

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Euro declines as U.S. rulers gain over imperialist rivals

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'You take on one of us, you take on all of us'

P&M coal strike spreads to Wyoming

BY JEFF POWERS

KEMMERER, Wyoming—One hundred fifty striking miners and their supporters from United Mine Workers Local 1307 lined the road going into the Pittsburg and Midway coal mine here May 30. They greeted the few company supervisory personnel that went to work that morning with handmade signs that declared, "You take on one of us, you take on all of us," "We're not flexible," and "On strike against P&M—unfair labor practice."

Picketing alongside Local 1307 miners were several workers from a nearby coke plant who are also members of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA). The coke workers went through a 47-day strike two years ago.

The 230 miners who work at the Kemmerer mine struck Pittsburg and Midway (P&M) on May 28 a minute past midnight. They joined the more than 300 UMWA miners who have been on strike against P&M since May 15 at the McKinley mine near Gallup, New Mexico.

Kemmerer is the second largest of the four P&M mines, with close to 4 million tons produced last year. McKinley ranks first, with nearly 7 million tons of coal mined.

"The two main issues are the company's demand to go to a 12-hour day and their not wanting to give us a raise for six years," said striker Robert Wayman. "They say they are for the families, but how can you have any



Militant/Jeff Powers

UMWA members at Kemmerer have joined coal miners on strike in New Mexico

kind of life at all if you are working 12 hours a day?

"I have worked at the mine for 28 years," Wayman continued. "You have to have close to 20 years to be working here. Every time

a miner retires they replace him or her with a bigger shovel."

"Everything in the company's proposal was a loss," Dallas Wolf, a unit coordinator

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U.S. rulers debate easing Cuba embargo

BY GREG McCARTAN

A measure to lift U.S. sanctions on sales of food and medicine to Cuba cleared the House Appropriations Committee in May as part of an agricultural funding bill. Sponsored for the third year in a row by Rep. George Nethercutt, a Republican from Washington State, the rider passed 35-24.

A similar measure is being considered in the U.S. Senate. The proposal, at first opposed by Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairman Jesse Helms, moved ahead there after stipulations were added to prevent any sales to Cuba from being eligible for subsidies from the U.S. government. Last year, the Senate approved a comparable measure by a vote of 70-28.

The legislation is one of a number of signs that substantial wings of the U.S. ruling class have decided to move away from aspects of its trade embargo, a cornerstone of Washington's four-decade-long effort to try to weaken and overturn the Cuban revolution. Many Democratic and Republican party politicians, columnists and editorial writers in the big-business press, and corporate officials openly declare the embargo a failed policy and advocate a different course to achieve the same aim.

The debate over the Cuba embargo has intensified in the wake of passage of legislation giving China permanent normal trading relations with the United States. "What's good for China is good for Cuba," was the title of a feature column by Nethercutt in the *New York Times*. With the China trade bill behind it, he argues, Congress "must decide whether it has the courage of its convictions on another issue: lifting sanctions against Cuba."

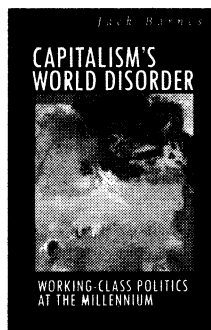
Senate majority leader Trent Lott, a Republican from Mississippi, has been a voice of caution. "It's very easy to see the distinction" between China and Cuba, he told reporters May 22. "And if you can't see it, I don't know. Maybe you are just blind to it." Lott added that Cuban president Fidel Castro

has "shown no repentance."

While attributing to one person the determination of millions of Cuban working people not to repent to U.S. imperialism for making a socialist revolution and defending it arms in hand for more than 40 years,

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FROM PATHFINDER



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Foreign policy rifts widen in U.S. election campaign

BY GREG McCARTAN

A number of issues central to Washington's foreign policy have emerged in the presidential elections, with Republican candidate George W. Bush presenting himself as the best defender of the interests of U.S. imperialism around the world.

On May 23 Bush went on the offensive, declaring, "America must build effective missile defenses based on the best available options at the earliest possible date." U.S. missile systems "must be designed to protect all 50 states and our friends and allies and deployed forces overseas from missile attacks by rogue nations or accidental launches," he said.

Bush also said he favored a reduction in nuclear warheads and that he would press Moscow to do the same. He said he would ask the Pentagon to review nuclear stockpiles and cut back on unneeded "expensive relics of dead conflicts."

"The emerging security threats to the United States, its friends and allies and even

Continued on Page 14

'Militant' gains 1,100 new readers

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

We did it! Campaigners for the international drive to win new subscribers to the socialist press won 1,102 new readers to the *Militant* and 358 to *Perspectiva Mundial*.

Partisans of these publications made our goals by reaching out to working-class struggles and taking advantage of political developments, such as the April 22 cop assault by the Clinton administration in Miami, to discuss politics using the *Militant*, *PM*, and Pathfinder books. The last week was by far the best campaign effort—262 *Militant* subscriptions—building on the momentum of the previous two weeks.

We also sold 377 copies of *New International*, falling short of that target.

Some 8,000 workers rallied at the nation's capital May 17 to demand the government

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AS WE GO TO PRESS...

A three-judge panel of the 11th U.S. District Court in Atlanta ruled June 1 that Cuban six-year-old Elián González is not entitled to a political asylum hearing here. In violation of Cuba's sovereignty, the U.S. government has since November refused to return the child to his country. The Miami relatives who filed the asylum claim have yet to appeal the ruling. The injunction barring Elián González from returning to Cuba remains in effect at least until then. Every supporter of workers' rights, Cuban sovereignty, democratic freedoms, and basic human solidarity should continue to press for the end of any restriction on his return to Cuba.

N.J. conference plans actions to back fight for a united Ireland

BY ANDY BUCHANAN

ATLANTIC CITY, New Jersey—Declan Kearny, a leader of the Irish prisoners rights group Coiste na n-Irchimi declared, "This is an exciting time to be a republican activist in Ireland—and an exciting time to be a republican activist in the United States!"

Kearny was speaking to 150 activists gathered here for the 30th Annual General Meeting of the Irish Northern Aid Committee (Noraid). The organization was established in 1971 to raise political support and funds in the United States for Irish republicans imprisoned by the British government because of their activities in favor of the unification of Ireland and freedom from British domination. For the last three decades it has been the main organization campaigning in this country to end British rule in Ireland.

This year's conference took place amid continuing advances in the struggle for a united Ireland. Speaking on behalf of the Sinn Féin leadership, Pat Treanor opened the conference with an outline of the situation in Ireland. He described how, over the last several weeks, the British government has been unable to roll back the deep popular sentiment in northern Ireland against the continuation of direct British rule over the northern six counties, and has been forced to move toward reinstating the executive body of the assembly established under the 1998 Good Friday Agreement with limited powers of self-government. The British government suspended the executive in February, alleging that the refusal of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) to "decommission" its weapons violated the Good Friday Agreement.

Treanor explained that the British government has now agreed to reestablish the executive of the assembly. As part of this process, it has agreed to release all remaining Irish republican prisoners in British jails by July 28, withdraw British army units from the streets and return them to their barracks, and begin the removal of an initial six "observation posts"—spy posts used

by the British army to monitor and harass the nationalist population. The concentration of military facilities makes areas like rural South Armagh some of the most heavily militarized places in the world.

In response to this progress, the Irish Republican Army stated May 6 that it will "initiate a process that will completely and verifiably put IRA arms beyond use." IRA arms dumps will not be turned over to the British government, but will be inspected by two observers reporting to the Independent International Commission on Decommissioning. Irish republicans nominated Cyril Ramaphosa, a former leader of the African National Congress in South Africa, as one of the arms inspectors. He will be joined by Martti Ahtisaari, a former prime minister of Finland.

Pat Treanor and leaders of Noraid stressed the importance of stepping up solidarity activity in the United States in this new phase of the struggle in Ireland. The conference was marked by enthusiasm and determination to do just that.

Support to former political prisoners

Declan Kearny outlined the work of Coiste, set up to help reintegrate freed Irish republican prisoners into society. Alongside work to assist the former prisoners and their families, Coiste campaigns to decriminal-



British army spy post in County Armagh, Northern Ireland, used to intimidate and harass local population. London has agreed to begin the removal of such facilities.

ize their struggle. Kearny noted that in the eyes of the British government the former political prisoners are paroled criminals. There are about 15,000 former republican prisoners. In some nationalist areas, more than 10 percent of the population has served time for their political activities. Noraid pledged to make raising funds for Coiste activities a top priority.

The conference was the largest such gathering for several years, and Noraid organizers reported that in the last few months four new local units have been set up. Activists mapped out plans for fund-raising activities. They decided to expand the circulation of

the *Irish People*, weekly newspaper of Irish republicans in the United States.

Local units of Noraid were urged to plan out events commemorating the 20th anniversary of the hunger strikes. During the 1980 hunger protest, 10 young Irish nationalist fighters died in an effort to force the British government to recognize incarcerated republicans as political prisoners. The hunger strike, and the large street actions in support of the strikers, focused world attention on the brutality of the British occupation of northern Ireland and won deeper international support to the struggle for a united Ireland.

Jobless workers revolt in northern Argentina

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

In May, another crisis-ridden province exploded in Argentina—this time in Salta, to the north. The revolt was detonated May 12 when 600 cops and paramilitary troops launched an early morning assault on hundreds of unemployed workers who for 11 days had been blocking access to an oil refinery along a highway 30 miles south of the Bolivian border.

The cops fired rubber bullets and tear gas against the workers, who were demanding

jobs and overdue pay. Dozens of workers, and some cops, were wounded in the ensuing battle, and one worker, trucker Víctor Jofré, died of a heart attack.

The cops forced the protesting workers, known as *piqueteros*, to retreat into the town of General Mosconi, where the provincial police chased protesters into private homes and hospitals as they clubbed, tear-gassed, and fired rubber bullets at them.

In response, thousands of furious residents of Mosconi poured into the streets in solidarity with the *piqueteros*. They set the town hall afire and trashed some stores. The 400 provincial cops were forced to beat a retreat as residents organized a demonstration to denounce the repression, marching behind an image of the Virgin of Fatima.

The demonstration converged with a march by 10,000 workers who came over from the neighboring town of Tartagal in a show of support.

Government authorities hastily negotiated an end to the protest by pledging funds to expand job programs—largely miserly makework schemes such as sweeping streets—from 1,600 jobs to 3,000, and other unemployment subsidies. They also released those arrested and promised no reprisals against other protesters.

Workers held a meeting on the highway and voted to approve the agreement. Standing on a fuel truck as a speakers platform, piquetero Juan "Pepino" Fernández declared, "There are still things pending and we expect them to be resolved. Otherwise we're going to have to come back onto the highway. This was a lesson for the politicians. I hope that now there will be peace, but for that we need jobs."

Salta and other Argentina provinces have been seething since the government of President Fernando de la Rúa, which took office in December, cut funds to job programs as part of an austerity program demanded by the International Monetary Fund.

Salta has been hit hard by layoffs in the oil industry since the sell-off of the state-owned oil company YPF. Unemployment in the area has climbed to 25 percent.

Meanwhile, on May 30, some 3,000 rice farmers blocked National Highway 18 in the northeastern province of Entre Ríos. They demanded relief from the devastating crisis facing small agricultural producers.

In December, the northern province of Corrientes erupted as hundreds of public employees demanding back pay waged a pitched street battle with the police, who killed two workers.

THE MILITANT

Why Israeli forces had to leave Lebanon

After two decades of trampling on Lebanon's sovereignty, the U.S.-backed Israeli occupation of the south finally collapsed and residents celebrated the return to their homes. The *'Militant'* interviews Lebanese working people and anti-imperialist fighters on the significance of this victory. Don't miss a single issue!



