout at Canadian National (CN) Railway after rejecting by an 80 percent margin a tentative agreement reached by CN bosses and union officials. The workers, who are members of the United Transportation Union (UTU), had struck for 15 days in February.

Key issues in dispute are work rules, rest times, and unsafe conditions generated by CN's "precision railroad" productivity drive. UTU officials called for "selective and targeted strike action" in rotating strikes in British Columbia and Ontario. CN bosses then locked out strikers in Vancouver and Kamloops, British Columbia, as well as at three Ontario terminals. On April 17 the federal parliament passed strikebreaking legislation forcing the unionists back to work.

—John Steele

## Steelworkers strike Rexam Can in Alabama and eight other states

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama—"We went on strike because the company decided to tell the retirees that they don't want to take care of their health care anymore," said Steve McKeever, on the picket line outside Rexam Beverage Can's plant here April 12. Workers at the

plant are members of United Steelworkers (USW) Local 7436 and make beverage can tops. Along with some 800 other USW members in eight other cities, the Steelworkers walked out April 10 after twice rejecting the company's offer of a new five-year contract. The previous pact expired February 24.

"They only offered us a 2 percent wage increase over the next five years," said McKeever, a 27-year veteran press operator at Rexam. Of the 138 workers at the Birmingham plant, all but one are union members, he added. Health care costs for working employees are also an important strike issue. The workers are staffing a round-the-clock picket line at the plant.

—Susan Lamont

## Shipyard workers in Mississippi end strike, sign new contract

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama—After 28 days on strike, shipyard workers at the giant Northrop Grumman facility in Pascagoula, Mississippi, ratified a revised contract offer April 4 and began returning to work. Before going on strike the workers had voted down two company-proposed contracts. The final agreement was approved by 60 percent of the 3,300 union members voting.

A central demand of the nearly 8,000 unionists working at the shipyard was



Militant/Peter Clifford

## Workers picket Grampian Country Foods plant April 12 in Cambuslang, Scotland.

higher pay to offset the devastating effects of Hurricane Katrina on workers' standard of living. The company's earlier offers of a \$1.40-an-hour raise the first year of the contract was increased to \$1.68 in the new pact. Other demands by the workers for lower health insurance premiums and dental and vision coverage were not part of the pact.

—Paul Mailhot

## Meat workers in Britain strike 24 hours at six plants

CAMBUSLANG, Scotland—More than 1,400 meat workers, members of the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU), took 24-hour strike action April 12 against Grampian Country

Foods Group (GCFG) at six of its plants in the United Kingdom. Workers at three factories in Scotland, two in Wales, and one in England walked out over demands for improved wages and pensions. They also objected to the treatment of agency (temporary) workers, many of whom are from Poland and generally receive lower wages. Few union members crossed the picket lines, but at Cambuslang the company bused in more than 100 agency workers on an extended shift. This was the first daylong strike at the factory here in 15 years. Based in Scotland, GCFG employs 20,000 workers in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Thailand.

—Pamela Holmes

# Circuit City fires 3,400 to replace them with lower-paid workers

BY BEN O'SHAUGHNESSY

NEW YORK—Circuit City Stores Inc., the second-largest electronics retailer in the United States, fired 3,400 workers March 28. Company officials said they will replace them with lower-paid workers.

The bosses said they fired the employees—8 percent of the company's workforce, mostly salespeople—because they were receiving wages "well above the market-based salary range" for their jobs. The replacement workers will be

hired at much lower "wage ranges."

"It had nothing to do with their skills or whether they were a good worker or not," Bill Cimino, a spokesman for Circuit City, told the press. "It was a function of their salary relative to the market"—that is, they were being paid "too much."

The company pays store and warehouse workers about \$10 to \$11 an hour.

Circuit City said the firings and other steps will help boost profits by \$110 million this year and \$140 million per year after that. The company is also closing

seven U.S. stores, a distribution center, and 62 stores in Canada.

The electronics giant, facing competition from Best Buy and other rivals, lost \$11.8 million in the fiscal year ending February 28.

"I was a part-time person and only made \$10.10 an hour and I still got laid off," Betty Owen, one of 19 workers fired in El Paso, Texas, told the *El Paso Times*. Owen, who has extensive technical experience from previous jobs, had been working at Circuit City for three years. She said most workers fired at her store had been with the retailer longer and were receiving higher wages.

Here in New York, a worker at a Manhattan store, speaking on condition of anonymity, told the *Militant* that several coworkers came in the morning of March 28 and without warning were told they

were fired. "I've worked for Circuit City for over five years," he said. "There used to be many people with seniority over me, but now there are very few."

The *New York Times* ran an article by business commentator David Leonhardt April 4, headlined "One Safety Net Is Disappearing. What Will Follow?" Echoing an employer argument, he said the Circuit City firings were justified by the "uncomfortable fact" that "most companies are underpaying their younger workers and overpaying their older ones." He wrote, "A typical worker in his early 60s makes about 50 percent more than a worker in his early 30s" but is "not 50 percent more productive."

Workers should increasingly expect to see wages tied to "performance" and face cutbacks in employer-based pensions and medical insurance.

