

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

UK to raise troop levels in Afghanistan

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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General: U.S. troops in Iraq for 'long-term effort'

BY RÓGER CALERO

"I believe Iraq's problems will require a long-term effort," said top U.S. military commander in Iraq Gen. David Petraeus. He was speaking before a joint congressional hearing September 10 of the House Armed Services Committee and Foreign Affairs Committee.

In hearings September 10–11, Petraeus and the U.S. ambassador to Iraq, Ryan



Getty Images/David Furst

U.S. occupation troops patrol Tigris River south of Baghdad September 4.

"There are no easy answers or quick solutions," said Petraeus. "A premature drawdown of our forces would likely

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Bring the troops home now!

— Editorial, p. 9

Crocker, outlined the results of the military escalation Washington began there in January. Reflecting the lack of an alternative course offered by any wing of the U.S. ruling class, the two recommended staying the course and delaying any decisions on cutting troop levels until next year. Washington is trying to establish a stable government in Iraq that can protect its interests in the region.

Minnesota meat packers call union defense rally

Bosses deny union officials entry to plant

BY REBECCA WILLIAMSON

SOUTH ST. PAUL, Minnesota—Workers at Dakota Premium Foods, members of the United Food and Commercial Workers union (UFCW) Local 789, have called a rally outside the plant for September 19. The local called the action after the company denied union representatives entry to the plant, its latest attack in a three-month-long decertification campaign.

Local 789 representative Rafael Espinosa said the reason for the rally is "to get together and show the company that the workers are not alone and that this is going to be a fight."

Dakota workers are reaching out for solidarity from the labor movement and the community. They've invited other unions in the Twin Cities to join the September 19 rally. Like the unionists at Dakota, some of these

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Workers in Virginia protest local cop immigration checks



Yadira Martinez

Five thousands at September 2 rally call on Prince William County Board of Supervisors to rescind a resolution empowering local cops to enforce federal immigration laws.

BY SETH DELLINGER

WOODBIDGE, Virginia—More than 5,000 people marched here September 2 to demand the Prince William County Board of Supervisors rescind a resolution giving county police the power to check the immigration status of those they arrest.

The march came at the end of a weeklong boycott of non-immigrant businesses in the county. Three mass meetings in late July, attended by 3,500 workers total, called the march and boycott. Workers at these meetings also voted to carry out a county-wide work stoppage October 9.

"We always come to the marches," said Reina López, a cleaner originally from El Salvador who was with her husband, Martín, a construction worker originally from Mexico. "All we want is to be able to work

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Stepped-up campaign for Cuban 5 launched



Militant/Sam Manuel

WASHINGTON, September 12—Today marks the beginning of an international campaign of stepped-up activities to win freedom for five Cuban revolutionaries unjustly held in U.S. jails. The campaign ends October 8.

To kick off the month's activities, 30 supporters of the Cuban Five attended a press conference and rally outside the Justice Department today. The activity was called by the newly formed D.C. Metro Free the Cuban Five Committee.

Pictured speaking above is Netfa Freeman of the D.C. No War on Cuba Movement. Other speakers included Luis Rumbaut, Cuban American Alliance Education Fund; Shirley Pate, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom; Wayne Smith, former head of the U.S. Interests section in Havana; Banbose Shango, Venezuela Solidarity Committee; Sonia Umanzor, Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front; and Gloria LaRiva, National Committee to Free the Cuban Five.

The press conference also built a meeting hosted by the Howard University Law School tonight at which Leonard Weinglass, a defense attorney in the case, will speak.

Antonio Guerrero, Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Fernando González, and René González have been imprisoned in the United States since 1998. They were convicted and sentenced following a 2001 frame-up trial in Miami. The five were monitoring counterrevolutionary Cuban-American groups in Miami that have carried out violent attacks in Cuba with complicity of the U.S. government.

—SAM MANUEL

Miner killed on the job in West Virginia

BY RYAN SCOTT

PITTSBURGH—A coal miner was killed in a September 3 roof collapse at the Bronzite mine in Mingo County, West Virginia.

Brent Reynolds, 35, of Virgie, Kentucky, was operating a continuous mining machine when the collapse killed him, said C.A. Phillips, deputy director of the West Virginia Office of Miners Health, Safety and Training.

There have been eight reported

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Immigration, weakening of divisions are changing working class in N. Ireland

BY PETE CLIFFORD
AND ÖGMUNDUR JÓNSSON

DUNGANNON, northern Ireland—“When I first came to Dungannon in 2002, people would turn in the street and stare,” said Roy Setiawan, a meat worker originally from East Timor. “Now there’s so many of us it’s normal.”

Setiawan is one of tens of thousands of recent immigrants to Ireland, north and south. In the north, the influx of workers from many different countries combines with the weakening of divisions between Protestants and Catholics fostered by the British rulers as part of maintaining their control.

Hundreds of immigrants from Eastern Europe, Portugal, and former Portuguese colonies have come to this town of 11,000 to work.

Three large meat companies have plants here. Setiawan estimates that about 75 percent of the 1,700 workers at the Moy Park chicken plant where he works are immigrants. Seven hundred workers are employed by a temporary agency. They get paid the minimum wage of £5.35 an hour (£1=U.S.\$2) with a compulsory six-day week. The company uses the mandatory overtime to undermine conditions for permanent Moy Park employees.

“If a Moy Park worker wants to do overtime they have to sign a different contract and agree to do this at the flat rate of £6,” said Setiawan, a shop steward for the Transport and General Workers Union/Unite in the plant. About half the agency workers have joined the union, he said. “We all do the same job; we



Militant/Ögmundur Jónsson

Meat worker Roy Setiawan and Militant reporter Pete Clifford, Dungannon, northern Ireland.

‘Militant’ welcomed in N. Ireland

BY ÖGMUNDUR JÓNSSON

BELFAST, northern Ireland—Workers here welcomed the *Militant’s* coverage of the Cuban Revolution and the paper’s editorial, “Safety is a union question! No miner has to die!” during an August 19 sales team. Discussions ranged from gains of the struggle against British imperialist domination to what growing immigration means for workers’ ability to fight.

A group of workers from Poland who bought the paper said they work at the post office for a temporary agency and take home £125 per week

(£1=U.S.\$2). Another Polish worker said he lives in a Catholic area but works mainly with Protestants. He said he saw no difference.

The previous day, the team set up in the meatpacking town of Dungannon and got a similar response. Many of those who stopped by were meat workers, most originally from East Timor and other former Portuguese colonies, as well as northern Ireland.

All told, the team sold 4 subscriptions, 15 *Militants*, and 11 copies of the supplement on the Utah mine disaster. Three Pathfinder books were sold, all related to the Cuban Revolution.

should have the same conditions.”

A number of workers interviewed in the town center said that relations between workers of different nationalities are good at Moy Park. But some described racist abuse in other meatpacking plants, as well as on the streets.

An Irish-born worker from Dunbia Meats said Protestant and Catholic workers get along well in the plant. “We’re all workers,” he explained.

Still, the square in this predominantly Irish Catholic town was adorned with pro-British flags August 18 to mark the marching season of the Orange Order—a rightist group that seeks to preserve the union with Britain.

“The Orange Order used to march all the way down Ormeau Road, but five years ago they started to turn at the bridge,” said Gerard Rice, who runs a community center in Lower Ormeau, a small, mainly Catholic section of Belfast. He led mass protests in the 1990s that won the rerouting of the Order’s march. He reported that now almost none of these provocative marches go into Catholic areas. “Life has changed for our children; they can wear their school uniform without fear of attack.