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Lebanese return as Israeli forces withdraw

BY GEORGES MEHRABIAN

ATHENS—"As word reached Beirut of the Israeli redeployment from some villages in the occupied south, ordinary people started calling each other, meeting up and heading for the south," reported Imad Abd Hamid in a May 24 phone interview from the newly liberated Lebanese village of Kfar Hamam.

Abd Hamid, in his 20s, is from that village but had been unable to go there for 18 years due to the Israeli occupation of Lebanon. "Do you know what it is like for people not to have seen their families for 18 years?" he asked. "This was our chance to change things!"

The Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon began in 1978. In 1982, in an attempt to crush the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and defeat the struggles by workers and farmers in Lebanon, Israeli troops, with Washington's backing, launched a massive invasion of Lebanon all the way to Beirut.

After three months of heroic resistance against vastly superior military forces, the PLO led an organized retreat from West Beirut. Israeli forces, supported by U.S. marines and other imperialist occupation troops, imposed a rightist government in Lebanon.

For almost two decades the Zionist regime, allied with the rightist South Lebanon Army (SLA), maintained a ruthless occupation of the south.

Tens of thousands of Lebanese and Palestinians have perished and hundreds of thousands have been forced out of their homes and into refugee camps. Close to 1,000 Israeli soldiers have been killed in the conflict.

Failure to break Lebanese resistance

But the U.S.-backed Israeli occupation failed to break the resistance of the Lebanese people. And it sparked growing opposition within Israel itself—beginning with a September 1982 protest by 400,000 in Tel Aviv in response to the Israeli-backed massacre of Palestinians at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps of West Beirut.

This failure eventually led the Zionist regime under Prime Minister Ehud Barak to withdraw its troops from southern Lebanon, precipitating the collapse of the Israeli-created SLA and the triumphant return of Lebanese to their land.

"Tens of thousands of people reacted the same way," Abd Hamid recounted. "The highway to the south was jammed as residents moved to retake their lost homes. We were joined by people from other regions of Lebanon, not just the south. It was an unstoppable movement. The Israeli troops blew up the bridge leading to our zone but within a couple of hours people built another temporary, and dangerous, bridge and we crossed."

"About half a million people have ties to the previously occupied south," explained Hadi Bekdash, one of the activists who helped organize demonstrations in Beirut over the last few months against the Israeli bombings and occupation, in a phone interview from Beirut. "The southern suburbs of Beirut are emptying out as masses are heading south." These are neighborhoods of mainly Shiite Muslim working class and displaced working farmers with origins in southern Lebanon.

Abd Hamid added, "My car was the first to reach Kfar Hamam. Just moments before reaching the village, the local South Lebanon Army commander surrendered to the only authority around—the mayor. They were immediately handed over to the

Hezbollah resistance fighters who by now were part of our car caravans. Everywhere we could see abandoned armored personnel carriers and tanks of the SLA. Now many of these weapons are in the hands of the Resistance," referring to Hezbollah combatants.

"Within hours the SLA militia, the collaborators, disintegrated before us. As of today, more than 1,000 have surrendered and thousands more fled toward the enemy lines," he said in the May 24 interview.

"As we entered, the residents of the village greeted us with showers of flowers and rice. The euphoric party has been going on for 48 hours now in all the villages and streets. You see people dancing the *dabke* [a Lebanese folk dance] everywhere. People have made it right up to the Israeli border fences and started the enemy troops down. The Israeli occupation ended in humiliation, and we owe this victory in large part to the efforts of the Resistance."

One high point was the liberation of the Khiam Prison from the hands of the SLA. Five hundred villagers stormed the prison and released 144 prisoners while the SLA

forces fled. These were all prisoners held for their activities against the Israeli occupation.

"The village right next to ours is Rachaya Fukhar," Abd Hamid continued. "This is a Christian village. Today a caravan of 15 carloads from there came to our village, which is Muslim, to celebrate the liberation together. We will not allow the Zionists to divide us along sectarian lines."

Reaction by Israel soldiers

As Israeli soldiers poured back across the border, a number of them expressed their opposition to the long occupation of Lebanon. The May 25 *International Herald Tribune* reports one soldier commenting, "We have nothing to do over there. It is better for them to be there and for us to be here." Another stated, "You can't win a guerrilla war." Yet another soldier said he felt "sadness because we surrendered, in a way, and happiness because maybe soldiers will stop getting killed."

In a threat of further aggression, Israeli prime minister Barak declared that his regime would consider attacks on Israel by

Lebanese fighters as an act of war by the governments of Lebanon and Syria.

Meanwhile, Washington and Paris are seeking to contain their political losses by pushing for an intervention force in southern Lebanon under the United Nations banner. There are currently 4,500 UN troops in Lebanon north of the newly liberated zone. With U.S. and French backing, UN secretary general Kofi Annan is proposing to beef up the force to 8,000 troops and deploy them in the south. Paris, the former colonial ruler of Lebanon, would play a major role in the deployment.

Meanwhile, protests by Palestinians against the Israeli occupation of their land have picked up again. Starting in mid-May, thousands of Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip engaged in sustained mass protests.

The central demand was for the immediate release of 1,650 Palestinian political prisoners. In the course of the demonstrations, Israeli troops killed four and wounded hundreds. At one point Israeli soldiers exchanged fire with infuriated Palestinian Authority police.

Lebanese in Detroit celebrate Israeli pullout

BY JOHN SARGE

DEARBORN, Michigan—"We did enough protests. Now it is time to celebrate," Ali Jawad told the press as reports from southern Lebanon confirmed the final pullout of the Israeli army from the area and the collapse of its puppet force, the South Lebanon Army (SLA).

He was speaking May 24 outside the Lebanese-American Heritage Club here, with Lebanese music blasting over loudspeakers as 2,000 people celebrated with traditional dance and food, many wearing T-shirts with the Lebanese flag and words in Arabic declaring, "This is the wedding of the independent Lebanon."

The celebration began the night before as news spread of the collapse of the Israeli occupation. Thousands of people, mainly Lebanese, but joined by neighbors, Arab and non-Arab alike, poured into the streets, waving Lebanese flags and banners of Hezbollah, the main Lebanese organization that fought the Israeli army and SLA forces. Many decorated their cars with flags and signs and drove around with horns blaring.

Thousands gathered again May 25 at the Bint Jbail Cultural Center, which is named for a town in southern Lebanon.

This suburban Detroit city is the center of the Lebanese population, estimated at 60,000 in the metropolitan area. Thousands of refugees from Israeli aggression have immigrated here since 1978.

Celebrations and other events are planned for the coming days and weeks in response to the new situation in Lebanon. Some businesspeople and religious figures in the area have launched fund-raising for the reconstruction of southern Lebanon, much of which has been destroyed under the Israeli occupation, and the resettlement of refugees still in Lebanon.

The mood of many on the street was captured by an auto assembly worker and United Auto Workers member, Ali, who asked that his last name not be used because he had missed work to take part in the events. "I danced so much last night that I could barely move this morning, but I had to come back because my brothers and sisters in Lebanon proved that anyone, even Israel, can be beaten. And that is worth celebrating."



Militant/John Sarge
Community gathers May 24 outside Lebanese-American Heritage Club in Dearborn, Michigan, to celebrate Israeli troops ending occupation of southern Lebanon.

Co-workers protest cop killing of Black man in Maryland

BY SAM MANUEL

LARGO, Maryland—"These kinds of killings by the county cops have got to stop," declared Vernon Jones, a campus facility worker at Prince George's Community College. The previous day some 50 co-workers, students, and others participated in a march and candlelight vigil to protest the death of Clarence Stewart, 52, while in the custody of the cops.

"We had to do something to keep this in the public view," Jones explained. "The five officers have been put on administrative leave, which is nothing but a paid vacation. They hope with time this will be forgotten." The cops are white; Stewart was Black.

"We had to stand up because this could have been one of any of our family members," added campus worker Geraldine Oliver. "We worked with the students on this and the unity we showed was very positive," said Jones.

According to press reports, Stewart had a verbal altercation May 19 with a manager of a Giant Food supermarket while shopping at another store. The store's security guard called the cops and told Stewart to leave.

According to a witness, Shawn Reeves, the cops located Stewart shopping at a third store. Reeves told the *Bowie Star* that the cops demanded Stewart return to the store and apologize for the altercation. They grabbed, shoved, and threatened Stewart. Once in the store where the argument had taken place, he was taken to a "security" room, where the cops alleged he spat on them and hit one cop in the face.

The cops say Stewart collapsed into un-

consciousness after they "subdued" him. But a worker in the store said Stewart lay handcuffed on the floor for at least half an hour bleeding profusely from his head.

The cops here are under investigation by the FBI for eight other incidents where people have died in their custody, including Elmer Newman, whose September death has been ruled a homicide.

Flanked by local leaders of the NAACP, the Hispanic Resource Center, and the Nation of Islam, county police chief John Farrell attempted to defuse the incidents.

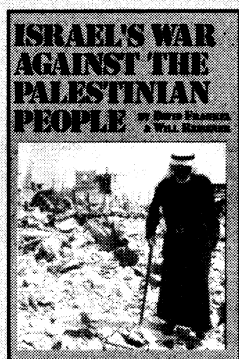
He reported on "alternative" methods developed to subdue individuals, such as pepper spray and canvas wraps. Farrell said 57 cops have been forced out largely through early retirement or resignations. Of those, nearly half were found to have lied under oath.

In April, two federal juries found cops violated Freddie McCollum's civil rights after three police officers beat him severely during a traffic stop in 1997. McCollum was awarded \$4 million. Salvadoran immigrant Nelson Robles won \$650,000 in damages after Prince George's County cops handcuffed him to a pole and left him there to await pickup by Montgomery County cops.

"We're waiting on the results of the autopsy. But we won't forget Clarence," concluded Vernon Jones.

Sam Manuel is the Socialist Workers candidate for delegate to the House of Representatives in Washington, D.C. He is a rail worker and a member of the United Transportation Union.

Further reading



Israel's War against the Palestinian People

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YS reaches out to striking coal miners

The Young Socialists is an international organization of young workers, students, and other youth fighting for socialism. For more information about the Young Socialists write to P.O. Box 33 Times Square Post Office, New York, NY 10108, or call (646) 263-8974, or send an e-mail to: young_socialists@hotmail.com

BY LOUIS TURNER

TUCSON, Arizona—Hours after miners struck Pittsburg and Midway Coal Co. (P&M) on the Navajo nation near Gallup, New Mexico, a team of Young Socialists and socialist workers were standing side by side with the pickets who are demanding a contract that does not gut health benefits and overtime pay.

This was a highlight of the team's work over the past week, which included meeting with tomato workers fighting to unionize in Willcox, Arizona, and selling the *Militant* and Pathfinder books on the campus of the University of Arizona, at community tables, door-to-door in working-class neighborhoods, and to Arizona miners getting off work at the Asarco copper mine in Sahuarita and at a coal mine in Kayenta, also on the Navajo Nation.

The miners at P&M, members of United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) Local 1332, called an extended picket for 6:00 a.m. in Window Rock, New Mexico, after walking out at 12:01 a.m. on May 15.

A team of socialists, who came from California, Arizona, and Wyoming, joined the 50 miners who were out on the highway holding up homemade UMWA signs that expressed their displeasure with the contract.

Over the course of the morning, the picket line swelled to more than 200 miners, family members, and supporters at three different locations.