## Two miners killed in western Maryland

BY TIM MAILHOT

BARTON, Maryland, April 21—The bodies of two miners trapped after a wall section collapsed in an open-pit coal mine in western Maryland were found here yesterday. Their deaths brought the number of fatalities in U.S. mines this year to 15, six of them in coal mines, according to the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA).

Dale Jones, 51, a back hoe operator, and Mike Wilt, 37, a bulldozer operator, were buried beneath 15–20 feet of rocks and dirt when the high wall collapsed April 17 at the Tri-Star Job No. 3 mine in this town, about 150 miles west of Baltimore. The rescue effort lasted three days before the bodies were found.

Jones and Wilt had been working alone in the mine at the base of the 100–125 foot high wall when it gave way. According to MSHA acting regional director Bob Cornett, heavy rains and freezing and thawing conditions may have contributed to the collapse. He did not say why Jones and Wilt were working under those conditions.

MSHA is beginning an investigation, and the mine will remain closed until its completion.

According to MSHA records, the mine employed 51 people, 35 of them miners, at the end of last year. It produced nearly 653,000 tons of coal in 2006. There had been no fatalities there since 1995.

Tri-Star Mining owns at least two other surface mines in the state.

Last year, 47 coal miners died on the job in the United States, the highest number since 1995.

# — 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO —



May 7, 1982

The Reagan administration is moving to restore aid to the military rulers of Guatemala, a country that Alexander Haig calls "strategically the most important Central American republic because of its size, population and raw materials, oil included."

Administration officials cited in the April 25 *New York Times* said Washington "planned to approve the sale of \$4 million worth of spare parts for American-made helicopters being used by the Guatemalan Army against leftist rebels." Also in the works is a total of \$300,000 for military training during the next two years.

If aid is now restored, it will represent a further escalation of Washington's war against the revolutionary upsurge of workers and peasants that is sweeping Central America.



May 6, 1957

The United States Government in its first use of the Eisenhower Doctrine has enabled a reactionary, feudal king to overthrow the democratically elected government of Jordan and establish a bloody dictatorship in its place. The doctrine has been invoked in Jordan as part of the plan of the U.S. government to beat back the rising Arab national independence movement and to consolidate U.S. domination of the Mideast through using the feudal monarchies of Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan as its main props.

The government openly proclaimed support for King Hussein, when he labeled his opposition "communist."

All political leaders who opposed Hussein's coup, including the majority of the elected 40-member parliament, have been arrested or forced into hiding or exile.



May 7, 1932

Between 30,000 and 40,000 New York building trades workers went on strike May 1st because of a failure to arrive at a wage scale agreement. The building trades employers association had previously, arbitrarily posted notice of wage cuts ranging from 25% to 30%. However, the immediate cause of the strike was the fact that the elevator manufacturers broke ranks and made a verbal promise to the elevator constructors' union of a day scale of \$11.20 instead of the \$10 announced in notices posted.

On Monday May the 2nd three unions still remained at work, the elevator constructors, the electricians and the iron and steel workers. But the following day the employers decided to make the shut-down complete and dispense with the service of these three unions also.



# ‘Internationalism a principle of the Cuban Revolution’

Boston event promotes book by Chinese Cuban leaders

BY TED LEONARD

BOSTON—More than 60 students and others attended a program at the University of Massachusetts here April 18 to discuss the book *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*.

The meeting was sponsored by the UMass Asian American Studies Program, Africana Studies Department, Latino Studies Program, Asian Student Center, Black Student Center, and Casa Latina, as well as the July 26 Coalition.

Andrew Leong, an Asian American Studies professor at the university who chaired the event, said he had received an e-mail from a student saying he had never known there were Asians in Cuba. That, he noted, underscored the importance of the book.

The other speakers at the meeting were Omar Ocampo, a student and member of Casa Latina; Meizhu Lui, executive director of United for a Fair Economy and coauthor of *The Color of Wealth: The Story Behind the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide*; and Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press and editor of *Our History Is Still Being Written*.

Ocampo reviewed the sweep of the story told in the book, from the arrival of 140,000 Chinese in Cuba as indentured laborers in the mid-19th century to the 1959 socialist revolution and beyond.

“The Cuban Revolution eliminated institutionalized discrimination. That allowed the sons of three Chinese immigrants to be government representatives in Cuba,” he said, referring to Armando Choy, Gustavo Chui, and Moisés Sío Wong.

Pointing to the words of Cuban president Fidel Castro quoted on the back cover of the book, “Those not willing to fight for the freedom of others will never be ready to fight for their own,” Ocampo described Cuba’s internationalist solidarity today, from medical volunteers working in Venezuela to its offer to send 1,500 doctors to the U.S. Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina. “These are the principles of the Cuban Revolution,” he said.

“What hit me when I read the book,” said Meizhu Lui, “was the similarity in the family histories of the three generals and my father’s and grandfather’s.”

There is a “difference between growing up in Cuba and in the United States, however,” she added. “In Cuba today everyone is included, everyone’s capacities are used. In the U.S. they foment divisions.”

Lui referred to the fact that Chinese “were first brought to the East Coast in significant numbers in the 1880s to break a shoe strike.”

Mary-Alice Waters noted that going to school in the United States “almost the only thing you learn about Asian

American immigrants in the U.S. is that Chinese labor built the transcontinental railroad and the Japanese on the West Coast were sent to concentration camps during World War II.