“Sectarianism of the state has not gone away, though,” he added. He said Protestant areas get a greater share of public funding.

In Belfast, just a few streets separate the Catholic Ardoyne, where nationalist murals are a feature, and the Protestant Shankill, where a sea of British flags

dominate. A system of school and housing segregation fuels divisions among working people.

But Simon Lynch, an engineering worker from a Catholic section of Belfast, described how Protestant and Catholic workers at his job talk about politics, including northern Ireland. Before, he said, that would never happen.

Overlooking the Belfast skyline are the huge cranes of the Harland and Wolff shipyards. For decades, this was a relatively well-paid job preserve for Protestant workers. Once employing tens of thousands, its workforce is now down to a little more than 100.

According to Belfast resident Marnie Kennedy, an office worker, the Shorts aerospace plant is one of the few large “No Catholics need apply” workplaces left. Even there, about 25 percent of the apprentices are Catholic, she said, and two years ago workers of both backgrounds struck against company moves to erode conditions. Still a long way from reversing decades of discrimination, but a change, she noted.

Lynch also described increasing openings for Catholics to get jobs. Before, he said, “people would say, ‘Are you working?’ Now they say, ‘Where are you working?’”

THE MILITANT

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Houston meat packer is on ballot in mayor's race

BY JACQUIE HENDERSON

HOUSTON, September 6—The Socialist Workers Party's candidate for mayor was certified on the ballot for the November 6 election today.

Meat packer Amanda Ulman, 32, is running for mayor on the SWP ticket, along with garment worker Steve Warshell, 53, the party's write-in candidate for controller.

"We have already received a strong response from working people," Ulman told the press and campaign supporters at city hall after filing election papers yesterday. She said the filing fee "was raised by workers and youth who put contributions in our collection cans at factory plant gates and campaign tables in working class neighborhoods."

Ulman is one of three candidates running for mayor. Warshell is one of two for controller. Today's *Houston Chronicle* wrote that incumbent mayor William White "will face minor opposition" from Ulman.

"There is nothing 'minor' about our campaign," Ulman said, in an interview. "Working people are belittled every day by the bosses and their parties. The Socialist Workers campaign is presenting a working-class alternative to the Republicans, Democrats, and other capitalist parties."

"We are the only candidates calling for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq and all theaters of imperialism's 'war on terror,'" she added.

Ulman and Warshell have participated with coworkers in street demonstrations demanding legalization for undocumented immigrants over the past two years, including on May Day 2006 and 2007.

"The SWP campaign urges support for a September 12 protest at the federal building and other actions demanding an end to the deportations and raids," Ulman said.

On August 14 the socialist candidates were interviewed on the KPFT radio program *Proyecto Latino*.

"The need to support workers' strug-

gles to unionize in order to fight effectively is at the heart of the SWP platform," said Warshell.

"Safety is a life and death union question for workers," added Ulman, pointing to the August 6 coal mine collapse that trapped six Utah miners.

"Our campaign is 100 percent financed by workers, and we need your help in getting the campaign on the ballot and sending our mayoral candidate to Utah to get a firsthand report on the response of working people there," said Warshell.

One garment worker who unsuccessfully tried to get through the station's phone lines to offer support for the campaign came to a campaign forum after Ulman returned from Utah and donated \$50.



Militant/Jacquie Henderson

Amanda Ulman, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Houston mayor, and Steve Warshell, right, SWP candidate for city controller, campaign at University of Houston September 11.

Ulman has also campaigned at the Pilgrims Pride chicken processing plant in Nacogdoches, Texas. There she met workers looking for ways to resist company firings of immigrants whose papers

it questions. She has also campaigned in the town of Farmers Branch, where the city council passed a law against renting to and doing business with immigrants without papers.

Scotland plastics factory bosses get slap on wrist for fatal 2004 explosion

BY CAROLINE BELLAMY

EDINBURGH, Scotland—"They wouldn't be dead if the company had done what they were supposed to," Rosemary Doyle told the *Scotsman* newspaper. Her daughter Annette was one of seven workers and two company directors killed after a May 2004 explosion caused the Stockline Plastics factory in Glasgow to collapse.

The bosses were fined just £400,000 (£1=U.S.\$2) August 28 after pleading guilty to health and safety charges in court.

"I feel very angry and bitter," said Doyle. "[Annette] is finished but they will go on. Yes, they'll get a fine, but they will go on."

The blast also injured 40 people, 17 of them seriously. According to an eyewitness, the nineteenth-century building collapsed "like a house of cards."

Judges can impose unlimited fines under health and safety laws, but

Philip Brodie, the presiding judge in the case, expressed concern that a steeper fine could have put the company out of business. He also said that the company's "blameworthiness" was limited.

"The company has never apologized," said Angela Rowlinson, whose sister Tracy McErlane died. Rowlinson said she felt the bosses got off lightly. "They have never shown any remorse."

At the time, chairman Campbell Downie claimed the explosion was an "act of God." Three years later, evidence has forced the company to admit its failure to assess various health and safety hazards.

Liquid propane gas pipes buried during construction in 1974 had deteriorated and corroded over time. A steel floor was installed over the pipes in 1980, creating a basement. Eventually gas escaped from the corroded pipes and accumulated in the basement. The cloud of accumulated gas ignited and exploded in 2004,

causing the building to collapse. The court was told it would only have cost £405 to replace the faulty pipework.

Workers at the plant had raised concerns about dangerous company practices prior to the blast, complaining several times to the government Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and writing to members of Parliament. They were ignored by bosses and government bodies alike.

Even after the explosion, Downie wrote to workers ordering them to ignore "speculation" about safety concerns and slamming workers who spoke out as "unreliable sources." The HSE investigated the factory in both 2000 and 2003 and concluded that conditions there were safe. The bosses were warned in advance of HSE visits, and inspectors fingered a worker who complained about health risks, according to the *Daily Mirror*. There was no union at Stockline.

Families of the dead workers want a full public inquiry. Because of the bosses' guilty pleas, much of the evidence that may have come out in a trial will stay under wraps. "We need to know why," said Doyle. "Compensation means nothing. . . . We want to know if the Health and Safety Executive is checking the premises to make sure this doesn't happen again."

The Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC) is backing the call for a public inquiry and its lawyers are acting for six of the families. STUC officials are also pushing for more legislation "to act as a future deterrent to prevent further deaths."

N.Y. cab drivers assess 2-day strike

BY DAN FEIN

NEW YORK—"We had a fair strike," said Jean Baptiste, a cab driver with 15 years experience, referring to a September 5-6 taxi strike here.

"With the GPS, they will control everything over the drivers," he said. "What the city government proposes is not good for drivers—it's just good for the big shots."

New York cab drivers struck for two days to demand the city's Taxi and Limousine Commission (TLC) drop its regulations that all cabs have a Global Positioning System (GPS) installed and accept credit card fares by October 1.

The GPS enables the authorities to know the exact location of the cab at all times. Drivers say this is an invasion of privacy.

Drivers will lose 5 percent of their income for fares paid with credit cards, as they will have to cover the credit card fees.

"I think the use of the credit card issue should be voluntary with the driver," said a striker who asked to remain

anonymous. "If the card is no good, we will lose the whole fare."

"The strike was effective in getting out our side. I will participate if there is another," he said.