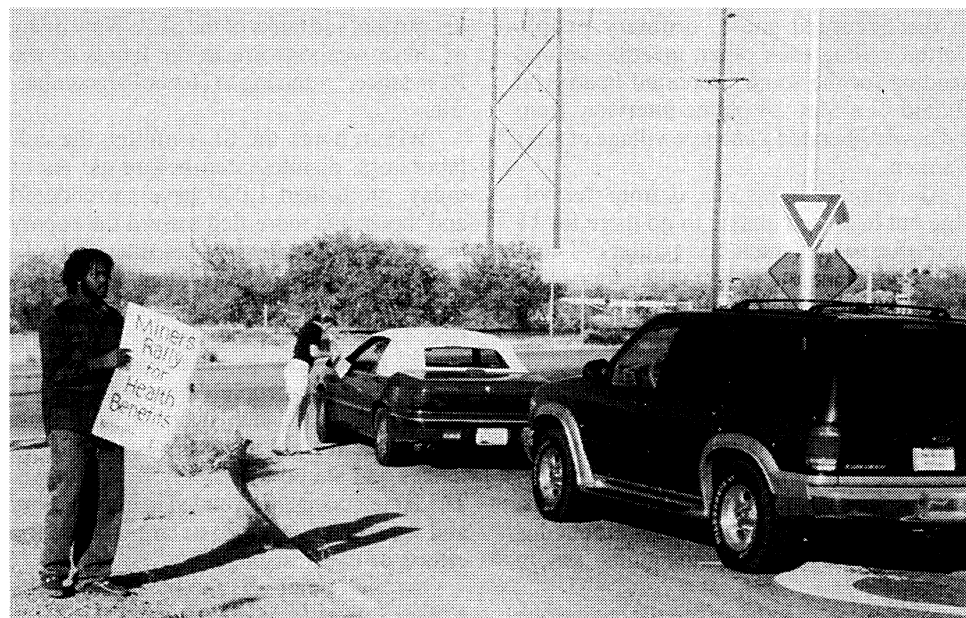
Many were three-time strike veterans and knew how to keep warm on a cold morning picket, standing on either side of a highway near roaring bonfires. The majority of the cars honked in support of the miners as they passed on the highway.

This reporter moved from group to group, stopping to talk to some veteran fighters and telling them of the copper mine that we visited earlier in the week, which is on a Native American reservation in Tucson, and of the fighting tomato workers in Willcox and their struggle to become union members. The miners were pleased to hear the news of other fighters demanding their rights from the bosses. As we exchanged stories they saw similarities between themselves and the tomato workers.

Following the picket line, this reporter and Patricia Gutiérrez, a member of the Young Socialists at the University of California at Santa Cruz, headed to a nearby coal mine in Kayenta, Arizona.

Gutiérrez spoke to miners getting off work for the day and showed them the *Militant*. We also set up a Pathfinder literature table at a busy convenience store. By the end of the trip Kayenta miners had bought 30 copies of the paper.

As we were leaving, a high school student who is the son of a Kayenta miner approached the socialist literature table wondering what all of our books were about. He stayed at the table and discussed politics for an hour and a half, and asked to keep



Militant/Carole Lesnick

Young Socialists sell *Militant* to coal miners in New Mexico

in contact with the Young Socialists.

The following day, supporters of the socialist press went door-to-door in a working-class neighborhood in Tucson and sold a subscription to the *Militant* and a special issue of *Perspectiva Mundial* with a lead article on "INS assault in Miami: blow to the working class."

We then set up a literature table in a local shopping plaza. We sold all but two of our

Militants and met a young man whose father is one of the striking miners near Window Rock. He stayed at the table for an hour to discuss a wide range of political topics, bought two copies of the *Militant*, and signed up to stay in contact with the Young Socialists.

Louis Turner is a member of the Young Socialists in Tucson.

Socialist campaign supporters press fund drive in final week

BY GREG McCARTAN

The Socialist Workers 2000 Campaign Fund is gaining momentum, and supporters of the campaign are working hard to meet their goals by June 4. A number of public meetings featuring socialist workers running for office are scheduled that weekend, and will be a focus for the fund-raising

activities.

Plans are under way for the petitioning drives to place the Socialist Workers candidates for U.S. president and vice president on the ballot in more than a dozen states. In late June the campaign will be launched at a public meeting in New York, kicking off an intensive effort across the United States to present a socialist alternative to the parties of the super-wealthy minority.

The first petition drives will be in New Jersey, Iowa, Washington State, and Rhode Island, followed by New York and Washington, D.C. For the first time ever, the socialist campaign has an opportunity to get on the ballot in Florida, due to a change in the ballot requirements in the state. Socialist workers are starting to sign up electors for the party's candidates there to take advantage of the greater openings this will provide to gain a hearing for the socialist program and perspectives.

Successful Miami event

Rachele Fruit from Miami reports that a May 26 meeting in that city raised \$1,200 for the national Campaign Fund and participants in the event pledged another \$650. Four socialist candidates for public office in the state spoke at the meeting.

With each week, new struggles of working people pop up across the United States—from mine workers' rallies and strikes to actions by locked-out Steelworkers at Kaiser, from the recent delegation of fighting farmers to Cuba to demonstrations demanding the U.S. Navy get out of Vieques, Puerto Rico.

The response to the *Militant* by working people involved in these struggles indicates the interest there is in learning about other battles. There is openness to considering a socialist explanation of the capitalist crisis and why workers and farmers need to mount a revolutionary struggle to establish a government of their own, opening the road to constructing a socialist society. Socialists have launched election campaigns in Michigan, Texas, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Florida, and Ohio, with more to come over the next several weeks.

In the home stretch on the fund drive, supporters in three cities have raised their goals: San Francisco, Washington, D.C., and Charlotte, North Carolina. Every reader of the *Militant* is encouraged to send a contribution to: Socialist Workers Campaign, P.O. Box 14239, St. Paul, MN 55114.

BY SCOTT BREEN

SEATTLE—"We are calling for mass picketing of Valley Manufactured Housing in Sunnyside," Rogelio Montes told the audience at a Militant Labor Forum here. The pickets, planned for June 2 and June 5, are in response to a decertification election called by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) for June 6.

One hundred thirty members of Local 2739 of the Western Council of Industrial Workers, an affiliate of the carpenters union, have been on strike since August 1999 for better wages and against forced overtime and increased medical premiums.

The NLRB called the election just three weeks after receiving a petition April 24 signed by a scab named Tony Cavazos. The petition alleges that a "substantial number of employees assert that the certified or currently recognized bargaining representative is no longer their representative."

According to the NLRB order, both the 130 strikers and nearly 200 replacement workers will be eligible to vote. Voting will be held within Valley Manufactured Housing's (VMH) production facility in Sunnyside, Washington, and an outside location.

A majority "no" vote would end union representation at VMH and cripple the strike. It would also encourage other employers to attack the few unions that do exist in the Yakima Valley and deal a blow to the union organizing drives going on among farm workers and packinghouse workers. Strikers are appealing to new hires to vote for a union, leafleting workers crossing the picket line and visiting them at home to explain why they should support the union.

Since the strike began, the company has refused to negotiate with the union and im-

mediately hired replacement workers. The last negotiating session, held April 11, lasted five minutes. The bosses claim they have nothing new to offer. Company attorney Ryan Edgley told the *Yakima Herald-Republic*, "For the type of workers we have, we're offering a reasonable proposal."

The vast majority of the workers—both strikers and replacements—are immigrants from Mexico. The bosses original and unchanged offer would keep starting wages at \$6.65 an hour with a top wage of only \$8.50. Out-of-pocket medical expenses would be increased to about \$150 per month.

According to union members, the company orchestrated the petition and decertification campaign by pressuring replacement workers with threats of layoffs and firings if they didn't decertify the union.

Workers have been picketing daily. Strikers also organized a large march and rally in Sunnyside April 8 joined by 100 locked-out Steelworkers from Kaiser Aluminum in Spokane.

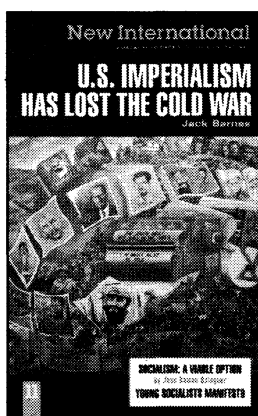
Strikers have questioned the quality of the manufactured homes built by scabs, leafleting VMH outlets in Yakima, the Tri-Cities, and Spokane. The union has asked the Washington State Labor Council to put VMH on its "Unfair/Do Not Patronize" list.

Strikers have participated in the planning of the June 4 march and rally in nearby Pasco called by the United Farm Workers union. This action demands higher wages for farm workers and a new amnesty law for undocumented workers, who make up a sizable portion of the 40,000 farm workers and 15,000 packinghouse workers during the harvest season in central Washington State. Strikers plan to urge those participating in the march to bolster their picket lines in Sunnyside the next morning.

Socialist Workers 2000 National Campaign \$80,000 Fund

City	Goal	Paid	%
Allentown	1,000	925	93%
Des Moines	1,200	1,095	91%
Boston	3,750	3,206	85%
Washington	3,800	3,242	85%
Los Angeles	6,000	4,480	75%
Seattle	6,000	4,100	68%
Twin Cities	5,000	3,400	68%
Philadelphia	3,000	2,025	68%
Houston	5,000	3,325	67%
St. Louis	1,300	840	65%
Chippewa Falls	500	300	60%
Charlotte*	1,850	1,035	56%
Newark	4,000	2,221	56%
Chicago	7,000	3,875	55%
San Francisco	7,300	3,925	54%
Detroit	3,000	1,550	52%
Cape Girardeau	565	290	51%
Pittsburgh	3,000	1,500	50%
Birmingham	3,500	1,530	44%
Atlanta	3,100	1,250	40%
Cleveland	2,250	740	33%
Miami	2,500	645	26%
Upper Manhattan N.Y. Garment District	2,000	375	19%
Brooklyn	4,000	700	18%
Fort Collins	2,800	370	13%
Fresno	250		
Other	300		
Total	\$83,965	\$47,234	56%
Goal	80,000		
*raised goal			

U. S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War by Jack Barnes



Communist Strategy of Party Building Today by Mary-Alice Waters. Two programmatic documents of the Socialist Workers Party. \$14.00 In *New International* no. 11

The Eastern Airlines Strike

Accomplishments of the Rank-and-File Machinists and Gains for the Labor Movement
Ernie Mailhot, Judy Stranahan, and Jack Barnes

The story of the 686-day strike in which rank-and-file resistance by Machinists prevented Eastern's union-busting onslaught from becoming the road to a profitable nonunion airline. \$9.95

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Sales drive goes over the top!

Continued from front page

enforce its promise to provide lifetime health care for retired miners and their dependents. "We sold eight *Militant* subs at that event and one copy of *New International*," wrote Janice Lynn from Washington. "We sold another sub at a *Militant* Labor Forum that reported on the miners' rally and on the social movement developing in the coalfields."

Lynn said that during the final week of the subscription drive the campaigners in Washington raised their *Militant* goal and pushed to help the international campaign. They set up several literature tables in working-class neighborhoods where they sold four *PM* subscriptions and five copies of *New International*. "We sold three more subscriptions on the job to unionists who work at United Airlines and Amtrak," she added. "We also joined other activists in the circulation drive going door-to-door in coal mining areas outside of Pittsburgh."

Militant campaigners organized daily teams in New York the past two weeks, winning new readers among unionists, students, Puerto Rican activists, and young people interested in socialism.

One hot spot was in the Garment District, where socialist workers and Young Socialists members set up a street table nearly every day. Thousands of garment workers—going into work, getting off work, and pushing carts and racks during work—fill the streets much of the week.

The presence of a regular team at the same street corner meant garment workers and unionists passing by could talk to and get to know the socialists, as well as being able to return to purchase a book or subscription later on.