“The real history—the exclusion laws, the head taxes, the residency restrictions, the pogroms—but above all the proud history of resistance to these policies, is never mentioned.”

Waters said Pathfinder has published a number of books by Cuban revolutionaries similar to Choy, Chui, and Sío Wong—men and women who, like thousands from their generation, refused to bow down to the brutality of the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship and began to fight.

After the victory of the Rebel Army in 1959, as they carried out a land reform, launched a massive literacy program, opened the door to greater equality for women, wiped out the scourge of unemployment, and began to eradicate the

## Cuba, Venezuela protest U.S. release of CIA-trained murderer

BY MAGGIE TROWE

MIAMI—A U.S. district court judge in El Paso, Texas, ruled April 19 that ultrarightist bomber Luis Posada Carriles could be released while awaiting a May 11 court date for immigration fraud. Posada’s supporters posted a \$350,000 bond and whisked him to Miami, where he will be under house arrest.

In response, the governments of Cuba and Venezuela issued strong protests. A march of 50,000 people in Bayamo, southeastern Cuba, condemned his release the evening of the judge’s ruling.

A mercenary in the CIA-organized Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in 1961, Posada, who was born in Cuba and later became a naturalized Venezuelan citizen, has a decades-long history of violent attacks on Cuba. He was involved in a midair bombing of a Cuban airliner that killed 73 people in 1976. He admitted organizing a bombing campaign against Cuban hotels in 1997 that killed an Italian tourist and wounded dozens. In November 2000 he led a failed assassination attempt in Panama against Cuban president Fidel Castro. He and three others were arrested and convicted for this attempted murder, but were pardoned by the Panamanian government in 2004.

In May 2005 Posada entered the United States and asked for asylum. He was arrested and held in an immigration jail in El Paso. A grand jury indicted him on charges of lying to immigration authorities on how he entered the country.

An immigration judge ordered Posada deported to any country that would take him except Cuba and Venezuela—both of which have demanded his extradition—saying he might be tortured there. No other country has agreed to take Posada to date.

The Cuban government reacted angrily to Posada’s release. “Cuba condemns the shameful decision to release terrorist Luis Posada Carriles and points to the United States government as the only one responsible for this cruel and despicable action, which seeks to buy the terrorist’s



Militant/Ben Joyce

Speakers at April 18 meeting at University of Massachusetts in Boston on *Our History Is Still Being Written*. From left, Omar Ocampo of Casa Latina; Meizhu Lui of United for a Fair Economy; and Mary-Alice Waters (at podium), editor of the Pathfinder book.

institutions of racist discrimination, they came into conflict with the propertied interests of the ruling families of Cuba and the United States. They again refused to back down. The economic and military power of the capitalists was broken.

“That was the beginning of the first socialist revolution in the Americas,” Waters said, “and to this day that remains the reason for the implacable hostility of the U.S. rulers to the people of Cuba.”

In the discussion period, chaired by

Terral Ainooson, coordinator of Casa Latina, students asked numerous questions about Cuba today. Nancy Kohn from the July 26 Coalition encouraged people to visit the group’s table for more information about Cuba and the campaign to defend the Cuban Five (see Young Socialists column on page 4). Leong also urged those in the audience to support the fight of the Quincy Four, Asian American youth who were assaulted by cops a year ago and are fighting a police frame-up.

silence regarding his crimes in the service of the CIA,” its April 19 statement said. Posada’s release is not only an insult to the Cuban people, it said, but “to the people of the United States themselves.”

In another statement published in Cuba’s daily *Granma*, Fidel Castro also put the blame squarely on Washington. “Those who bought his freedom while the terrorist was held in prison in Venezuela, so that he could supply and practically conduct a dirty war against the people of Nicaragua, resulting in the loss of thousands of lives and the devastation of a country for decades to come,” Castro said, “could not possibly act any different.”

Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez said his government will protest Posada’s release at the United Nations.

da’s release at the United Nations.

In Miami, Miguel Saavedra, president of Vigilia Mambisa, an ultrarightist group that has physically attacked defenders of the Cuban Revolution, welcomed Posada’s release.

Elena Freyre, executive director of the Cuban-American Defense League, called his release “absolutely appalling.”

“We here feel very strongly that he [Posada] should be brought to justice,” said Andrés Gómez, national coordinator of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, a Miami-based group that supports the Cuban Revolution. “We have held many demonstrations in past years and press conferences, demanding that the government prosecute him as a terrorist, and we will not give up until it is done.”

## Congress approves \$100 billion for war

Continued from front page

Democrats and Republicans say they’ll get the bill to Bush quickly, so that after his veto another war funding bill that is acceptable to the administration can be worked out and passed.

Meanwhile, nearly 1,000 residents of the Adhamiyah section of Baghdad marched in the streets yesterday to protest the building of a three-mile-long 10-foot-high wall around their neighborhood as part of a new U.S. military counterinsurgency plan. A similar measure failed during the U.S. war on Vietnam.