"It affects all drivers," said striker Jean Desrosiers. "I was not glad to go on strike because we lose money. You could see the strike was 90 percent effective."

Strikers rallied near Pennsylvania Station September 6. They chanted, "Hey hey, ho ho, GPS has got to go!" and yelled "Shame!" at those drivers who were working when they stopped to pick up customers.

"We are ready to continue with our mobilization despite however the mayor's office and the TLC want to spin the story," said Bhairavi Desai, executive director of the New York Taxi Workers Alliance, which organized the strike. "The reality is that we have been heard."

Mayor Michael Bloomberg said the strike was having no impact and the TLC said more than 70 percent of the cabs were on the road.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

FLORIDA

Miami

The Isquierdo Case: Oppose the State of Florida's Attempt to Deny Child Custody to a Parent in Cuba. Speakers: Andrés Gómez, Antonio Maceo Brigade; Ruth Robinett, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Sept. 21. Dinner, 6:30 pm; program, 7:30 pm. 8365 NE 2nd Ave., Suite 206. Tel.: (305) 756-4436.

NEW JERSEY

Newark

Free the Cuban Five! Speaker: Nancy Rosenstock, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Sept. 21, 8 p.m. 168 Bloomfield Ave., 2nd Fl. Tel.: (973) 481-0077.

The Political Legacy of Thomas Sankara. Speakers: Mike Taber, Socialist Workers Party; Ingrid Franco, Young Socialists. Fri., Sept. 28. Dinner, 7:00 p.m.; program, 8 p.m. 168 Bloomfield Ave., 2nd Fl. Tel.: (973) 481-0077.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Free the Cuban Five! Speaker: Tim Mailhot, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Sept. 21. Dinner, 7 p.m.; program, 8 p.m. 3717-B Georgia Ave. Tel.: (202) 536-5080.

—CALENDAR—

MINNESOTA

St. Paul

No More Stalling—Justice Now! UFCW Local 789 worker solidarity rally at Dakota Premium Foods. Wed., Sept. 19. 4 p.m. 425 Concord St. Tel.: (651) 451-6240. Sponsor: United Food and Commercial Workers Local 789.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Stop the War at Home & Abroad. National march, Sat., Sept. 29. Tel.: (212) 633-6646. www.TroopsOutNow.org. Sponsors: Troops Out Now Coalition and others.

Join the Young Socialists!

Letter to youth seeking revolutionary change

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

To young *Militant* readers:

Join the Young Socialists! There is no better way for young people to be a part of today's struggles than to join the only revolutionary communist youth organization in the United States—the YS.

As the rulers in Washington “stay the course” in their “long war on terrorism” from Iraq to the Philippines, and in their assaults against working people here in the United States, we urge others to join street actions and demand, “Not one penny, not one person for Washington's wars! Bring the troops home now!”

The YS, together with members of the Socialist Workers Party, will be in Washington, D.C., on September 15 and 29 to explain that no wing of the U.S. capitalist class can present a road forward out of the spreading wars and financial disorder.

The period we are living in today did not begin with the Bush administration or the September 11, 2001, attacks. The growing capitalist crisis is rooted in the decades-long downward trend in the employers' profit rates, and the breakdown of the imperialist world order marked by sharpening competition between rival powers. No wing of the ruling class—not the Democratic or any other capitalist party—offers an alternative to this course.

At the same time the bosses continue their assault on workers, farmers, and youth on the home front. They are speeding up production, driving down wages, and cutting corners on safety in an attempt to turn around their declining profits. They are driving industry by industry, factory by factory, to break the unions and gut the social wage.

Even as standoffs and stalemates continue to be the norm for struggles in

the labor movement, we see today the emergence of a mass political vanguard within the working class resisting these attacks—a vanguard emerging from the fight for legalization for all immigrants. The YS and SWP fight as part of this vanguard.

In response to the recent disaster at the Crandall Canyon mine in Huntington, Utah, young socialists, along with socialist workers, reached out to coal miners and other working people in Utah and across the country. “Safety is a union question! No miner has to die!” read the headline of the *Militant* that YS members sold at mine portals and in working class communities in Utah, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania. We joined discussions with miners about the need to organize and use union power to defend life and limb on the job.

This fall the YS is reaching out broadly on campuses to bring our revolutionary working-class perspective to students and other youth. We will collaborate with other young fighters to organize meetings in defense of five framed-up Cuban revolutionaries. We will build protests against imperialist war. And we will organize events



Militant/Ben Joyce

“All troops out now!” YS contingent demands at January 27 march on Washington.

to discuss the ideas and communist course of Thomas Sankara, the leader of a revolution in Burkina Faso during the 1980s, in conjunction with the release of new editions in French and English of *Thomas Sankara Speaks* by Pathfinder Press.

Capitalism offers no future for working people and youth, as it continues to dive deeper into financial and political turmoil. The only way forward is to join the fight for a society based on human solidarity, not the dog-eat-dog morality of capitalism. To achieve this, we need

to build a revolutionary party capable of leading the working class and its allies to take power out of the hands of the exploiters. The Young Socialists is connected with such a party—the Socialist Workers Party.

For more information on how to join the YS, contact us at the address listed above, or contact the *Militant* distributor nearest you in the list on page 8.

Join the YS today!
Sincerely,
Ben O'Shaughnessy
for the Young Socialists

New volunteers on 'Militant'



Militant photos by Paul Pederson (left), Robbie Kopec (right)

Left, Doug Nelson and Cindy Jaquith; right, Ben O'Shaughnessy

BY PAUL PEDERSON

The *Militant* has added two new editorial volunteers in recent weeks. Cindy Jaquith, 60, and Doug Nelson, 32, have joined the paper's full-time volunteer staff; in addition, Ben O'Shaughnessy, 21, editor of the “Young Socialists in Action” column, is expanding his responsibilities on the paper.

Jaquith was an editor for the *Militant* from 1979 through 1985, and an edito-

rial volunteer from 1971 to 1991. She was a *Militant* correspondent in Iran during the 1979 revolution there. From 1985 to 1987 Jaquith was the chief of the paper's Managua Bureau in Nicaragua. She is now back in New York after working as a sewing machine operator in Pittsburgh, where she was active in the work of the Socialist Workers Party branch for the past six years.

Nelson joined the communist movement in 1995 as a student in Minneapolis, Minnesota. From 1998 to 2003, Nelson volunteered in the print shop that produced Pathfinder books and pamphlets. He ran for city council in New York in 2001 on the Socialist Workers Party ticket, and was part of the *Militant*'s volunteer staff in 2004–2005. Most recently he lived in Washington, D.C.

O'Shaughnessy is the organizer of the Young Socialists National Steering Committee. He joined the Young Socialists in October of 2005 as a student at the State University of New York in Albany. He has edited the “Young Socialists in Action” column since it was established in January of this year.

In April, O'Shaughnessy reported for the *Militant* on an international conference in Havana on the fight to win freedom for the Cuban Five. These five men have been locked up since 1998 in U.S. prisons, accused of conspiracy to commit espionage and a range of other frame-up charges. In August he participated in a conference in Venezuela marking the 60th anniversary of the World Festivals of Youth and Students.

Judge rules against part of Patriot Act

BY DOUG NELSON

A federal judge ruled unconstitutional a part of the USA Patriot Act that gives the FBI broad powers to secretly demand that communications companies turn over Internet, e-mail, and phone records of individuals. The decision was suspended to allow the government time to appeal.