One young garment worker said he was interested in subscribing to *Perspectiva Mundial*, but reported he had just been laid off by the boss for a month. The worker had joined the May 1 march to defend immigrant rights in New York, and wanted to learn more about working-class politics in the United States. He gave his name to the team and asked that they let him know about activities they are getting involved in.

On Memorial Day weekend Sunday, teams sold 18 subscriptions to the *Militant*. *Militant* sales teams have met farmers

who have been organizing actions to fight against foreclosures and racial discrimination by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Some of these participated in the recent congress of the National Association of Small Farmers of Cuba. They will be speaking on their experiences and reaching out to more farmers who are becoming active in the struggle to defend their land. Campaigners for the *Militant* sold a total of 26 subscriptions to farmers during the circulation drive. This includes a dairy farmer in Australia involved in a meeting to protest the deregulation of milk prices.

The sales campaign was an international effort to reach out to workers and farmers and youth. Joanne Kuniansky from Sydney, Australia, wrote, "We sold six subscriptions to young people—our highest campus totals ever. Two of the youth we met at protests and other activities organized by Australia Aid to Ireland, three at Sydney University, and one at a protest against a new nuclear reactor planned for construction in a Sydney suburb." Kuniansky said they also sold a subscription to two Aboriginal rights fighters who "we met at Survival Day when we visited them on one of our regional trips." A May 28 march for Aboriginal rights attracted more than 200,000 people in Sydney.

The report below is one example of how supporters of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* succeeded in broadening the base of new readers.

BY ELLIE GARCIA

ST. LOUIS—In the last week of the sales drive here we organized to get out to workers and youth in the city and in the Illinois coalfields with the two previous issues of the *Militant*, which featured coal miners standing up to the coal bosses and their government. We took advantage of having Friday off as part of the Memorial Day weekend and went to Sparta, Illinois, to sell to coal miners changing shifts at the Zeigler mine.

Socialist candidate condemns attack on campaign office

BY LESTER DOLPHY

DETROIT—"The vandalism of my campaign headquarters is clearly a political attack designed to intimidate and silence me and supporters of the Socialist Workers campaign," said John Sarge opening a May 30 news conference. Sarge is the Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress in the 15th District.

He was responding to the shattering of the storefront window in the Socialist Workers campaign office and Pathfinder Bookstore during the early morning hours of May 29. The vandalism was discovered when campaign supporters arrived to plan activities for the Memorial Day holiday. Damage was estimated at more than \$500.

Just two days before the attack, Sarge was part of a *Militant* Labor Forum panel there, featuring opponents of police brutality. The forum, titled "Stop the killer cops! What's behind the revelations about the Detroit police," took up recent disclosures about killings and violence by city cops.

The panelists included Arnetta Grable, whose son was killed by a Detroit cop three years ago, in a case against the cops that recently opened in court; and Abayomi Azikiwe, an organizer supporting the fight to stop the execution of Mumia Abu-Jamal and abolish the death penalty.

Sarge, an auto worker, explained that the attack "was directed at other fighters against police brutality as well." Grable and Azikiwe both reported that activists opposing police brutality "have faced harassment in Detroit."

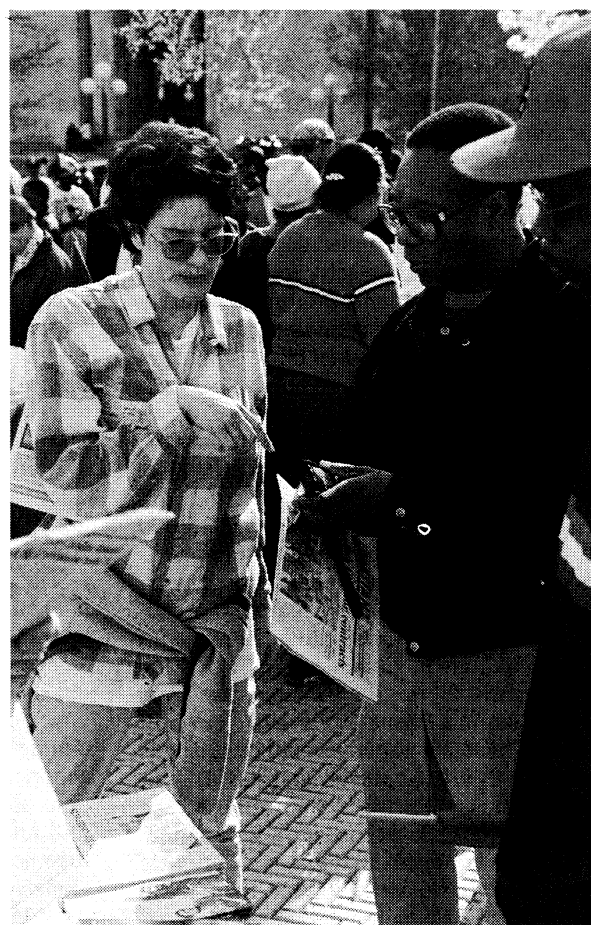
"My campaign," Sarge told reporters, "will continue to speak out against police brutality and the death penalty, and support the struggles and resistance of working people today."

Attending the news conference were reporters from the *Michigan Citizen*, one of the city's major Black newspapers, and WHPR radio, which plans to broadcast excerpts of Sarge's comments.

Four miners stopped to buy the *Militant* and two of them bought one copy of each issue. Afterwards we sold at two shopping centers, one in Sparta and the other in Belleville, where we sold six more. On Sunday two of us returned to the Sparta shopping center and sold seven more copies of the *Militant* and one of *Perspectiva Mundial*. Another member of the team went to Taylorville, Illinois, where coal miners had heard that a nonunion mine could open up and held a demonstration there. He participated in the event and sold two copies of the paper.

Most people who bought the *Militant* were not miners but had fathers, uncles, and grandfathers who had worked in the mines. All said that those particular mines had closed. One 19-year-old, who came from a coal mining family and who is now a steelworker, liked the coverage of the coal miners strike in New Mexico. He pointed to the UMWA's fighting legacy and said that even though the coal companies had shut the mines down in the area "to get rid of the union," he thought the union would be back.

On Saturday we set up a table at the farmers market where hundreds of working people come to shop. We sold two subscriptions, including one to a truck driver who is a member of the Teamsters union. The picture of striking miners on the front page stopped him in his tracks. He signed up for



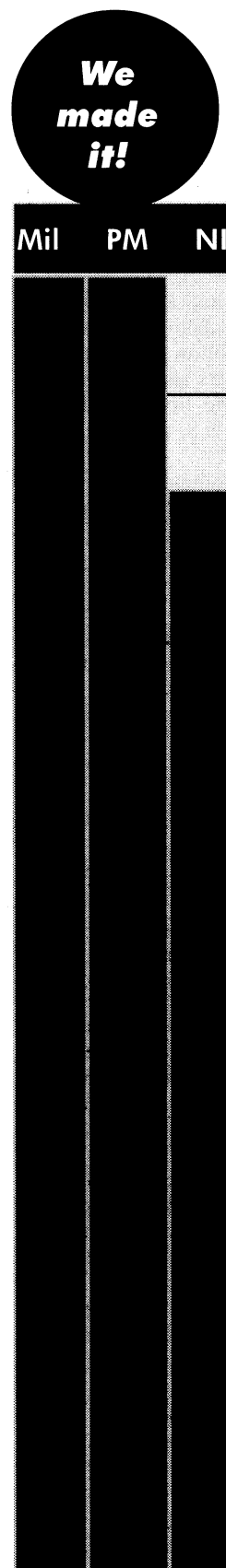
Militant/Brian Taylor
Campaigning with the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and Pathfinder books at April protest against police brutality in Brooklyn, New York.

a subscription right away, saying he supported anyone who was fighting. The second subscription was purchased by a student who we met a few weeks earlier at Washington University. He picked up a copy of the *Militant* at that time and told us he had been thinking of subscribing to the paper.

Militant/PM Subscription Drive in the Unions

	Militant		PM		NI	
	Goal/Sold	%	Goal/Sold	%	Goal/Sold	%
N.Z.						
EPMU	2 4	200%				
MWU	1					
N.Z. total	2 5	250%				
U.S.						
IAM	45 41	91%	10 8		20 8	
USWA	40 33	83%	3 2		16 3	
UFCW	35 27	77%	20 20		15 10	
UTU	32 23	72%	3 4		10 4	
UAW	17 11	65%	3 5		9 6	
UNITE	35 13	37%	25 20		16 5	
Total	204 148	73%	64 59		86 36	
Australia						
MUA	3 2	67%			1	
TCFUA	2	0%			1	
Total	5 2	40%			2	
UK						
TGWU	10 5	50%			3 2	
RMT	7 1	14%	2		5	
AEU	8	0%				
Total	17 6	35%	2		8	
Canada						
UFCW	3 2	67%	1 1		4 1	
UNITE	4	0%	2 1		2	
Total	7 2	29%	3 2		6 1	

AEU—Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Workers Union; EPMU—Engineering, Printing and Manufacturing Workers Union; IAM—International Association of Machinists; MUA—Maritime Union of Australia; MWU—Meat Workers Union; RMT—National Union of Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers; TCFUA—Textile, Clothing, and Footwear Union of Australia; TGWU—Transport and General Workers Union; UAW—United Auto Workers; UFCW—United Food and Commercial Workers; UNITE—Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees; USWA—United Steelworkers of America; UTU—United Transportation Union



Militant/PM Subscription Drive March 25–May 28									
	Militant			PM			NI		
Sweden	12	14	117%	4	3	6	8		
Australia	12	14	117%	1	0	5	2		
New Zealand									
Christchurch	12	13	108%	1	0	3	5		
Auckland	20	21	105%	1	1	3	4		
N.Z. total	32	34	106%	2	1	6	9		
France	4	4	100%	4	1	20	18		
United States									
Cleveland*	35	40	114%	8	8	5	5		
Des Moines	30	34	113%	15	15	10	7		
St. Louis	15	17	113%	5	5	10	8		
Charlotte	10	11	110%	3	2	5	2		
Houston	35	37	106%	15	15	12	7		
Los Angeles*	60	63	105%	40	41	30	30		
Chicago*	44	46	105%	16	17	17	19		
Chippewa Falls*	25	26	104%	18	20	10	10		
Pittsburgh	25	26	104%	2	2	8			
Atlanta*	34	35	103%	10	15	12	14		
Boston	35	36	103%	10	12	15	21		
Philadelphia	35	36	103%	10	10	15	11		
Washington*	37	38	103%	10	11	15	15		
Birmingham	45	46	102%	5	5	15	16		
Allentown	25	25	100%	2	1	5			
Miami	40	40	100%	15	15	20	22		
Newark*	70	70	100%	25	29	25	21		
N.Y. Garment Dist	60	60	100%	20	26	20	23		
San Francisco	50	50	100%	20	11	25	10		
Seattle*	40	40	100%	12	12	12	2		
Twin Cities	35	35	100%	8	13	10	4		
Upper Manhattan	55	55	100%	20	24	20	10		
Cape Girardeau	12	11	92%	4	1	4			
Fort Collins	12	11	92%	1	1	4	1		
Fresno	12	8	67%	8	9	6	3		
Detroit	45	27	60%	8	2	15	6		
Tucson	5	3	60%	2	1	2	2		
Brooklyn	55	31	56%	10	11	25	10		
Other		1							
U.S. total	981	957	98%	322	334	372	279		
Canada									
Toronto	25	26	104%	6	6	20	20		
Vancouver	25	16	64%	5	5	12	12		
Montreal	16	7	44%	6	1	15	7		
Canada total	66	49	74%	17	12	47	39		
Iceland	5	3	60%	1		5	2		
United Kingdom									
London	40	22	55%	8	6	20	17		
Manchester	24	4	17%	2	1	12	3		
UK total	64	26	41%	10	7	32	20		
Int'l totals	1176	1102	100%	361	358	493	377		
Goal/Should be	1100	1100	100%	300	300	450	450		
*raised goal									

Haitians in Miami: 'Halt the deportations!'