In March, the House and Senate passed separate bills to fund the Afghanistan and Iraq wars, which differed on when U.S. troops would be repositioned. The House version set a mandatory “redeployment” deadline of Sept. 1, 2008, while the Senate set a nonbinding deadline of March. 31, 2008. House Democrats have since agreed to the “nonbinding” dates.

The agreement reached on the current version was preceded by weeks of “antiwar” posturing by Democrats, particularly by Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid. During an April 19 press conference with Senate Democrats,

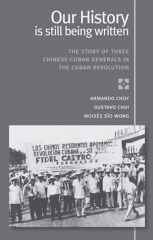
Reid said, “This war is lost.” He also said redeploying the troops does not mean pulling them out.

Other leading Democrats, including Sen. Barack Obama, a presidential hopeful, and Senate Armed Services Committee chairman Carl Levin have said their party will not cut war funding.

In Baghdad, residents of Adhamiyah, a largely Sunni district of the Iraqi capital, marched and rallied in the neighborhood’s main square to protest being cordoned off in what the U.S. military has dubbed “gated communities.” Iraqis at the protest referred to the planned structure as the “Sectarian Segregation Wall.”

Iraqi prime minister Nouri al-Maliki said he would order a halt to construction of the wall. But a spokesman for the Iraqi military said building of the barriers would continue.

As part of its crackdown, launched in January with the announcement that more U.S. troops would be deployed to Iraq, the U.S. military plans to cordon off 10 districts in Baghdad and use biometric eye scans and fingerprints to track those entering and leaving the areas.



**Our History Is Still Being Written**

THE STORY OF THREE CHINESE-CUBAN GENERALS IN THE CUBAN REVOLUTION

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# Venezuela congress draws women from 90 countries

BY OLYMPIA NEWTON

CARACAS, Venezuela—Nearly 1,000 delegates and guests representing more than 160 organizations in 90 countries came together here April 9–13 for the 14th congress of the Women’s International Democratic Federation (WIDF). It was the first WIDF congress to take place in Latin America.

The bulk of participants came from the Americas and Europe, with the largest delegations being from Brazil, Cuba, Portugal, and Venezuela. The participation of women from 18 countries in Africa, 8 in Asia, and 11 in the Middle East registered the international breadth of the gathering and brought the conditions facing women in those countries to congress discussions.

In addition to five plenary sessions, numerous congress work commissions, and an all-day conference focused on young women (see article in April 23 *Militant*), nearly a dozen workshops took place as part of the congress agenda. They took up themes such as “The Negative Impacts of Neoliberal Globalization on Women,” “Women’s Struggles Against State Terrorism and Imperialist War and the Fight for National Independence,” “Advancing Equality and Social Rights to Work, Healthcare, Social Security, and Education,” “Defense of the Culture and Equal Rights of Indigenous and Afro-Descendant Women,” and “Transforming the Media’s Negative Impact on the Image of Women.”

The congress discussion reflected the absence of mass struggles by women for their rights anywhere in the world today. Contributions from the floor in plenary sessions and workshops tended to focus on broad political characterizations with many delegates pointing to “neoliberal globalization” in general, and the Bush administration in Washington in particular—not private property and the capitalist system—as the source of the problems women face today. “Get out, Bush!” was a popular chant in Spanish and Portuguese during plenary sessions.

The virtual absence of discussion on issues such as child care, education, or women’s rights to control their reproductive lives, including access to abortion, marked the gathering.

## Roots of women’s oppression

Probably the most interesting discussions addressing the material roots of women’s oppression and the kind of struggle needed for its elimination took place at the workshop on “WIDF, Feminism, and Gender Theory.”

“To have gender equality, it’s necessary to build a new social system,” said Carolina Aguilar of the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC). Aguilar pointed out that a socialist revolution transformed social relations in Cuba and opened the door for women, and men, to change the economic and social status of women. The scope of what has changed in Cuba in 50 years of revolutionary struggle for women’s equality is unsurpassed anywhere in the world.

“In the garment industry in the United States, workers are historically paid less because the majority are women and also immigrants,” noted Maura DeLuca, a sewing machine operator and member of the Young Socialists in the United States, pointing out how capitalism perpetuates and profits from the oppression of women. Actions for the legalization of undocu-

mented immigrants and against raids and deportations have increased confidence in the working class in the United States, DeLuca said, including among workers who are women. “Through these fights, workers break down barriers the bosses impose on us based on race, gender, and immigration status,” she said.

In informal discussions especially, participants exchanged information about conditions facing women, ranging from illiteracy to property ownership rights and experiences in struggle.

“Nowadays if a woman wants to get a divorce, the decision is based on religious law,” Dr. Shaikha Al-Zayani of the Women’s Society of Bahrain told the *Militant*. “If two women with the same problem go for a divorce, the results can be very different, depending on the judge’s personal views and religious school.” The Women’s Society of Bahrain is now campaigning for a Personal Status Law that would make divorce a civil, and not religious, matter.

During a plenary session, a delegate from north Korea described the fight to expose the truth about how the Japanese army forced more than 200,000 Korean women into sex slavery between 1910 and 1945. “We learned a bitter and important lesson—that without fighting imperialism, nothing can be achieved,” she said. The congress adopted a resolution in support of the struggle to reunify Korea. Delegates from Japan abstained on the vote, making that resolution the only one of dozens adopted by the congress that was not approved unanimously.