The September 6 decision by Judge Victor Marrero concerns a provision of the 2001 law that significantly relaxed the rules on the use of “national security letters” (NSLs). These are secret subpoenas that have been used by spy agencies since 1986 to access individuals' private records from banks, credit bureaus, and communications companies. They don't require a warrant.

The judge's ruling did not challenge the use of NSLs, but said the law should be amended. Allowing the FBI to impose permanent gag orders on companies it subpoenas for information violates free speech, he ruled. Marrero suggested instead that, if a company challenges an NSL, the gag order stand for a limited period while the case is reviewed in court. Currently, disclosing an NSL's existence to anyone but the recipient's lawyer carries a penalty of five years in prison.

Implementation of Marrero's 2004 ruling against the NSL provision of the Patriot Act was also suspended. As the government's appeal was in process, Congress amended the law, voiding the ruling. The amendments allowed for limited judicial review and required the FBI to state that a permanent gag order is necessary in each case—a little more paperwork.

Jameel Jaffer, an attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union, which brought the case against the government, called the 2005 amendments

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CPUSA continues to evolve from party toward radical grouping

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON—“Can Al Gore Save the World?” asks the cover story of the September *Political Affairs*, a publication of the Communist Party USA. Gore has a better chance of winning the presidential election than Hillary Clinton or Barack Obama, the article says.

Electing a Democrat for president and increasing the Democratic majority in Congress was the axis of a report by CPUSA chairman Sam Webb to the March 24–25 meeting of its National Committee. The report was titled “New Times Require Fresh Politics and Flexible Tactics.”

The report, which is posted on the party's website, highlights the CPUSA's continued evolution away from any pretense of building a revolutionary workers party and instead toward a radical political association entrenched in bourgeois politics.

Peter Zerner wrote in the *Political Affairs* article, “Imagine the level of de-

bate—and consequently action—that would ensue if a real thinker [Gore] sat in the White House.”

The article is preceded by a disclaimer that Zerner's views do not necessarily reflect those of the editor or publisher. However the story is highlighted on the cover with an illustration of Gore holding a torch in one hand and a tree growing out of a pot in the other—its branches and leaves extending to form a halo behind Gore's head.

“The main arena of struggle is the 110th Congress,” according to the report by Webb. “It has been a long time since Congress has been an arena of struggle where the labor-led people's movement not only could bring their legislative demands, but also stood a chance of securing majorities for those demands.”

As a result of last year's elections, he says, “Political initiative is passing (not completely and fully) into its [the Democratic Party's] hands and the

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University of Minnesota staff strikes for contract

BY SANDI SHERMAN

MINNEAPOLIS—Some 3,500 members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) at the University of Minnesota walked out September 5 after voting by a 72 percent margin to reject the university's last contract offer.

More than 600 strikers and their supporters rallied here September 7. Pickets have fanned out across campuses in Minneapolis, St. Paul, Duluth, Morris, Crookston, and Rochester. The strikers are members of four different AFSCME locals representing clerical, technical, and health-care workers at the university.

The main issue is wages. The university offered a 2.25 percent raise for clerical and technical workers and a 2.5 percent raise for health-care workers. The union notes that these raises, which would amount to \$850 a year for most workers, do not keep pace with inflation.

"With that contract, I'll retire when I'm 72," said Linda Kingman, 59, a secretary in the oral surgery department and a strike picket captain.

The strike, which began on the second day of classes, has impacted the university. Two bursar's offices, where students pay their tuition, had to be closed. The Veterinary Teaching Hospital Clinic is accepting only emergency cases. The walkout of

dental assistants, lab technicians, and hygienists reduced the dental clinic operations. All of the university 911 operators have joined the strike, forcing calls to be rerouted to the city of Minneapolis. Other affected areas include the Facilities Management emergency call center, the library system, and the student health clinic.

In addition, a number of teachers are holding classes off campus to show solidarity. The university has responded by ordering professors to keep their classes on campus or face discipline.

The editorial board of the student newspaper *Minnesota Daily* endorsed the strike, as did the American Medical Students Association Minneapolis branch. Other faculty and student groups have written letters of support.

The strike has received support from other unions, including the Amalgamated Transit Union. Bus drivers routinely honk in support of strikers as they pass picketers, and several have joined the lines.

Jack Berner, who has been on strike twice while working for Metro Transit, told the *Minnesota Daily* that he supports the strike. "They're trying to make a living, too," he said. "Everybody on the top is taking all of the money."

Sandi Sherman is a striking member of AFSCME Local 3800.



Militant/Sandi Sherman

Members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees on strike at the University of Minnesota rally with supporters September 7 in Minneapolis.

ON THE PICKET LINE

Kia contract workers end sit-down strike

Contract workers at Kia Motors Corp.'s main production plant south of Seoul, south Korea, ended a more than weeklong occupation of the paint shop, the Associated Press reports.

The workers—employed by some 20 different companies contracted by Kia—were demanding higher wages, job security, and equal working conditions with full-time workers. The sit-down strike shut down production for a day and slowed it down for another six workdays.

Meanwhile, after rejecting a company contract offer August 24, the union representing 45,000 workers at Hyundai Motors approved an offer September 7 that includes a 5.8 per-

cent wage increase. Hyundai is Kia's parent company.

—Paul Pederson

Auto workers strike bus plant in New York state

Nearly 400 workers at a bus manufacturing plant owned by DaimlerChrysler near Utica, New York, went on strike September 6. The main issues involved are wages, benefits, and job security.

The workers are members of United Auto Workers Local 2243. Their contract expired August 31, and workers rejected two contract proposals, the *Utica Observer-Dispatch* reported.

A 1998 strike at the same plant under different management lasted 19 days.

—Paul Pederson

Coal miner killed in West Virginia

Continued from front page

serious roof falls at the mine so far this year. The mine is owned by Pittsburgh-based CONSOL Energy through its subsidiary CONSOL of Kentucky, Inc.

Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) records show that MSHA inspectors have not completed or even started one of the federally mandated "Regular Safety and Health Inspections" this year. Instead, inspectors have conducted three "Spot Inspections," which take half the time underground of a full inspection.

Three roof collapses reportedly happened in one day, July 23. Two of those falls happened in consecutive areas along the intake entry, where fresh air is brought into the working areas of the mine. None of the eight falls were reported to be cleaned up. None of the roof collapses are cited in

MSHA's spot inspections.

The Bronzite mine has a workforce of 32, and last year mined 276,000 tons of coal—a small operation.

Four miners have been killed on the job in West Virginia this year, and 71 nationwide since the Sago Mine disaster in January 2006.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



September 24, 1982

SAN FRANCISCO—The Mel Mason campaign for governor of California is deepening its fight to win ballot status, despite efforts by Democratic and Republican party officials and the courts to exclude the independent working-class candidate.

Mason, a city councilman in Seaside, California, is a leader of the Socialist Workers Party. His supporters gathered 214,699 signatures to place him on the ballot, but California Secretary of State March Fong Eu has invalidated more than half the signatures, claiming the socialists' petitions contain only 88,157 valid names.

Mason's campaign has focused on opposition to the draft and U.S. intervention in Central America and to Washington's war at home on the unions, Blacks, women, and working farmers.

"It's these ideas that win us support among working people," says Mason, "and it's these ideas the Democratic and Republican party officials don't want to let voters hear."