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

MIAMI—"What do we want? Equal treatment! When do we want it? Now!" chanted hundreds of people marching toward the Immigration and Naturalization building here May 19. The protesters, mostly Haitian, demanded the U.S. government stop deportation proceedings against thousands of Haitian immigrants. Nearly 500 people rallied at the end of the march.

"Clinton promised in 1998 we would get our status adjusted and be able to get residency papers," said Detrie Gustave, a bus driver originally from Haiti. "But now the INS is moving to deport Haitians who have children born in this country."

The case includes an estimated 5,000 U.S.-born children of Haitian immigrants whose parents may be deported under current government policy because U.S. authorities have refused to provide them with proper documentation.

Margorie Pierre, for example, has lived in the United States since 1987 but still doesn't have her papers even though she is married to a U.S. citizen and has a U.S.-born son who is a high school student. She is among those threatened with deportation. "What am I going to do if they send my wife to Haiti?" said Gorvy Pierre at the rally in front of the INS building. "What the government is doing is unjust."

Florida initiative against affirmative action is dropped

BY MIKE ITALIE

MIAMI—Supporters of affirmative action scored a victory May 8 when businessman Ward Connerly called off his petition campaign to put an anti-affirmative action measure on the Florida ballot. His group, the Florida Civil Rights Initiative, was sponsoring four amendments to the Florida state constitution aiming to abolish affirmative action in public education, government contracting, and employment.

Connerly and his allies have spearheaded similar drives that eventually won majority votes in California and Washington State.

The retreat by these forces came after protests across Florida defending affirmative action programs—actions that involved tens of thousands. The demonstrations were organized by civil rights organizations, unions, and other groups, and targeted Gov. John Ellis Bush's "One Florida" initiative. Some 4,000 turned out at a February 3 hearing in Miami, 2,000 students marched February 8 in Tallahassee, and a March 7 statewide march drew thousands of unionists, farmers, students and others in Tallahassee.

Bush issued this executive order in November 1999, with the goal of eliminating affirmative action in public college admissions and state contracts.

The move by Connerly's group came only days after the state legislature passed portions of the governor's anti-affirmative action plan. In the wake of the public protests, Bush had scaled back some parts of his original proposal, and spokesman Justin Sayfie expressed the governor's satisfaction that Connerly's "initiative is not going to be on the ballot because he [Bush] believed it would be divisive for the state." Connerly in turn charged that Bush's plan didn't go nearly far enough in dismantling affirmative action. "It's like a 39-cent hamburger," he said, "Big bun, no pickle, no lettuce, no tomato, teeny-weeny patty."

Connerly called off his campaign claiming a lack of time to collect 500,000 signatures by the August deadline. The Florida Supreme Court heard arguments in March but has not yet ruled on whether the petition was legal. Connerly stated that he and his allies will try another petition drive in 2002.

The action was called by the Haitian American Grassroots Coalition and other Haitian rights organizations. It was co-sponsored by the NAACP; locals of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Workers; and other trade unions, religious groups, and professional associations. It was also supported by a few Democratic Party politicians. Protesters gathered outside the Veye Yo headquarters at 54th St. in northeast Miami and marched 25 blocks up Biscayne Ave. to the INS building.

Marchers held Haitian and U.S. flags. They sang in Creole, "No, no, no. We won't go. If we go, we will come back. Because America belongs to us all."

The majority of motorists driving by honked in support—with African Americans the most enthusiastic—and many pedestrians gave victory signs.

Liberal politicians and others who had gone out of their way to distribute U.S. flags among participants attempted to give the action a similar flavor to earlier demonstrations along U.S. Highway 1 supporting the INS raid on the home of Lázaro González to remove the Cuban boy, six-year-old Elián González. They had little success.

"I don't want this, I want a Haitian flag," said Daniel Mesadieu, a van driver, pointing to the little U.S. flag he had tucked into his back pocket in a typical comment. "Somebody gave me to carry it. But I prefer this," he stated, referring to his handmade sign, which read: "Born here? Born there? Unite to fight the rich, here, there, and everywhere."

Other handmade signs included: "African Americans and Haitians unite for our survival," "Why does America treat its immigrants so bad?" and "Haitians are humans like you."

Many protesters called for the release of dozens of Haitians held at the Krome detention center, some for years, and displayed signs with their names. Iva Mondése, for example, told *Militant* reporters her 22-year-old son has been imprisoned for three months. He was held at Krome and is now in a Louisiana jail. He faces deportation, although he has been in this country since he was three months old.

Several speakers at the rally promoted anti-Cuban prejudices that are pushed by capitalist politicians and the big-business media, lumping all Cuban-Americans as a privileged bloc that follows rightist Cuban émigrés. These speakers also supported the April 22 raid on the home of Lázaro González ordered by U.S. attorney general Janet Reno.

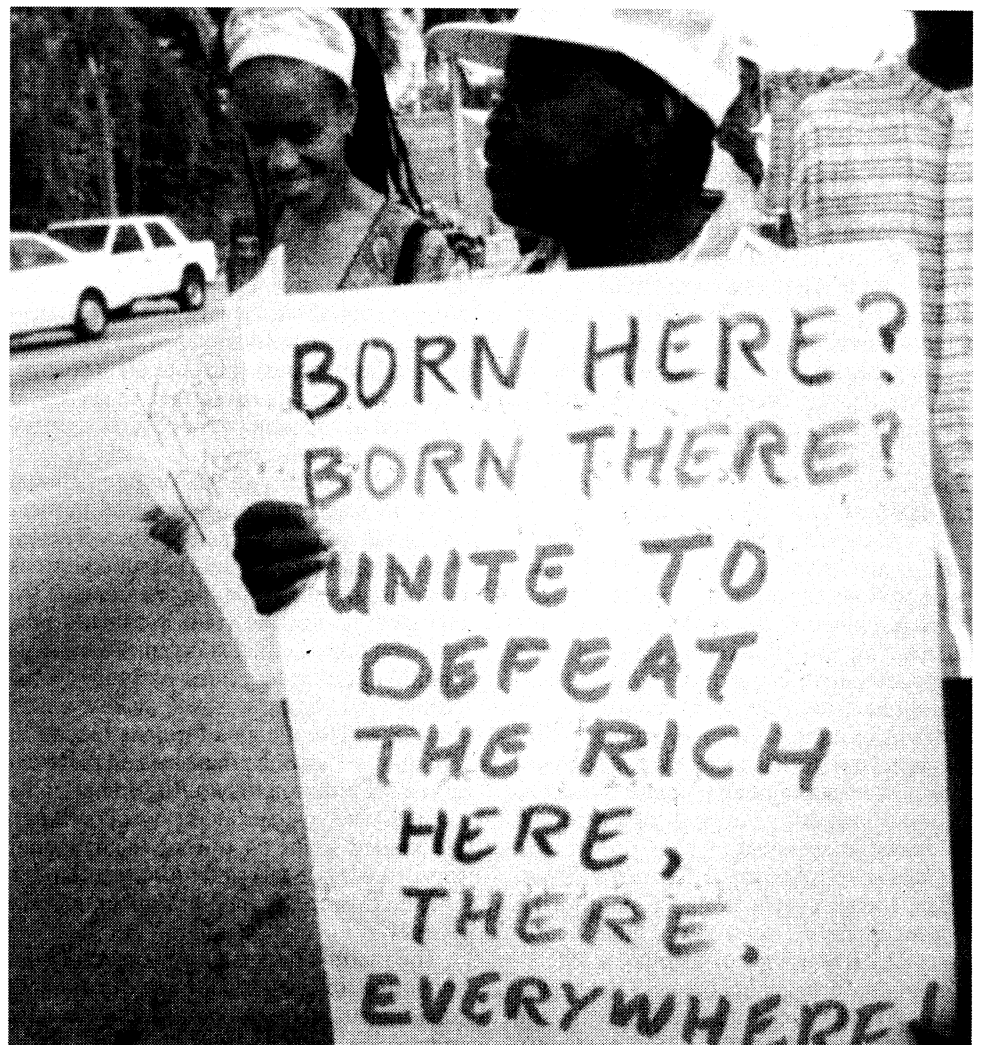
"Politicians in Washington are very concerned about persons fleeing communist countries, especially Cuba," said Cheryl Little, the executive director of the Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center. "Cubans, to their credit, have a lot of political clout. Unfortunately, the color of the Haitians' skin has something to do with the way they have been treated over the years."

North Miami councilman Ossmann Desir asked Reno to treat Haitian children "with the same respect she had accorded Elián González." And Leonie Hermantin, executive director of the Haitian American Foundation, said, "Janet Reno, I applaud you for what you did for Elián. Now do the same for 5,000 Haitian children." Other speakers included representatives of the Rainbow Coalition, Service Employees International Union, and Haitian-American Lawyers Association.

Rolande Girard, Socialist Workers candidate for Miami-Dade County mayor, presented a different view. Addressing the rally, she said her campaign calls for equal rights for all immigrants and opposes these deportations.

She pointed out that the target of opposition should be the anti-immigrant policies of the Clinton administration and Congress, and the capitalist system that generates dog-eat-dog competition among workers. It's the same system, she noted, that keeps Haiti and other countries in Latin America in debt slavery and forces millions to immigrate from economic devastation.

Most Haitians in Miami celebrate the fact that the day Elián González will return home to Cuba, with his family and friends, is approaching, she pointed out. In doing so the April 22 INS raid should be condemned as a dangerous precedent for more attacks on democratic rights.



Militant/Argiris Malapanis

Protesters at May 19 march demand INS halt deportation of thousands of Haitians

Several protesters echoed the anti-Cuban prejudices promoted by some of the rally's sponsors. However, most of those interviewed among the protesters agreed with Girard's call to condemn the April 22 INS raid.

Several spoke favorably of the Cuban revolution. "How can we applaud Janet Reno and the INS after what they've done to our people?" said Detrie Gustave. "We have to remember that the problem is here,

and not in Cuba. These politicians want the Cubans to come on the rafts to show Cuba is bad, a place to flee from. But what have these politicians done for Haiti? Kept it in economic slavery. Cuba, at least, with all its problems, sent us doctors when the last hurricane hit."

Argiris Malapanis is a garment worker in Miami. Rolande Girard, a sewing machine operator, contributed to this article.

Health care and pensions must be extended to entire class for a lifetime

The May 17 rally in Washington by thousands of coal miners and retirees demanding the U.S. government not cut their lifetime health benefits put the spotlight on the need for the labor movement to fight for such an entitlement to be extended to the entire working class. Today, 43 million people in the United States have no health insurance coverage, and 100,000 people lose their cover every month. The percentage of the U.S. population with no health insurance increased to 16 percent in 1999 from 13.6 percent in 1990. Meanwhile, the share of employed workers covered by employer-sponsored health plans has fallen, and more and more workers enrolled in such plans are being forced to pay an increasing portion of the costs of these benefits. The proportion of workers required to make contributions toward health benefits for single coverage rose from 51 percent in 1991 to 69 percent in 1997, and for family coverage from 69 percent to 80 percent.

Printed below is an excerpt from a report, which takes up this social question, entitled "Leading the party into industry," approved by the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party in February 1978. The entire talk can be found in *The Changing Face of U.S. Politics: Working-Class Politics and the Unions*. Copyright © 1994 Pathfinder press; reprinted by permission.