“As in Latin America, the Spanish colonizers did not leave many good



Militant/Maura DeLuca  
**Carolina Aguilar of the Federation of Cuban Women speaks at April 11 workshop at international women’s conference in Caracas.**

memories for Saharawi women,” said a delegate from the Western Sahara during a session broadcast on Venezuelan TV and radio. “We are here representing the people of the last colony in Africa, and we continue to suffer the illegal occupation by the Kingdom of Morocco, backed up by Spanish imperialism. Saharawi women are true protagonists in the fight for national liberation.”

## History of WIDF

A workshop on “WIDF’s History and Role in Defense of Women’s Rights, National Independence, Social Justice, Democracy, and Peace” was one of the most politically interesting sessions. The main presentation, made by Yolanda Ferrer of the FMC, was given to participants in written form.

WIDF was founded in 1945 immediately after World War II. From the beginning, its members were overwhelmingly women’s organizations led by Communist parties that looked to Moscow for political direction. WIDF’s international headquarters was located in Berlin, east Germany, until 1990.

For decades, Stalinist parties in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe dominated the federation and largely excluded the participation of women’s organizations who did not share their politics. The presentation by Ferrer underscored the importance of anticolonial and anticapitalist revolutions in Africa and Asia in the decades following World War II, and the 1959 triumph of the Cuban Revolution, in broadening the horizons of WIDF and beginning to shift its center of gravity toward the struggles of women in countries subjugated by imperialism.

# U.S. high court upholds ban on abortion procedure

Continued from front page

decriminalized in the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court ruling. D&E is normally performed in the second or third trimester of pregnancy. The 2003 law, which was passed with substantial bipartisan support at the time, also allows husbands of women who undergo the procedure, or parents of minors who do so, to sue their relatives and doctors.

Pro-choice groups had obtained stays on implementation of the ban, with federal judges in Nebraska, California, and New York finding the legislation unconstitutional. The Supreme Court decision reverses those rulings by lower courts. The federal ban will go into effect in 25 days. Doctors who perform the procedure can now face criminal prosecution, fines, and up to two years in prison.

In the court majority opinion, Justice Anthony Kennedy emphasized “ethical and moral concerns.”

The dissenting opinion, read from the bench by Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, said that the law “saves not a single fetus from destruction.” Ginsburg also called the majority decision “an attempt to chip away a right declared again and again by this court, and with increasing comprehension of

its centrality to women’s lives.”

U.S. president George Bush applauded the decision as “an affirmation of the progress we have made over the past six years in protecting human dignity and upholding the sanctity of life.”

Several prominent Democrats criticized the ruling because it includes no exceptions to protect the health of a pregnant woman. Sen. Barack Obama, a leading contender for the 2008 Democratic Party presidential nomination, opposed the decision for “dramatically depart[ing] from previous precedents safeguarding the health of pregnant women.”

Having the majority in Congress, Democrats in the House and Senate have the ability to repeal the ban through new legislation. But no one has proposed doing so.

“Those who support this law are trying to outlaw all abortions, one step at a time,” said Dr. LeRoy Carhart, a Nebraska doctor involved in the lawsuit challenging the ban, according to today’s *New York Times*.

Some 87 percent of U.S. counties have no abortion provider today. Other attacks on a woman’s right to choose include mandatory waiting periods and parental consent laws for minors.

After the bureaucratic regimes and parties that had sustained WIDF collapsed at the beginning of the 1990s, the federation almost disintegrated. Regional initiatives taken by the FMC and others—including a 3,000-strong International Encounter of Solidarity Among Women held in Havana in 1998—reached out to new and broader forces fighting for women’s rights and helped to revitalize the federation.

The FMC devoted substantial leadership to ensure the success of the 14th congress, a success registered by the fact that it took place for the first time ever in Latin America and, with broad international participation, was the largest since 1991. The Venezuelan government sponsored the event and provided the resources to guarantee its functioning. It was hosted by several Venezuelan women’s organizations, which are in the midst of discussions about creating a unified women’s movement.

Delegates and guests also joined an April 13 march of 1 million people here marking the fifth anniversary of the reversal of a U.S.-backed coup against Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez. One of the congress sessions, an exchange with Chávez, was televised and broadcast live on the *Aló Presidente* show April 12.

The congress reelected Márcia Campos, from the Confederation of Brazilian Women and the October 8 Revolutionary Movement, as WIDF president. Five vice presidents were elected, one for each WIDF region: Annie Raja of the National Federation of Indian Women, for Asia; Ruth Neto, National Organization of Angolan Women, for Africa; Mayada Abassi, Palestinian ambassador to Brazil, for the Arab countries; Skavi Koukoumes, of the Federation of Pan-Cypriot Women’s Organizations, for Europe; and María Inés Brassesco, of the National Organization of Women in Argentina, for the Americas.

Maura DeLuca and Mary-Alice Waters contributed to this article.

Speakers at yesterday’s rally here included representatives of the National Organization for Women (NOW), the American Civil Liberties Union, the National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL), Planned Parenthood, and some Democratic Party politicians. Many speakers promoted electing Democrats in 2008 as a way to defend a woman’s right to choose.