September 23, 1957

The Democratic Party has been the traditional party of racial oppression. Before 1865, it stood for slavery and secession. Since the defeat of the slaveholders, the Democratic Party has been the political haven and fortress of the vilest Negro-haters, exploiters and segregationists. This party is permeated with the stench of the slave pens and the scorched flesh of the lynched.

For leaders of the Democratic Party to put on a show of indignation at Eisenhower's miserable conduct in the Arkansas school integration crisis is brazen hypocrisy.

Certainly [Harry] Truman is the last man who should be criticizing a President on the issue of civil rights. He was President for almost eight years just before Eisenhower and there is no record of his taking any effective action whatsoever to enforce the Constitutional and human rights of the Negro people. Another Democrat, Franklin D. Roosevelt, held the lease of the White House for more than twelve years just before Truman.



September 24, 1932

When Marx and Engels issued the "Communist Manifesto" in 1848, Japan was still in its dark ages of feudalism, shut in as a hermit nation to hold back the threatening inundation by the rising tide of world economy. Less than a century after its issuance, a scant sixty-four years after the beginning of the modern era in Japan, the spectre of Communism haunts Asia as well as Europe. And in fact the spectre has materialized and taken on flesh and stands with a foot in either continent, so that even as Japan reaches maturity as a world capitalist power, world economy already includes within itself at least the framework of a more advanced stage of society.

Japan, the last of the powers to abolish feudalism, has itself become one of the capitalist powers. The unprecedented speed with which this process occurred has been the admiration of those bourgeois writers who attribute the "successes" of Japanese capitalism to the planful foresight of its ruling class.

For further reading

The Changing Face of U.S. Politics
Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions
by Jack Barnes

"The workers must have veto power on questions of safety. They should insist that production be shut down at once on demand of the workers and at no loss in pay whenever safety of personnel is at stake. All safety controls and the speed of the production line must be set by the workers themselves." Also available in French, Greek, and Spanish. —\$23

www.pathfinderpress.com

UK to raise troop levels in Afghanistan

BY PAUL DAVIES

LONDON—Since taking over from Anthony Blair in June, British prime minister Gordon Brown has vowed that he will stay the course in Britain's part in the multi-theater "war on terror."

"I reject . . . a predetermined exit timetable that would undermine our international obligations, as well as hindering the task of our armed forces," he told opposition politicians August 27.

Britain has 5,500 troops in Iraq, mostly outside Basra at its airport. The 7,100 British military personnel stationed in Afghanistan will increase to 7,800 by October. Armed forces Chief of Staff Gen. Richard Dannatt said August 28 that Britain was "in a wider conflict that may last for a generation." He added that the "go first, go fast, go home" course outlined by the British government in 1998 had to be "balanced with a willingness and a structure to 'go strong and go long.'"

BBC News reported August 31 that bloodshed in Afghanistan is the highest it's been since the 2001 Anglo-American invasion overthrew the Taliban government. An estimated 4,000 people were killed there in 2006. A quarter of them were civilians.

A 12-hour battle in Musa Qala in late July left 60 Afghans dead. While the imperialist forces claim they were all Taliban fighters, local residents said many were civilians. The Taliban has held the town since British forces withdrew last October after a deal with tribal elders. In early August, 50 Afghans were hospitalized when a U.S.-led air strike hit a marketplace. Further strikes on Musa Qala August 31 killed 24.

To advance the striking power of British imperialism, Brown has decided to construct the largest aircraft carriers Britain has ever put to sea. Security minister Alan West, a former admiral, called the ships "four acres of British sovereign territory that you can move anywhere in the world to project power."

Meanwhile, tensions between U.S. politicians and two retired British generals have sharpened. Maj. Gen. Timothy Cross and Gen. Michael Jackson both recently criticized U.S. policy in Iraq. Jackson, who headed the British Army during the invasion of Iraq, declared U.S. policy "intellectually bankrupt."

In late August U.S. presidential advisor Frederick Kagan said that Britain's "ground forces are too small and are now paying the price."



Reuters/Desmond Boylan

British troops in Kabul, Afghanistan, in August. United Kingdom's armed forces chief of staff said they were "in a wider conflict that may last for a generation."

The September 2 *Sunday Times* editorialized that "after 168 deaths the government is lacking the political and military strength to go on sacrificing soldiers in the Basra meat grinder. Better to fight in Afghanistan, where the mission and the enemy are more clear cut."

But Brown has made clear his government's commitment to follow through on its course in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"With a new Brown government some people are looking for evidence

that our alliance [with the United States] is breaking up," Foreign Secretary David Miliband told the *Times* July 16. "There isn't any, and there won't be any. Nothing has changed. Our single most important bilateral partner is the USA."

A week earlier, Miliband refused to rule out military action against Iran. He claimed that Iran "doesn't have the right to undermine the stability of its neighbours" and said that the United Kingdom would push for a UN resolution to tighten sanctions.

Workers in Virginia protest cop immigration checks

Continued from front page in peace."

"What I don't like is that they are trying to deny basic rights to our children, the right to health services, the right to an education," said Martín.

Many workers brought their families to the march. Most came from Manassas and Woodbridge, both in Prince William County. They were joined by others from Arlington, Alexandria, Charlottesville, and Washington, D.C. About 20 workers from Culpeper carried a banner that read "Culpeper supports the Hispanic Community of Prince William." Culpeper County passed a resolution August 8 affirming English as the official language of county business.

"This resolution is unjust and racist," said Noe Ventura, a truck driver for a concrete company. "We had a discussion at my job about the strike. Many of us have decided not to work. Others are working, but they still support us in their hearts."

With the exception of one worker who feared retaliation from her employer, workers interviewed by this reporter unanimously supported the October 9 strike call.

A rally after the march featured speeches by activists and religious leaders and a mariachi concert.

"They have pushed us against the wall without any options," said Ricardo Juárez, a leader of the immigrant rights group Mexicanos sin Fronteras. "Will we hide?"

"No!" shouted the crowd.

"Will we fight for our rights?"

"Yes!" was the response, followed by chants of "¡Sí se puede!" ("Yes we can!")

Help Save Manassas, an anti-immigrant group affiliated with the rightist Minuteman Civil Defense Corps, held a press conference the next day.

"We're going to continue hard on this course. We're not backing down," said Prince William County Board chairman

Corey A. Stewart.

In a further indication of the growing polarization in the region, local media reported that the Ku Klux Klan had distributed leaflets in Manassas urging a ban on "all non-white immigration."

Several Virginia counties have initiated studies to determine the effect of "illegal immigration" on the local economy. In addition to Culpeper, Stafford County declared English its official language. Loudon County passed an anti-immigrant resolution nearly identical to the Prince William resolution. A September 4 meeting of the Loudon County Board of Supervisors voted to study ways to cut government services

to undocumented workers.

Prince William County Delegate Jeffrey M. Frederick called for all Virginia localities to introduce measures like those in Prince William and Loudon counties. He plans to introduce legislation at the state level to deny funding to local governments that do not check the immigration status of residents who receive public assistance, the Associated Press reported. Five law enforcement agencies in and around Prince William County announced an agreement called the "Prince William Criminal Alien Initiative" to increase cooperation between local officials and federal immigration authorities.

Judge rules on Patriot Act

Continued from page 4 "purely cosmetic."

The FBI's use of the secret subpoenas ballooned after the USA Patriot Act was passed with overwhelming bipartisan support in 2001. According to FBI records, 8,500 NSLs were issued in 2000. This figure jumped to an average of 47,700 a year from 2003 to 2005.