BY JACK BARNES

When we talk about the social and political responsibilities of labor we explain the need to combat the ruling-class policy of imposing on the individual family the responsibility for social services that should be taken care of by society—the care of the young, the elderly, the sick and disabled. But that's not the only way capitalism works. The employers also try to impose upon the individual workers responsibilities that should be met by society. And more and more they try to establish that these responsibilities will be met only according to the profitability of each worker's own boss. I

leave aside the most grotesque single examples such as the public-employee unions' officials sinking massive amounts of pension funds into city bonds in New York City. But more and more so-called general fringe benefits—pensions, health-care plans, supplemental unemployment benefits—all become contingent on the continuing profits of the boss you work for. We see this growing in industries like coal, steel, and auto.

These benefits are not won for the class as a whole, or even a section of the class.

FROM 'CHANGING FACE OF U.S. POLITICS'

It's almost like a march back toward feudalism, not a march forward toward socialism. These fringes are good in good times—for workers who have them—because they're a substantial addition to everything else industrial workers can count on. But when the squeeze comes on, this all begins to fall apart. Your pension funds are threatened. Your health-care plans are dismantled. The supplemental unemployment benefits run out. And the squeeze is on.

This is the payoff when the debt of business unionism comes due. This is the price paid for the class-collaborationist policy of refusing to fight for the real needs of the class—the social security of the class, national health care, for national unemployment insurance that's real and high enough, for a shorter workweek at no cut in pay, for protection against inflation, and for independent working-class political action. This is the price paid for a bureaucracy that says independent social and political struggles are secondary, and says the employers' promise in the contract are decisive.

This is the payoff for the refusal of the labor bureaucracy to fight for the broad social needs of the working class and to build a political instrument to fight for them.

Unionists link up in Houston to support Kaiser Steelworkers

BY JACQUIE HENDERSON
AND MICHAEL MARTINEZ

HOUSTON—Steelworkers locked out by Kaiser Aluminum in Washington State, Ohio, and Louisiana gathered here for two days of protest actions May 23-24 against Kaiser's parent company, Maxxam Inc.

"I came here to show support," said Kelsey Simon from Gramercy, Louisiana, who was among the 200 people at the protests. Simon and about 35 of his co-workers locked out of the Gramercy Kaiser plant rented a bus to come to the actions. "This is my fight, to the last day."

"The strike is strengthening the union. It has opened the eyes of many workers about the company and the need for the union," said Henry Love, who also came on the bus from Gramercy. "The company has pushed propaganda to weaken us for too long. Since the strike began we are constantly being reminded of their 'good faith' and their 'trust me' slogans that are not about bettering conditions for everyone, but about lining their own pockets."

The workers from five Kaiser plants went on strike in September 1998. They were locked out by the company in January 1999 after offering to return to work. The Steelworkers were joined at the rally here by supporters from Texas, Florida, and Oklahoma, and by environmental activists from California and the Pacific Northwest.

The contract fight is fueled by Kaiser's demands to cut retiree health insurance benefits, weaken seniority, and eliminate hundreds of jobs through contracting out. The lockout affects a total of 2,900 workers.

After 20 months out on the street, the Kaiser workers were in fine fighting form. The activities included a march through the streets of Houston, a rally at Maxxam headquarters, a candlelight protest at the home of Maxxam head Charles Hurwitz, and preparatory meetings for the May 23 stockholder meetings.

Rubber workers back action

A highlight of the day was the arrival of a bus full of workers from the Michelin tire plant in Ardmore, Oklahoma.

Involved in an organizing drive there, the workers were told by their bosses that they shouldn't join the Steelworkers union, citing the example of the locked-out Kaiser workers.

"They published a false document," explained Jim Teague, a union organizer in Ardmore who works at a nearby plant.

Raymond Duffy, a tire builder at the Michelin plant, told how the company's slanders backfired. "The union drive was strengthened and we organized this bus in solidarity," he said. "We're here to help these guys," added Linda Gilliland and Rick Smith, both from Ardmore.

Speaking at the afternoon rally in front of Maxxam headquarters, Jody Viebrock from the Trentwood Kaiser plant in Spokane explained that not only she, but her father, brother, and in-laws worked at the mill. "Why does Hurwitz think the plant is his when we are the ones who work there?" she asked. "In my family alone we have over a hundred years of experience in the plant."

Successful campaign to isolate Kaiser

Linda Ott, one of about three dozen workers from Spokane at the rally, explained how she and Viebrock participated in the successful campaign that led to Daws Manufacturing canceling all Kaiser Aluminum orders. "We organized rallies. We picketed. We worked with the union there," she said. The victory with Daws, the third largest customer for the Trentwood plant, provided a boost for the determination of the locked-out workers.

"Remember its an *illegal* lockout," Ott is quick to point out, referring to the April 26 National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) announcement that it will file unfair labor practice charges against Kaiser. Negotiations, recently broken off by the company, have been restarted again following the NLRB ruling.

On the second day of actions, the Kaiser workers were able to turn the annual stockholders meetings of Maxxam and Kaiser into a forum for their demands. They were joined by environmental activists protesting the actions of Maxxam-owned Pacific Lumber, which has been the target of numerous protests over its clear-cutting of the old-growth redwood forests. Throughout both meetings, the time allotted to questions was virtually monopolized by unionists who pro-



Militant/Jacque Henderson

Locked-out Kaiser Steelworkers were joined at Houston actions by unionists from Texas, Florida, and Oklahoma and by environmental activists.

ceeded to expose the companies' lies.

Several workers from the Gramercy plant dissected the bosses' explanation of how a deadly explosion occurred last July, saying they believed it took place because of the arrogant disregard by the bosses for the experience of union members. Workers from the other plants exposed the company's union-busting campaign that began months prior to the strike. In response, Kaiser CEO John Milchovich admitted that a strikebreaking plan with a detailed budget was in place by mid-1998.

Workers discuss strike impact

Henrietta and Dave Wolfe came from Spokane to participate in the Houston protests. Dave has worked at Kaiser for 29 years. Henrietta estimated that "20 to 25 workers from each of the two Spokane plants," flew to Houston for the actions. "I think more and more workers are becoming distraught at what Hurwitz and Milchovich are doing now, especially when you think back to 1984 when they gave them back \$4 an hour." That year, in response to company threats of bankruptcy, Kaiser workers took a severe wage cut.

"Before the lockout I was unaware of the

environment. Now I wonder about things I took for granted," said James Croghan, who has worked on the hot line at the Trentwood mill for five years.

Clarice and Ron Underhill came to Houston along with two other workers from Kaiser's Tacoma plant. Clarice told the *Militant* that before the strike she had "never been to a protest before. Now we go everywhere. My friends at work ask me, 'Well what's the protest this week, Clarice?'" She said that before the strike she and her husband "never knew anyone from Spokane, let alone workers from all around the country." In some ways, "being on strike has been a good thing. It has opened up windows for us."

Ron Underhill explained, "There we were, secure in our jobs, not really thinking about what was going on around the world. Then suddenly we were out in the cold, filing for unemployment insurance and struggling to make ends meet. You looked around and saw so many other people in the same situation everywhere. It gave us a different view."

Jacque Henderson is a sewing machine operator in Houston. Michael Martinez is a member of the Young Socialists from Miami. Steve Warshell contributed to this article.

Wyoming miners strike for contract

Continued from front page

for the UMWA, told the *Militant*, describing P&M's "final" offer.

"P&M hired an independent consultant named Dave Smith to negotiate both the Kemmerer and McKinley contracts for

them," Wolf said. "Everywhere he goes there are strikes. He was the chief company negotiator at A.T. Massey and at Pittston and we had bitter, long strikes at both those mines," he noted, referring to the strike battles in 1984-85 against A.T. Massey Coal and in 1989-90 against Pittston.

The central takeaway the company wants is a change in the work schedule.

"They want to go to 12-hour shifts seven days per week," Wolf explained. "They want no overtime unless 40 hours are worked during a week, and they want to eliminate the shift differential of 35 cents per hour for second shift and 40 cents per hour for third shift."

"Right now we're scheduled to work three shifts, eight hours a day, 40 hours a week, Monday through Friday, with overtime on Saturday—and we work a lot of Saturdays," Wolf reported.

"The company is offering a 30-cent raise if we agree to their proposal, but that doesn't even make up for the shift differential we lose, much less for the overtime," he pointed out. "They're promising no layoffs, but with this schedule layoffs are inevitable."

"The union was willing to work with the company to come up with a new schedule to make the mine more productive," Wolf said. "We have agreed to different work schedules at a number of other mines, but P&M would not seriously negotiate with us."

Another takeaway demand is that the miners pay for at least a portion of their health-care benefits. Right now Kemmerer miners are covered at 100 percent of all health-care costs.

"At one point P&M said they wanted us to make a 20 percent co-pay on all medical expenses, but they took that off the table," Wolf reported. "The main thing they are after is the 12-hour day."

tion from power plant emissions.

The proposed customer of the new mine, Archer Daniels Midland's power generation plant, is fitted with "scrubbers" that remove harmful emissions from the high-sulfur coal.

Figures from the Illinois State Geological Survey show that 4.7 billion tons of coal lie under the hills of Christian County. Sixteen mines have removed 359 million tons since 1889. The Herrin No. 6 seam, which the proposed mine would tap into, has 3.4 billion tons of coal remaining.

The rally to protest the company's non-union project was held at the courthouse on the central square of the town. Many nearby businesses prominently displayed signs saying, "This establishment supports UMWA members and their families."

In Bill's Toasty Shop, owner Calvin Scallions explained why he gladly posted the sign. "I am a union man. I worked at Allis-Chalmers for 30 years and was a member of the UAW [United Auto Workers]."

The rally was sponsored by UMWA Locals 9819, 2488, 1969, 2802, and 12 in District 12; the Taylorville Trades and Labor Council; and a local of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. The president of UMWA District 12, Joe Angelton, attended the rally, which was covered by local media.

Illinois miners protest plans to open nonunion operation

BY MARIAN RUSSELL

TAYLORVILLE, Illinois—About 70 miners and their supporters rallied in this central Illinois town May 28 to protest plans by Diversified Energy Inc. to open a non-union mine.

Greg Mahan, president of United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) Local 1969 at Freeman United's Crown II mine, set the tone for the rally. "We will fight like hell to organize that facility. Christian County coal will always be union coal," he said.

Company spokespeople have said the mine would not be a union operation. The county board chairman told the Decatur, Illinois, *Herald & Review* he didn't think a coal company using nonunion labor would cause much outcry in the community.

Local 1969 member David Yard said 404 miners have died in Christian County mines. He proposed a memorial be built to them. "We won't forget," he declared.

A company spokesman told the *Herald & Review* he expects the mine will produce up to 3 million tons of coal and employ 500 workers in three to five years. It would be the first large-scale mining operation in Christian County since Peabody's No. 10 mine closed in 1995. Employers shut down many mines in Illinois in the 1990s after the Clean Air Act placed restrictions on pollu-

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Files detail FBI's war on Puerto Rican independence fight

BY BETSEY STONE

CHICAGO—For decades the FBI and other U.S. political police agencies have carried out a systematic campaign of harassment and victimization against fighters for Puerto Rican independence, both in Puerto Rico and the United States. They have also targeted unionists and other political activists in that U.S. colony.

The truth about these crimes by Washington's secret police has come increasingly into the open. These disclosures began in the 1970s with the release of many files from the FBI's infamous Cointelpro (Counterintelligence Program). More facts came out in Puerto Rican Senate hearings on the 1978 Cerro Maravilla case, where two young independence fighters were executed by Puerto Rican cops, with complicity and cover-up efforts by FBI and colonial government officials.

Now, in the midst of sustained demonstrations against the U.S. military in Puerto Rico and a continued campaign for the release of pro-independence political prisoners, FBI director Louis Freeh has released thousands of previously classified documents that further document Washington's war against the independence movement.