According to NARAL and Pro-Choice New York, other protests occurred in Seattle; St. Louis; San Francisco; Helena, Montana; and Washington. “The Supreme Court decision is an attack on women’s health,” said Anne Keenan of New York City Planned Parenthood. “Doctors and patients should make the decision.”

“I am not happy with the decision,” Jessica Hernández, another protester, told the *Militant*. “I came today because women of color have been left out of decisions of women’s health and dignity.”

The day after the court ruling, NOW president Kim Gandy released a statement indicating her organization’s response to the decision is to help pass the Freedom of Choice Act, which Gandy says “would legislatively reverse the Court’s damaging decision.”



# May Day and U.S. fight for an eight-hour day

*International Workers Day began in the United States. It is celebrated as May Day throughout the world with the exception of the United States. In 1884 the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions began a campaign for the eight-hour working day. The federation set May 1, 1886, as the deadline for the bosses and their government to implement the measure. On that date hundreds of thousands of workers across the country went on strike. The Chicago labor movement, strongly influenced by*

## ORIGINS OF MAY DAY

*revolutionary-minded workers who were anarchists, was one of the centers of the strike. Below is an account of the strike and its importance from Revolutionary Continuity: The Early Years, 1848–1917 by Farrell Dobbs. Dobbs was a central leader of the 1934 Minneapolis Teamsters strikes and national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party from 1953 to 1972. This excerpt is being run in place of the Books of the Month column to mark May Day. Copyright © 1980 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.*

### BY FARRELL DOBBS

On May 1, 1886, the deadline set for inauguration of the eight-hour day, a



**Illustration of police attack on rally led by anarchist workers at Haymarket Square in Chicago on May 4, 1886.**

gigantic strike wave developed. From coast to coast workers downed their tools, established picket lines, and held mass demonstrations. Then, in Chicago, Illinois—where outstanding labor solidarity was manifested—the capitalists launched a savage counteroffensive.

By that time the anarchists led by [Albert] Parsons and [August] Spies had emerged as the most influential radical tendency within the Chicago labor movement. At first they had been rather indifferent to the eight-hour demand,

dismissing it as a reformist compromise with the capitalist system. But when it became apparent that the demand had drawn large masses into united action, they made common cause with the workers in the eight-hour fight as a means of promoting a general confrontation between labor and capital. Acting through trade unions under their sway, the anarchists helped to strengthen the effectiveness of the strike.

As the struggle unfolded, the Chicago police harassed the strikers day after day, trying to provoke an incident that could be used as a pretext for a full-scale attack on the trade unions. A labor rally to protest the police provocations was held at Haymarket Square on May 4. It was a peaceful assembly that was about to adjourn when a large body of cops descended upon it, demanding that those present disperse immediately. At that point a bomb exploded among the police, killing one instantly and wounding others. The forces of “law and order” then fired upon the assembled workers, inflicting many casualties.

This tragedy provided the capitalists with an alibi for a general assault on the eight-hour movement. Through a combination of witch-hunting and police repression labor’s ranks were divided, the strike undermined, and the workers forced to return to their jobs. Even under those adverse conditions, however, some reductions in hours were achieved because the formidable strength displayed by the trade unions had thrown a scare into many employers.

As part of its antilabor campaign the ruling class demanded vengeance against those held responsible for the Haymarket bombing, and the blame was fixed upon the anarchists, who had issued propaganda urging the workers to arm themselves in self-defense. Eight of them were brought to trial before a rigged jury that—acting out of prejudice against the defendants’ ideas—convicted them without the prosecution having presented any proof of guilt. After losing appeals made to higher courts, four victims of the

frame-up were hanged: Albert R. Parsons, August Spies, George Engel, and Adolph Fischer. Another of those scheduled to be hanged, Louis Lingg, escaped that fate only by committing suicide. Michael Schwab and Samuel Fielden, both of whom had initially been doomed to execution, later had their sentences commuted to life imprisonment. Oscar Neebe received a fifteen-year prison term.

In a political sense, the Haymarket episode put an end to the anarchists’ leading role within the trade unions. Their movement was reduced to little more than a small band of intellectuals. . . .

The situation was different, though, concerning the individual anarchists charged with murder. They were honored throughout the mass movement as courageous fighters who had been singled out by the capitalists in an attack that was really aimed at the entire working class. When the jury found the eight defendants guilty, organized labor nationally launched a pardon campaign on their behalf. Following the executions a vast body of Chicago trade unionists attended the funeral of those whose lives had been taken by the capitalist government. The pardon campaign was continued thereafter until finally, a few years later, Governor John P. Altgeld of Illinois reviewed the trial proceedings and declared all the defendants innocent. Altgeld then freed the frame-up victims serving prison terms and granted pardons posthumously to those who had been hanged.

## May Day actions for legalization

### Continued from front page

Service Employees International Union locals 1 and 73, United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 881, International Coalition of Mexicans Abroad, Socialist Workers Party, and dozens of others.

The march and rally here is one of many actions across the country to demand legalization of all immigrants and an end to raids and deportations.

Many of the actions will oppose “immigration reform” proposals pushed by the White House or various congressmen—like the one sponsored by U.S. representatives Luis Gutierrez, a Democrat from Illinois, and Jeffrey Flake, a Republican from Arizona. These proposals include stiff penalties and onerous requirements for those seeking residency (for more details see article on page 2).