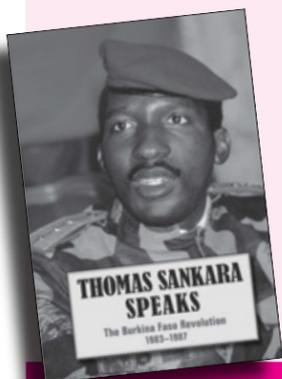
Because more than one NSL can be issued for an individual, the FBI reports that about 52,000 people were spied on using NSLs during this three-year period. A U.S. Department of Justice review this year, however, found thousands more unreported NSLs.

The Patriot Act built on the 1996 Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act and other "antiterrorism" bills. It gave wider latitude to the FBI and other spy agencies to conduct

espionage and disruption operations within the United States, carry out arbitrary searches and seizures in private homes and businesses, and jail immigrants virtually indefinitely without charges.

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Cointelpro
The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom



by Nelson Blackstock

Describes the decades-long covert counter-intelligence program directed against socialists and activists in the Black and anti-Vietnam War movements.

—\$16

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Investigations begin into Utah mine disaster

BY FRANK FORRESTAL

More than 1,000 people attended a September 9 memorial service in Huntington, Utah, for six coal miners trapped in an August 6 cave-in and three men killed during the rescue attempt at the Crandall Canyon mine. The memorial service came a few days after the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education began hearings on the disaster in Washington, D.C.

The Senate hearings are one of what will likely be at least five different investigations in the coming months.

Two months before the cave-in, the federal Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) approved a plan submitted by mine owner Murray Energy Corp. to remove not only pillars of coal, but also large panels of coal called "barriers." Barriers support the weight of the mountain above after most of the coal has been extracted.

Before questioning from U.S. senators, MSHA head Richard Stickler declined to defend the mining plan. Stickler said he would "have to see the result of the accident investigative team" before drawing any conclusions on whether or not MSHA should have approved the plan.

"The mining plan should never have been approved," Cecil Roberts, international president of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), told the congressional committee. "In essence the only coal remaining in the mine was in the barriers and pillars necessary to support the roof of the mine's main entries."

In his testimony, the union president said, "Murray Energy was extracting that very coal, using the pillar extraction method, at the time of the catastrophic collapse."

Robert Murray, head of Murray Energy Corp., did not attend the hearings. Arlen Specter, a Republican sen-

ator from Pennsylvania, suggested that the committee might issue a subpoena to force him to testify.

Another ongoing investigation, which has drawn criticism from the UMWA and others, is being carried out by MSHA.

MSHA's investigation is headed by Richard Gates, who oversaw the investigation into the Jan. 2, 2006, explosion at the Sago mine in West Virginia that killed 12.

Salt Lake Tribune reporter Mike Gorrell wrote September 4 that MSHA internal reviews "of two fatal mine accidents in a three-week span last year in West Virginia... revealed numerous shortcomings in how the agency enforced mine safety laws."

U.S. labor secretary Elaine Chao has appointed an "independent" panel, headed by former MSHA officials, to investigate the findings of the Gates-led investigation. The *Charleston Gazette* reported that this "independent study would take the place of MSHA's traditional internal review process."

Chao's move is designed to ward off criticism of MSHA and reflects growing concern by working people that MSHA investigations have little or no impact on mine safety.

"After the Sago mine disaster there was a big investigation and promises of improvement, but all we have is more dead miners," said Mack Isaacson, a roof bolter at the Horizon mine near Helper, Utah, in a recent interview with the *Militant*.

Seventy-one miners have been killed in the United States since the Sago disaster. The figure includes the six men trapped in the Crandall Canyon mine, whom MSHA added to their 2007 fatality list over Labor Day weekend. With nine fatalities so far this year, Utah has the highest number of mining deaths of any state in the country.

Union calls rally at Dakota

Continued from front page

locals are trying to win contracts, including truck drivers organized by the Teamsters and striking members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees at the University of Minnesota.

On September 7 union representatives were not allowed to enter the Dakota plant. This violated a basic right in the contract that enables union representatives to check on conditions. The day before, union supporters in the plant had passed out a new issue of the *Workers' Voice* newsletter announcing that Local 789 representatives would be coming to discuss safety and other problems workers are facing. The week before two workers were accidentally stabbed on the job due to unsafe conditions, including line speed, the newsletter said.

"We filed a grievance and also a charge with the NLRB [National Labor Relations Board] because we were denied access to the plant to talk to members about their grievances," said Espinosa. "We won this in the

contract."

Workers at Dakota Premium fought for two years and won union representation in 2002. In June of this year their first contract expired. Shortly before the contract expiration, pro-company workers began circulating a petition against the union, part of a company campaign to decertify the local. The petition has been handed over to the NLRB, which will decide whether or not a decertification election will be held. The UFCW has contested the petition, pointing to company involvement in its circulation.

"It's one more way the company is attacking the union at the plant," said Julian Santana, a worker in the kill department. "When I talked to a coworker who had asked why they weren't in the plant and I told him that the company didn't allow them to enter, he was not surprised."

Rebecca Williamson is a trimmer at Dakota Premium Foods and a member of UFCW Local 789.

Boston picket demands 'Free the Cuban 5'



Militant/Ted Leonard

BOSTON—Twenty-five supporters of the Cuban Five staged an informational picket during rush hour here August 20, reaching hundreds of passersby with information on the frame-up case.

Participants distributed flyers that explained the facts behind the government's charges against the Five and described the prosecution's conduct during the trial. The action coincided with oral arguments in Atlanta, part of the appeal process. It was sponsored by the July 26 Coalition, a local Cuba solidarity group, and drew participants from several organizations.

The Cuban Five—Antonio Guerrero, Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Fernando González, and René González—have been locked up in U.S. prisons on frame-up charges since 1998. They are Cuban revolutionaries who were in Florida monitoring counterrevolutionary Cuban-American groups that have a history of carrying out violent attacks in Cuba with Washington's complicity.

Plans are underway for more events in defense of the Five this fall as part of a month of stepped-up action in their defense beginning September 12. Among the activities planned here is a video showing of a meeting last spring to defend the Five and promote *Super Power Principles*, a book about the frame-up. The meeting featured professor Noam Chomsky. In addition, plans are being made to host a citywide public meeting featuring nationally known figures in the defense effort.

—JOHN HAWKINS

'Long-term effort' in Iraq

Continued from front page
have devastating consequences."

There are currently 168,000 U.S. troops in Iraq. The number of daily patrols by U.S. and Iraqi forces has gone up from 1,000 to 4,500 since August 2006.

In addition, 40,000 Sunni fighters—many militia members formerly at odds with occupation forces who have since turned against al-Qaeda—are now working with U.S. and Iraqi forces. The enlistment of local tribal sheiks has resulted in military gains for Washington. Petraeus attributed a decline in bombings and sectarian killings in the last two months to a series of offensive operations carried out by U.S. and Iraqi government troops since January. He said U.S. forces have killed or captured nearly 100 al-Qaeda leaders and 2,500 al-Qaeda fighters in Iraq.

"The military objectives of the surge are, in large measure, being met," said Petraeus.

But Crocker acknowledged that efforts to stabilize the political situation there have fallen short.

A September 4 *New York Times* op-ed piece noted, "there is military momentum for combined American-Iraqi forces and there is political paralysis in Baghdad." According to a chart published in the same issue, the number of Iraqis supporting a strong central government has declined to 55 percent from 85 percent in August 2003.