Many protesters will speak out against “guest worker” programs; the militarization of the U.S.-Mexico border; and local, state, or federal laws denying undocumented immigrants access to drivers licenses or deputizing local cops to enforce immigration laws.

In addition to Chicago, actions are planned in Los Angeles, Miami, Minneapolis, New York, and other cities (see calendar on page 3).

In conjunction with the immigrant rights action here, contingents of the Chicago Federation of Labor, UFCW locals 1546 and 881, Chicago Regional Council of Carpenters, AFSCME Council 31, and other unions will be meeting at 11:00 a.m. at the Haymarket Memorial monument in downtown Chicago before joining the May Day march. The monument honors the 19th century labor martyrs executed after being framed up by authorities during labor’s fight for the eight-hour day (see article on this page).

Actions will also take place in smaller towns and cities across the country. In

Hempstead, Long Island, for example, the May Day rally comes on the heels of a victory for immigrant rights. Anti-immigrant legislation introduced by Suffolk County elected officials there was just defeated. Directed at day laborers, who in their majority are immigrants, the measure would have made it illegal to stand, sit, or even “saunter” on county roadways.

*Jacob Perasso and Róger Calero in New York contributed to this article.*

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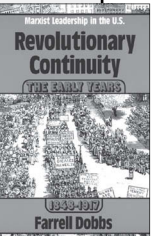
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EDITORIAL

Build May Day demonstrations

The May Day rallies across the United States—from Los Angeles to Chicago and Miami—are an opportunity to join forces with others to demand: Unconditional, immediate permanent residency for all undocumented immigrants! Legalization now!

Such actions are an important part of responding to the U.S. rulers’ stepped-up war on working people. In recent months hardly a week has gone by without raids by immigration cops, who have rounded up workers by the dozens, and sometimes by the hundreds, in workplaces and neighborhoods.

Last year’s unprecedented street mobilizations by immigrant workers—numbering up to 2 million at their peak—and the May Day walkouts, the first nationwide political strike in U.S. history, surprised the capitalist class and its two parties. These working-class actions stopped a move by Congress to pass a reactionary law that would have criminalized some 12 million immigrants without papers.

Today, as the police raids increase, capitalist politicians are again debating various “immigration reform” bills. All varieties would restrict the rights of foreign-born workers and should be opposed. Both the proposal backed by the White House and the bipartisan Gutierrez-Flake bill would beef up the border police,

decree thousands of dollars in penalties for applicants, impose numerous restrictions on eligibility for residency, and institute a new federal ID card singling out the undocumented. Both include a “guest worker” plan, under which workers’ legal status would be tied to the whims of their bosses.

The purpose of the Democrats’ and Republicans’ immigration policy—from police raids to restrictive immigration laws—is not to deport all those without papers. It is to maintain a permanent category of workers with fewer rights who are more vulnerable to superexploitation that the U.S. bosses profit from.

Last year’s mass mobilizations showed the increased confidence of foreign-born workers and the consequent strengthening and politicization of the entire working class. This can be seen, for example, in the April 17 protest by workers in Marshalltown, Iowa, against a plan to turn local cops into *la migra*.

Such actions—relying on the mobilization of working people, not on Congress—are the only effective way to push back these attacks and win expanded rights.

Let’s build the May Day actions to demand from the government: Stop the raids and deportations! Legalization now, with no strings attached!

‘We are workers, not criminals!’

Continued from front page

December 12 raid on Swift factories across the country by agents of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)—the Marshalltown City Council began discussing a proposal for ICE to train five local cops in immigration law enforcement.

“If this plan is approved, the police could stop you for any reason, such as drunk driving and other traffic infractions, even for loud music at a party, and take you to the police station, access the ICE database to determine your legal status, and have you deported,” Palmer said.

ICE wants to train 50 cops in the area, including here and in Ottumwa, another packing center, she said. The training of local and state police would allow them to officially act as immigration cops with ICE supervision. This is authorized under Section 287g of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act, signed into law by President William Clinton in 1996.

The ICE web site says police units in Alabama, Arizona, California, Florida, North Carolina, and Virginia have implemented similar agreements. ICE is actively working to expand the program.

The Nov. 8, 2006, issue of *Times-Republican*, a local daily, reported that 10 to 12 Iowa police agencies have expressed interest in participating. Final approval has not yet been given.

In the same article, Marshalltown police chief Lon

Walker claimed that under the plan, if an undocumented resident was pulled over for speeding, officers would only issue a ticket for having no driver’s license “unless the resident had been previously deported.”

But among the 287g “success stories” touted on the ICE web site are the arrest by the deputy sheriff of Florida’s Collier County of 20 people for alleged attempts to purchase “fraudulently obtained” drivers licenses. ICE states the plan also targets “the possession of fraudulent Alien Registration and Social Security cards” and U.S. birth certificates.

“This plan would hurt workers with or without papers,” Swift worker Pedro Nera said at the April 17 meeting.

“We would be stopped by the cops just because we have a Hispanic face,” added María, who identified herself only with her first name.

Scores of workers signed up to actively aid Latinos en Acción’s efforts to convince the Marshalltown council to reject the plan in the coming months.

Meanwhile, Norma González-Hernández, one of the 30 workers from the Swift plant here charged with felonies, including “identity theft” and “illegal reentry,” goes to trial April 30. Two have already been convicted. They are among the 99 arrested at the plant December 12 and in the weeks prior to the raid.

González’s lawyers said they would be glad to see supporters of her right to remain in the United States attend the trial, which will take place at the federal courthouse in Des Moines.

LETTERS

Imus controversy

There are different levels of discussion at work about Imus’s remarks. Should workers care about the firing of Imus and is this an answer to his remarks? Is his firing a violation of free speech? How do we eradicate racism?

What is all the confusion around

why the media picked up on this remark when Imus has made so many other racist and sexist remarks? Why the confusion around the “double standard” regarding remarks made in the past by Sharpton and others in the Black community?

How does one characterize Imus and why is his show so popular? Another topic workers are raising with this episode, is censorship. Any comments would be appreciated.

Wendy Banen

New York, New York

‘Sentenced Home’

The PBS program “Independent Lens” will be airing soon the film *Sentenced Home*. It is the story of young Cambodian immigrants who ran afoul of the law and were deported or face deportation back

to Cambodia.

The film centers on the Cambodian community in Seattle. I believe two of its protagonists have already been deported. But last I heard, Manny Uch, one of the subjects of the film whom I heard speak at an Asian American Resource Workshop, is still in Seattle. A review of the film, especially if done from Seattle, may be useful.

John Hawkins

Boston, Massachusetts

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.

Imus’s firing isn’t about free speech

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

In her letter to the editor, Wendy Banen asks questions about the controversy over radio host Don Imus, who was fired by CBS after a public outcry when he called the Rutgers University women’s basketball team “nappy-headed ho’s” (see April 30 *Militant*).

Many working people, especially African Americans, were glad Imus was fired, and rightfully so. Comments by public figures that degrade women, or Blacks and other oppressed nationalities, are not a matter of free speech. Thanks to changes in social consciousness among millions in the United States under the impact of the mass civil rights battles and the women’s rights

REPLY TO A READER

movement, such sexist and racist smears are not acceptable to broad layers of working people and others.

Workers have gained confidence when such attacks are pushed back, especially when it is through countermobilizations. For example, Chinese immigrants recently demonstrated to demand an apology from a New York TV station that broadcast a “news report” falsely claiming that a Chinese restaurant had served mouse meat. Such actions are in contrast with reactionary calls for laws banning “hate crimes” or racist or anti-Semitic statements—laws that capitalist governments can use to victimize working-class fighters.

Imus cultivated an image as an earthy “good old boy” known for “insult comedy,” spouting reactionary comments bordering on what was publicly tolerated. He let producer/sidekick Bernard McGuirk make the most offensive remarks against Blacks and others, letting himself off the hook. He also provided a venue to many public figures—such as Democratic senators Christopher Dodd and Barack Obama as well as Vice President Richard Cheney—with a knack for getting them to speak more candidly than other interviewers.

While not a rightist like radio host Rush Limbaugh—Imus said he voted for Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry in 2004 and criticized the Bush administration’s policies in Iraq—he called himself “the only registered Republican on the Upper West Side,” a middle-class liberal district in Manhattan. Last week’s *Militant* article inaccurately labeled Imus a liberal.

Sometimes Imus would push the limit, then issue an apology. This time, however, he crossed a line and didn’t get away with it. He became an embarrassment to capitalist politicians who had previously courted him to get exposure on his widely listened-to program. The Rutgers incident became an issue in bourgeois politics, marked today by the factional discourse between Democrats and Republicans. Its publicity led to widespread public outrage, although there were only a few small protest rallies. In the end, Imus became a liability to the owners of CBS Radio, as corporate sponsors began to pull out, and that’s why he was fired.

What about popular Black musicians who make demeaning references to women? Rutgers team member Essence Carson replied saying that while “rap, hip-hop, and music of that genre has desensitized America and this world” to such degrading language, “it doesn’t make it any more right for anyone to say it. Not only Mr. Imus. . . . It doesn’t make it right if you’re African American, Caucasian, Asian, it doesn’t matter. All that matters is that it’s wrong.” At the same time, there is nothing progressive about campaigns by capitalist politicians against rap lyrics, which often include calls for “defending moral values” and censorship laws.

Demeaning portrayals of women by the media and entertainment businesses are part of a deeper problem. The daily degradation of women is integral to capitalist society because women’s second-class status is profitable to the ruling billionaire families. It’s through mass struggles—from demonstrations against government attacks on a woman’s right to choose abortion or against racist brutality, to union struggles involving workers who are female or Black—that an effective course can be forged to defend the rights of women and oppressed nationalities. Such struggles can ultimately point to the need to eradicate the root of the problem—capitalism—and replace it with a socialist society, one based not on social inequality and its accompanying racism and sexism, but on solidarity and dignity.

**CORRECTION**  
The article in the April 30 issue “Workers in Minnesota protest immigration raid” incorrectly implied that the Ramsey County Jail is located in Willmar, Minnesota. The jail is located in St. Paul. A car caravan was organized from Willmar to St. Paul for the rally outside the jail.