Petraeus told Congress that the deployment of 30,000 additional troops to Iraq since January has set the stage for reducing the forces to "the pre-surge level of brigade combat teams by next

summer." But he said "it would be premature to make... recommendations on the pace" of further reductions.

He said that as many as 5,000 troops—1 of 20 U.S. combat brigades in Iraq—could be withdrawn by mid-December given the "progress" made so far. The proposal helps in part to deflect factional critiques by Democrats in Congress who, as part of their anti-Bush posturing, have requested timetables for troop withdrawal.

Democrats in Congress used the hearings to attack the Bush administration's course in Iraq. They complained that recent reports show the Iraqi government has not met "benchmarks" outlined by Congress when it approved \$100 billion to fund the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq last June. The bill authorized the funds regardless of whether Baghdad meets these benchmarks.

"It is very clear that every one of those reports, every one of them without exception, does not accomplish what the president promised the surge would do, and that is bring about political stability in Iraq," said Senate majority leader Harry Reid.

"The troops in Iraq are not available for other missions; to go into Afghanistan to pursue Osama bin Laden," said Ike Skelton, a Democratic congressman from Missouri and the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee.

Opening Guns of World War III

WASHINGTON'S ASSAULT ON IRAQ

by Jack Barnes

In New International no. 7
—\$14

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Stalin's role in defeat of 1927 Chinese revolution

From Lenin to Stalin is one of *Pathfinder's Books of the Month* in September. It is a vivid account of the early years of the Soviet Union under V.I. Lenin's leadership—and of the political counterrevolution by a privileged social layer headed by Joseph Stalin. The excerpt below sheds light on Stalin's betrayal of the 1927 Chinese revolution. Serge was a member of the executive committee of the Communist International and editor of its magazine. He was arrested and imprisoned several times as a supporter of the communist opposition to Stalin. He left the Soviet Union in 1936. Copyright © 1937, 1973 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



Rally of workers and peasants in Canton, China, Dec. 12, 1927. An adventurist putsch ordered by Stalin-led Comintern was savagely put down by troops of Chiang Kai-shek's Kuomintang. Some 5,700 members and supporters of the Chinese Communist Party were killed.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY VICTOR SERGE

There had been six large parties in the Third International: those of France, Germany, Italy, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia. Since the defeat of the proletarian revolution in Finland, Hungary, Germany, and Italy (1918–1922), the International had been able to raise the question of power in Germany and in Bulgaria; but these attempts had led to disaster

without bloodshed in Germany, with dreadful massacres in Bulgaria. The cause of the proletarian revolution in the West seemed lost for many years to come. And now an immense light was rising in the East; the Chinese masses had been stirred from their apathy, and were advancing from victory to victory. Hong Kong was blockaded by Canton, a revolutionary republic was formed in south China, with Soviet advisers and instructors, Borodin in the Cabinet, Galen (that is, Bluecher, the former guerrilla chief of the Urals) in Chiang Kai-shek's new-formed army, Voitinsky in Peking. Lenin was growing as popular as Sun Yat-Sen. Galen-Bluecher led Chiang Kai-shek's army northward, the trade unions took possession of Shanghai and Hankow. Everyone wondered what revolutionary power would arise out of the victory of a workers' and peasants' revolution throughout the extent of the yellow continent. The destinies of Eurasia were changing, and with them the destiny of our times. Yet we knew the inside of these victories; with our own eyes we saw the workers of Shanghai, Canton, Hankow, and Nanking led into ambush by our bureaucrats.

By this time the bureaucracy has, in actual fact, driven the workers from power in the USSR. Of the dictatorship of the proletariat only the name

remains. In the key positions, revolutionists have been replaced by functionaries. Policies are no longer inspired by the general interests of the Russian and international proletariat, but by the functionaries' wish not to be bothered. Stalin becomes their idol. They fear the victory of the Chinese Revolution even more than they pretend to desire it. They never dare when the hour for daring has struck. Their entire tactics consist in maneuvers to avoid complications. This leads to worse complications, but then it is too late.

We know that Chiang Kai-shek is preparing the open betrayal of the unions and his communist allies. We know that he is preparing a coup against the proletariat of Shanghai, which has accomplished one of the finest insurrections in modern history. We are not permitted to speak. And Stalin takes the floor in Moscow before thousands of workers and solemnly assures them that we have nothing to fear from Chiang Kai-shek. "We shall break him after having made use of him." This speech had not yet been published when, on the following day, the wires informed us of the event we had predicted: the massacre of the workers of Shanghai (1927). Stalin has the text and the proofs of his unfortunate speech removed from the office of

Pravda; they will never be seen again. He is reduced to stealing his own speech.

On all this I shall quote only one document of the time, the report delivered at the Fifteenth Party Congress by Chitarov, a Russian communist who had been sent to China. Stalin uses it to condemn those who, in China, had faithfully executed his orders. . . .

"For twenty days there was in Shanghai a people's government in which the communists had the majority. . . . This government was inactive although a military coup was expected at any moment. . . because the government of Wuhan had not confirmed it in its power (this government included two communist ministers). . . Hsueh Yoh, the leader of the first division, came to the comrades and informed them of the preparations for the coup. . . he was ready to join us with his troops against the military. The leaders of the CP replied that they knew about the plot but did not wish to break with Chiang Kai-shek prematurely; they ordered Hsueh Yoh to go to the front or to resign by way of proving his loyalty to the general. The first division left the city; the second replaced it; and two days later the workers of Shanghai were shot down en masse. . . .

"[I]n Hunan the counterrevolution triumphed on the twenty-first and twenty-second of May (1927) under circumstances which are hardly credible. There were 1,700 troops in the capital and 20,000 organized and armed peasants in the environs. However, the officers succeeded in taking power, in shooting the peasant leaders and establishing their dictatorship. . . . The peasants were on the point of taking possession of the city, which they could have done without difficulty, when they received a message from the Central Committee of the CP ordering them to avoid an armed conflict and to pose the question through governmental channels. The provincial committee sent the Red detachments the order to retreat. Two detachments did not receive the order on time; they attacked, and were surrounded and exterminated."

September

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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Troops out of Iraq, Afghanistan now!

Immediate, unconditional withdrawal of U.S. and allied troops from Iraq and Afghanistan! This is the demand that must be placed on Washington.

While repeating justifications for “long-term efforts” in Iraq, Gen. David Petraeus told Congress this week that as many as 5,000 troops might be drawn down by December. He cited “devastating consequences” if U.S. troops were to withdraw “prematurely.”

But the consequences of immediate withdrawal would only be a problem for the U.S. rulers and their imperialist allies. Washington’s “global war on terror” has already wrought devastation on working people in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Philippines, the Horn of Africa, and beyond.

There are currently 168,000 U.S. soldiers in Iraq and about 25,000 in Afghanistan. They are there for one reason only: to protect the interests of the capitalist class in the United States. Faced with sharpening competition from rival imperialist powers, the U.S. rulers need to expand their markets abroad and step up attacks at home on the wages, job conditions, and social gains of the working class. The combination of wars abroad and assaults at home is a decades-long perspective that the ruling class and both its major parties share.

Not a single voice in Congress calls for getting the troops out now. While taking partisan potshots

at the Bush administration and its shortcomings in Iraq, the Democrats agree with the goals of the war, and readily fund it. Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi calls for a “responsible” deployment of U.S. forces, “leaving enough troops there to fight the terrorists and to protect our embassy.” Prominent Democrats such as Senator Hillary Clinton have proposed sending more troops to Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, the “war on terror” continues to expand. U.S. troops are currently operating in Africa, Eastern Europe, the Philippines, and elsewhere. Washington is planning to build a base on the Iraq border just four miles from Iran. The U.S. rulers want to return to the days when the government in Tehran could be counted on to help further their political and economic goals in the region. They hope that a stable client regime in Iraq will advance this aim.

Working people need to demand immediate, unconditional withdrawal of U.S. and allied troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as everywhere else they are stationed—in the Balkans, Darfur, Korea, Colombia, Cuba’s Guantánamo Bay, and beyond. “Phased withdrawal” schemes or meaningless “timetables” only embolden the U.S. rulers to drive ahead in their military assaults around the world.

Not one penny, not one person for Washington’s wars!

Political evolution of U.S. Communist Party

Continued from page 4

hands of the labor-led people’s movement of which we are part.”

A section of the report entitled “Labor to the Front” cites “an innovative plan on how labor will participate in the 2008 elections” as probably the most important outcome of a meeting of the AFL-CIO Executive Board in March. Webb describes the joint effort of AFL-CIO and Change to Win labor federation officials to hustle votes for the Democrats as a sign of deepening labor unity.

The role of the CP in the “labor-led people’s movement” at this time, Webb said, is to “assist more than lead”—that is, subordinate itself to “center and pro-

gressive forces.”

This direction is not new in the party’s history. At its 1944 convention, as a show of good faith in support of Washington’s efforts in World War II, the convention dissolved the party and constituted a Communist Political Association.

While claiming continued adherence to Marxism, the preamble to the association’s constitution read, “The COMMUNIST POLITICAL ASSOCIATION is a non-party organization of Americans which, basing itself upon the working class, carries forward the traditions of Washington, Jefferson, Paine, Jackson, and Lincoln, under the changed conditions of modern industrial society.”

LETTERS

Legalization and the unions

The two excerpts from earlier *Militant* reports on the struggle of miners at the Co-Op coal mine in Huntington, Utah, reprinted in the September 10 issue of the paper are useful reviews of crucial lessons in labor organizing. One major point, however, is brought up without any follow up whatsoever: the importance of linkage between the struggle for union organizing in the mines and the one for legalization of undocumented workers.

In the first of the two reprints, coal miner Bill Estrada states that “what the coal miners fought through points to why the fight for legalization of the millions of undocumented workers in this country is so important.” A clear understanding of that connection is not just a precondition for more effective labor actions, but also for furthering the necessary political lessons to be learned.

The fact that the point is not expanded further in any of the two reprints is a sorry loss for those who should be better served by such reporting; particularly when such a high percentage of those toiling in the mines are undocumented workers themselves.

Claudia Kaiser-Lenoir
Boston, Massachusetts

Illinois abortion clinic

The article “Abortion rights backers defend new clinic in Illinois” in the September 17 *Militant* says, “A women’s clinic here that provided abortions shut down after being evicted in October.”

This is incorrect. The previous clinic in Aurora stopped offering abortions when the doctor retired last year. The doctor who bought the practice never opened up the clinic. He was the one who was evicted.

This is not a small error because of the propaganda that the right wing spreads. The Pro-Life Action League brags that an “abortionist” was evicted and some groups imply it was due to unsafe health practices.

Laura Anderson
Chicago, Illinois

Support the Jena Six

A rally and march are being called in Jena, Louisiana on September 20, the day that high school student Mychal Bell will be sentenced. Bell, one of the ‘Jena Six’, faces up to 15 years for aggravated battery. He has been in jail since last December. The other five, Robert Bailey Jr., Carwin Jones, Bryant Purvis, Theo Shaw, and an unidentified minor await tri-

al on charges ranging from aggravated battery to attempted murder.

Last September some Black students in the nearly 80 percent white high school in the rural Louisiana town sat in the shade of a tree that normally only white students sat under. The following day three nooses were hung from the tree. Black students then organized a sit-in under the tree to protest.

Days later a white student shouted racial taunts at Black students and praised those who hung the nooses. In the incident that followed he was knocked down, punched, and kicked by some students.

The Jena Six were then arrested, charged with attempted second degree murder, and expelled from school. Information on how to protest this blatant injustice can be found on the website www.freethejena6.org.

Maura DeLuca
New York, New York

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

On immigration and unionization

BY BEN O’SHAUGHNESSY

In a letter to the editor, reader Claudia Kaiser-Lenoir asks for further explanation on the connection between the fight for legalization of undocumented immigrants and the struggle for unionization.

The capitalists draw in immigrant workers to have a section of the working class with few or no legal rights, as part of maintaining their profits. Bosses and their politicians use arguments that immigrant workers steal “American jobs” to foster divisions and break down solidarity among working people. At the same time they use all means at their disposal—cops, courts, ultra-rightist vigilantes—to intimidate immi-

REPLY TO A READER

grant workers and maintain their status as a super-exploitable section of the working class. Divisions in the working class based on race, sex, and country of origin weaken the class as a whole and make it easier for bosses to drive down wages and working conditions for everybody.

Organizing and using union power goes in the opposite direction by uniting workers to fight together for more tolerable living and working conditions. Union organizing puts workers in a stronger position to defend themselves against boss attacks on wages, line speed, and dignity. In the process, working people cut across divisions and build solidarity.

With the changing composition of the U.S. working class through the influx of millions of immigrants from Latin America, Asia, and Africa, the demands for immediate legalization for all and an end to raids and deportations become urgently posed for the labor movement.

Immigrant workers have been at the forefront of some of the most important union battles in recent years. This was the case in the 2003–2006 fight to organize a United Mine Workers of America local at the Co-Op coal mine in Huntington, Utah. It was also true of the 2000 sit-down strike and subsequent organizing victory for the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 789 at the Dakota Premium Foods slaughterhouse in South St. Paul, Minnesota.

Another example is the May 25, 2007, union victory at PM Beef in Windom, Minnesota, where workers, largely led by Latino immigrants, successfully fought to organize themselves into UFCW Local 1161. The union representation vote there came less than six months after an immigration raid at a Swift plant just 30 miles away, where 239 workers were arrested. Many of the PM Beef workers had previously worked at the Swift plant, which is also organized by UFCW Local 1161.

Such raids are aimed at intimidating workers and weakening fights for legalization and unionization. The bosses can, have, and will continue to play the “immigration card” against workers fighting for unionization. During the Co-Op organizing struggle, the company fired dozens of workers on the eve of a union representation election, claiming it had just discovered the workers did not have proper papers to work in the United States.

Workers’ ability to maintain their jobs under these conditions can only be won in struggle. Dozens of immigrant workers who were fired for taking days off for demonstrations for legalization in 2006—from meat packers in Detroit to house painters in Monroe, Washington—won their jobs back.

On May Day 2006, two million workers walked off the job, shut down factories, and poured into the streets to demand legalization. This year, more than half a million marched in cities and towns across the United States on May Day. And hundreds of thousands of workers have participated in other actions protesting raids or local anti-immigrant laws that spring up every single week.

By taking to the streets, these workers set an example for all of labor at a time when the union movement continues to weaken and working class struggles tend to be marked by setbacks and stalemates more than victories. They reflected a growing self-confidence by working people—a confidence that the bosses desperately want to undo.