On May 24 FBI agents delivered 8,600 pages of these files to the offices of Congressman José Serrano. This was the first installment in an agreement to turn over to Serrano as many as 1.8 million files. Serrano is a supporter of the Clinton administration who has been pleading with the president to avoid antagonizing Puerto Ricans with the renewed Navy bombing of Vieques.

Freeh hinted at what is contained in some of the files when he acknowledged at a Congressional budget hearing in March that the FBI has violated the civil rights of many Puerto Ricans and engaged in "egregious illegal action, maybe criminal action."

According to a New York *Daily News* reporter who looked at the files, this first batch focuses on the FBI's longtime repression of the pro-independence Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico, in particular the party's central leader, Pedro Albizu Campos.

Under his leadership, the Nationalist Party was the foremost pro-independence force in Puerto Rico from 1930 to the 1950s. Albizu spent many years in U.S. prisons because of his intransigent opposition to U.S. colonial rule.

FBI targeted Albizu Campos

The files quote the U.S. District Attorney in Puerto Rico, A. Cecil Snyder, complaining to FBI director J. Edgar Hoover that Albizu Campos was publishing "articles insulting the United States" and giving "public speeches in favor of independence." This was in 1936, at a time of massive labor battles and rising popularity of the independence movement.

To justify the persecution of the Nationalist Party, Snyder claimed without evidence that Albizu Campos might be behind several bombings of U.S. government buildings. The FBI sent agents to Puerto Rico to go after the Nationalist Party. That year, he and several top party leaders were framed up, convicted, and locked up in a federal prison in Atlanta on charges of conspiring to overthrow the U.S. government by force and violence. He was sentenced to 15 years.

The files document the fact that the FBI even had the first elected governor of Puerto Rico, Luis Muñoz Marín, under surveillance for more than 20 years. Muñoz Marín, initially an advocate of independence, founded the Popular Democratic Party (PPD), which helped Washington push through the present form of colonial rule, known as commonwealth status.

In the 1960s and '70s, with the resurgence



Militant/Betsy Stone

Independence fighter José Solís at June 1999 press conference before a court hearing. Solís was framed by FBI on "terrorism" charge and is serving 51-month sentence.

of the Puerto Rican struggle, Washington unleashed a dirty war against the independence movement and a wide range of groups and individuals deemed "subversive."

According to the released documents, on June 21, 1961, FBI chief Hoover wrote, "In order to appraise the caliber of leadership in the Puerto Rican independence movement, particularly as it pertains to our efforts to disrupt their activities and compromise their effectiveness, we should have intimate detailed knowledge of the most influential leaders."

The FBI's Cointelpro program launched in the 1960s sought to disrupt struggles against police brutality, the movement against drafting Puerto Ricans into the U.S. army, the fight against the U.S. naval occupation of the Puerto Rican islands of Culebra and Vieques, and union struggles.

Under Cointelpro, the FBI and other police agencies targeted the political activities of millions of people in the United States. It disrupted civil rights organizations, the Chicano struggle, the anti-Vietnam War movement, the Communist Party USA, the Socialist Workers Party, and women's rights organizations, among others. The Puerto

Rico operation was one of the FBI's largest Cointelpro campaigns, with at least 37 separate disruption programs.

Many facts about Cointelpro were revealed through a lawsuit filed in 1973 by the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance against the FBI, CIA, and other cop agencies for spying and harassment. The SWP and YSA won a ruling in their case in 1986.

Cerro Maravilla case

Some of the most damning information about FBI repression in Puerto Rico became public in 1991-92 hearings by the Puerto Rico Senate Judiciary Committee. The hearings investigated the 1978 assassination by Puerto Rican cops of two young independence fighters at Cerro Maravilla and the subsequent cover-up by authorities.

An internal 1978 White House memorandum introduced at the hearings described FBI disruption activities, including attempts to create dissension within the pro-independence movement, mail tampering, and illegally inspecting bank records.

Testimony at the hearings showed that the Cerro Maravilla operation was part of a systematic campaign by U.S. authorities to smear the pro-independence movement as terrorist. Cops reported dozens of terrorist bombings on the island that never occurred, while carrying out bombings themselves that they blamed on pro-independence activists. During the 1978 electrical workers strike, for example, a police agent conducted sabotage against the company that was used to violence-bait the unionists.

Also revealed was the existence of right-wing death squads, including one led by the chief U.S. marshal, José López, and U.S. Navy lieutenant Alex de la Zorda.

The decision by Clinton's FBI today to open up documents on their spying and disruption of the independence movement confirms all the facts that had previously been revealed. Freeh's move is an effort to portray all this as a thing of the past and claim there is a "new" and "clean" FBI. But that is a lie.

One case in point. On March 12, 1999, Puerto Rican independence activist José Solís Jordán was convicted in a U.S. federal court in Chicago on frame-up "terrorism" charges of attempting to blow up a military recruitment facility in Chicago in 1992. He was convicted on the testimony of a string of FBI agents and a paid FBI informer and provocateur, and is now serving a 51-month jail term.

This same FBI provocateur, Rafael Marrero, was the key witness in a witch-hunt against independence activists at Clemente High School in Chicago who were falsely accused of stealing school money to fund the independence movement. Despite an intensive investigation and public hearings by an Illinois Senate committee in 1998-99, misuse of funds was never proven.

Besides Solís, five more independence activists remain in U.S. prisons. An international campaign continues to be waged to free these political prisoners.

In response to the rising national struggle in Puerto Rico, the U.S. government will escalate the use of its political police to try to disrupt and smear the independence movement and other social struggles. Because of increased awareness of FBI crimes, however, Washington will have a harder time gaining public acceptance for its actions.

Veterans demand U.S. Navy leave Vieques

BY RON RICHARDS

SAN JUAN—"This is the last time I will wear this uniform and this medal," said José Soto. He was one of dozens of Puerto Rican veterans of the U.S. military who are mailing their medals and insignia to U.S. president William Clinton as a protest against the January agreement between him and Pedro Rosselló, colonial governor of Puerto Rico, to resume bombing practice by the U.S. Navy on that Puerto Rican island.

"The same ones who awarded us medals want to wipe us out on our own land," said an angry Soto, a resident of Vieques, who took off his jacket, decorated with 10 medals, and stepped on it after he spoke.

Some 150 war veterans and their supporters gathered here May 29—Memorial Day in the United States—at the veterans memorial on the south side of the capitol to

demand the U.S. military stop bombing Vieques. Some wore uniforms, some were in wheelchairs.

The protest was organized by Rubén Lind of Veterans for Peace. Lind, a worker at the Veterans Hospital, was in the 1st Cavalry Division of the U.S. Army in Vietnam in 1970-71. He said his group is planning to organize a delegation in New York's Puerto Rican Parade to call for peace in Vieques.

"We are veterans," said Lind. "We know about bombs. We are Puerto Ricans first, veterans second, and then we are Americans."

The Veterans Monument consists of 20 panels with the names of Puerto Ricans from the island who have died in U.S. wars. The first panel has all the names from the first and second world wars. There are 12 panels with the names from the Korean War and

six from Vietnam. The last panel lists Puerto Rican soldiers killed in Lebanon, Libya, the Persian Gulf, Panama, and Somalia.

"Mr. President," said Antonio Ramos in a open letter to William Clinton that he was passing out, "when I was recruited to serve in the Korean armed conflict I was informed that I would be part of the Allied Forces as representing the U.S. Army. I was informed too that all of us were leaving our countries to defend Western democracy, civil rights and human liberties."

"The same was told to thousands and thousands of Puerto Rican soldiers who offered their lives, their precious blood, and mental and physic health. I am sure that today they regret, as I do, the deceit in light of the tragedy of the Vieques people, which is a tragedy of all Puerto Rico. I ask myself, where has democracy gone? What has happened to our civil rights, our right to live in peace and freedom?"

In front of the Navy base in Vieques, the Puerto Rican government has finished erecting a fence surrounding a police encampment. This was set up after the May 4 raid carried out by hundreds of FBI cops and U.S. marshals who evicted anti-Navy protesters camped by Camp García and on the U.S. bombing range.

Meanwhile, protesters, unfazed by the cop presence, remain stationed on three rented lots on the other side of the road. Every Saturday night a protest is held in front of the entrance to the Navy land. About 150 people, mostly local residents, rallied there May 27. People arrive from the main island every weekend to visit the camp and express their support to the fight.

A week earlier, Robert Rabin, the main organizer of the protests at Camp García, was beaten by cops after his vehicle stalled and was hit by a police car escorting Navy vehicles out of the base. The Committee for the Rescue and Development of Vieques, of which he is a leader, is waging a campaign to protest this attack.

Anticolonial fighters build 'Albizu Vive' contingent in NY Puerto Rican Day Parade

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

NEWYORK—Advocates of independence for Puerto Rico and opponents of the U.S. Navy's use of Vieques for war training are actively building the "Albizu Vive" (Albizu Lives) contingent for the June 11 Puerto Rican Parade, an annual event that this year is expected to draw at least 1 million people.

Several organizations, from the Vieques Support Campaign to Pro-Libertad, which campaigns for the release of Puerto Rican political prisoners, are among the sponsors of the contingent. The upswing in the anticolonial struggle in Puerto Rico has politicized the parade this year, which is officially dedicated to the people of Vieques and to Pedro Albizu Campos, historic leader of the independence movement.

Some 10,000 people from Puerto Rico are planning to participate in the parade, a spokesperson for the parade committee reported. Among these are 400 members of the Hostos National Congress, a pro-independence organization that has chartered a plane to New York.

Also coming from Puerto Rico will be hundreds of residents of Vieques, a large religious delegation, and representatives from 22 trade unions. These include the telephone workers union, the Federation of Teachers, and the Puerto Rican Federation of Workers (CPT).

There will several political events leading up to the Puerto Rican Day Parade. One will be a June 10 forum and benefit for the Vieques struggle featuring Ismael Guadalupe, leader of the Committee for the Rescue and Development of Vieques.

U.S. rulers debate easing Cuba embargo

Continued from front page

Lott's statements reflect a countervailing view that, because of the strengths of the Cuban revolution, ending the embargo is not the way to advance Washington's interests.

Ricardo Alarcón, president of Cuba's National Assembly, said in response to the legislation that the "idea, the motivation, the direction is a very positive one and we would welcome it."

Cuban foreign ministry spokesperson Alejandro González said the legislation is "a step in the right direction. We are watching all of these initiatives. We understand that although they are initiatives aimed in the right direction...we must also not have false expectations," especially for a total lifting of the embargo.

Through its embargo, of which the prohibition on Cuba's acquisition of food and medicine of U.S. origin is one aspect, Washington has sought to economically, financially, and commercially strangle Cuba.

The U.S. government's first trade restrictions against Cuba, including a cut in the amount of sugar purchased by U.S. companies, came in 1959 as Cuba's revolutionary leadership carried out a sweeping land reform and other far-reaching social measures that alarmed the wealthy U.S. rulers.

The trade embargo was enacted in 1960 by U.S. president John Kennedy in response to further mobilizations of Cuban workers and farmers, the nationalization of key industries, and the determination of the Cuban people to stand up to U.S. military threats.

Currency restrictions enforced by the U.S. Treasury Department prohibit U.S. residents from traveling to Cuba to see the country for themselves, violating their right of freedom to travel.

In a tightening of the embargo, the misnamed Cuban Democracy Act of 1992, known as the Torricelli law, made it illegal for foreign subsidiaries of U.S. companies to trade with Cuba. It closed U.S. ports to ships that have made a port of call to Cuba within the previous six months, and authorized the president to apply sanctions against any country that provides aid to Cuba.

The Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (Libertad) Act of 1996, also known as the Helms-Burton bill, was signed into law by President William Clinton. It codified all previous executive orders tightening the embargo. The law allowed Cuban-American and other U.S. businessmen whose property on the island was confiscated to sue companies abroad that invest in those properties.

Nethercutt's arguments about why the embargo should be eased are similar to those made by others in bourgeois circles who advocate a change. "The current agriculture spending bill includes an amendment I wrote that would lift all food and medicine sanctions on Cuba, Iran, Libya, North Korea, and Sudan," he wrote in the *Times* column. "The United States stands alone in prohibiting sales of the most basic humanitarian goods to these countries, leading to \$1 billion in lost economic activity in rural America. Our farmers suffer from lost sales, but these sanctioned countries freely purchase an estimated \$7 billion of agricultural commodities from our allies around the world," he noted, referring to sharpened

trade competition between U.S. capitalists and their imperialist rivals in Europe and Japan.

The congressman argued that "American farmers are the only ones punished" by such sanctions, adding that "denying innocent civilians access to food and medicine" is an "abhorrent foreign policy tool."

As to how lifting aspects of the embargo would advance Washington's long-term goal of crushing the Cuban revolution, Nethercutt says, "Castro has used this scapegoat argument against the United States for years. If we take this argument away from him, we export not only food and medicine but also democracy."

A *Washington Post* article quotes an unnamed White House official stating that while the administration is not "averse to the idea" of curtailing some sanctions, it opposes this legislation because it "interferes with the president's ability to make foreign policy." According to the article, the official said, "Sanctions decisions—either to impose, lift or modify—should reflect a cooperative relationship between the Congress and the president. Sanctions legislation should give the president the flexibility he needs to conduct foreign policy and protect national security."

A number of prominent delegations of U.S. business officials and members of Congress have made highly publicized visits to Cuba over the past few years.

Rep. Charles Stenholm, a Democrat from Texas, led a delegation of farmers to Cuba in April. "Over 90 percent of U.S. farmers and ranchers say that it is time to lift all unilaterally imposed sanctions on food and medicine," he said. Donald Patman, president of the Texas Farm Bureau, said, "Texas farmers and ranchers could easily and profitably supply many of the products both used and needed here in Cuba."

Last November Thomas Donohue, president of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, spoke out against the embargo at the Americas Business Forum held in Toronto leading up to a meeting of trade ministers from the Western Hemisphere. "We are pushing very, very hard to pass the food and medicine exemption," he told the gathering. Donohue traveled to Cuba last summer and met with the Cuban president. According to the *Journal of Commerce*, Donohue "called on private-sector groups to press for an end to the nearly four-decade trade embargo on Cuba." The article added, "Whether it is ports like Miami, Tampa and New Orleans, or express companies, forwarders and logistics providers, business plans are being drawn up for Cuba. Many believe the embargo will be lifted sooner rather than later."

One of the most prominent delegations so far was led by Illinois governor George Ryan. It included the chairman and chief executive of agribusiness giant Archer Daniels Midland Co. and officials from the heavy equipment manufacturer Caterpillar Corp. The *New York Times* backed Ryan's trip against critics, writing in an editorial that the "time is ripe for changing American policy toward Cuba from isolation to democratic engagement. American businesses, like American farmers, see post-Castro Cuba as a potentially lucrative market and do not want to concede it to foreign



Militant/Argiris Malapanis

Workers march in Havana on May Day 1996. Sign reads "Down with Helms-Burton law." U.S. embargo has failed to break Cuban working people and their leadership.

competitors."

An indication of the breakdown of the U.S. government's restrictions on travel to Cuba, except when licensed by the Treasury Department, is that some 200,000 visitors—both legal and illegal—traveled from the United States to Cuba last year, the second-largest number from any one country.

Allowing sales of food and medicine would not result in much increase in exports to Cuba, nearly everyone backing the bill admits. The measure specifies that companies wanting to sell to Cuba would have to obtain yearly licenses to export products and wait six months after the law is enacted to conduct business. Goods are limited to food, medicine, and medical products. There has already been some movement in this direction, with 63 licenses for export of medicine and medical products granted by the Commerce Department last year.

With Cuba facing foreign currency shortages and lacking credits to purchase agricultural products from U.S. businesses, there is little chance much food will be sold to Cuba under the proposed law.

Cuba currently imports wheat from France in a barter arrangement. Last year some 714,000 tons of cereals, about 70 percent of Cuba's flour needs, were imported from France. In return, Cuba sends sugar valued at \$180 million. The barter arrangement has grown steadily each year since it

was started in the early 1990s, according to *Cuba Business*. Cuba's top 10 trading partners, in descending order, are Spain, the Russian Federation, Canada, Venezuela, China, France, Mexico, Italy, Germany, and Argentina, according to the Cuban Chamber of Commerce.

The German government recently said it would finance a development program to combat desertification in eastern Cuba. German Cooperation and Development Minister Heidemarie Wiecek-Zeul announced the project in Havana in May. Two months earlier Cuban and German governments renegotiated debts dating back to Cuba's relations with the former East German government.

In April the Cuban government withdrew its request to join a trade and aid accord between the European Union and 71 African, Caribbean, and Pacific states, citing "unacceptable" demands, including "criticism of its human rights record and calls for the island to abandon one-party communism," according to the *Financial Times*.

A *New York Newsday* feature editorial, entitled "Annoy this man: end the embargo," bluntly put forward the aims of overturning the revolution by other means. "The 40-year-old embargo" is a "failed policy" that "hasn't come close to meeting its stated objectives: removing Castro or getting him to modify his regime."

INS official convicted on spy charge in case used by Washington against Cuba

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

A federal district court jury in Miami found an immigration official guilty of violating the Espionage Act on May 30, in a case that Washington used to expel a Cuban diplomat earlier this year.

Mariano Faget, 54, who had worked at the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) for 34 years and was near retirement, was arrested in February on charges that he revealed government secrets to a business partner about Cuba.

Shortly after his arrest, U.S. authorities accused José Imperatori—at the time vice-consul of the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, D.C.—of spying, and expelled him from the country. U.S. officials claimed Faget spoke with Cuban diplomats at a bar in Miami. This was illegal, they said, because of his INS position.

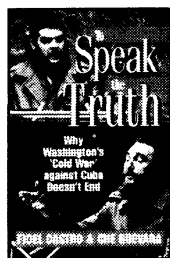
The FBI targeted Faget in a sting called "Operation False Blue." The INS official attended a meeting February 11 with FBI agent Hector Pesquera and other U.S. officials, who gave him phony information about the impending defection of a Cuban diplomat.

Afterwards, with U.S. agents monitoring his cell phone call, he relayed this information to a friend and business associate, Cuban-American Pedro Font, who was to meet shortly with Imperatori.

Prosecutor Richard Gregorie argued before the court that "Mariano Faget was supplying information to a friend of his in order to gain an economic advantage in doing business with Cuba." Faget and Font had formed America-Cuba Inc. in 1993 to pursue business ventures in Cuba in the expectation that Washington will eventually lift its trade embargo against the Caribbean nation.

Faget is the first INS official ever charged under federal espionage laws. He will be sentenced in August, and faces a maximum term of 10 years in prison.

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How Washington sponsored 1953 Iran coup

BY MA'MUD SHIRVANI

The governments of the United States and the United Kingdom plotted secretly in 1953 to overthrow the government of Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh of Iran. Through their spy agencies they recruited the shah of Iran, some of his army officers, and other pro-imperialist forces to carry out a military coup against the country's legitimate government. U.S. president Dwight Eisenhower approved the plan on July 11, 1953, and Mossadegh's government was overthrown on August 19 that year.

These and other well-known facts about the CIA-orchestrated coup are recorded in a "secret history" of these events that the *New York Times* reported on in a feature article by James Risen in its April 16 issue. The article states that the *Times* recently obtained a copy of the still-classified 1954 document—"the first detailed government account of the coup to be made public"—from a former CIA official.

The 1953 coup established the shah as a key prop of U.S. domination in the Mideast for a quarter century. That pillar of imperialist rule came crashing down in 1979, when Iranian workers and peasants carried out a revolution that dealt a historic blow to Washington's power in the region. Despite their efforts over the past two decades, the U.S. rulers have never recovered what they lost with the overthrow of the shah and the confidence that working people in Iran gained through their actions.

An editorial in the *New York Times* published two days after the article argues, "If the United States and Iran are ever to restore good relations, both nations must understand the events that helped drive them apart." The lessons drawn by the *Times* editors, of course, have nothing to do with the interests of the Iranian people. They only offer tactical advice to the U.S. rulers by pointing out how the CIA coup fueled hatred for Washington with "negative long-term consequences for the United States," and ultimately led to the 1979 revolution.

For working people both in the United States and Iran, however, the true history of the 1953 events helps us identify the U.S. imperialist rulers as the real enemy of working people and oppressed nations the world over, and other important lessons.

Nationalization of oil industry

After World War II, working people unleashed revolutionary struggles throughout Iran. In 1945 workers and peasants established their own government in Azerbaijan for a time, initiating a deep-going land reform. The revolutionary wave was halted by betrayals by the Stalinist misleadership.

These struggles erupted again a few years later. In a mass demonstration in 1951 in front of the *Majles* (parliament), students and teachers called for the nationalization of the British-controlled oil industry. Oil workers went on a general strike against British Petroleum's wage cuts, and won.

In response to these mass mobilizations, the *Majles* voted to nationalize the vast oil resources of the country. Mossadegh, who championed nationalization of the oil industry, became the popular prime minister.

London, backed by Washington and other imperialist powers, tried to strangle the country. A military threat staged by the British navy was followed by an international blockade and boycott, and the freezing of Iranian assets by these foreign powers. Iran's oil exports and foreign trade came to a virtual standstill, and the country faced a severe economic crisis.

Inside the country, the imperialist pressures were channeled through the monar-

Below, workers mobilize in Tabriz in 1946. Waves of anti-imperialist mobilizations in Iran after World War II, including 1951 oil workers strike against British Petroleum, led to nationalization of oil industry. Right, shah confers with U.S. secretary of state John Foster Dulles in 1956. Shah's regime was key prop for imperialist domination of Mideast until its overthrow in 1979 revolution.



chy—the shah and his army. In a dispute with the shah over control of the army, Mossadegh resigned as the premier in July 1952 and was replaced by a pro-imperialist politician, Ahmad Qavam al-Saltaneh.

Working people seek to mobilize

There was immediate mass opposition across the country to this reactionary move. Demonstrations and political strikes culminated in a mass confrontation with the army in Tehran on July 21. There, the discipline of the army troops began to disintegrate as they shot at the demonstrators who stood their ground and took casualties. Faced with the danger of soldiers joining the demonstrators, the army brass ordered the soldiers back to their barracks and the police went into hiding. Young people took over the city streets and directed traffic. The shah was forced to name Mossadegh prime minister again. The country celebrated the victory, known to this day as *Sieh Teer* (the 30th of Teer in the Iranian calendar).

Sieh Teer was a turning point. Class polarization accelerated in the country. The victory increased the confidence of work-

ing people in their ability to bring about change. Workers' strikes increased and peasants became more vocal in demanding land.

The pro-Moscow Tudeh (Masses) party grew. It joined the anti-imperialist movement for the nationalization of the oil industry, reversing its earlier shameful campaign to secure—in defiance of national sentiment for sovereignty—the concession of any oilfields in the north to the Soviet Union. The Tudeh party attracted workers and youth



who mistook it to be a communist party in continuity with the Bolsheviks, who had led the 1917 Russian Revolution.

Frightened by the prospect of a social movement of workers and peasants, the ruling landowners, capitalists, and tribal chiefs began to turn against the movement. Some of the founders of Mossadegh's National Front, which had led the struggle for the oil nationalization, and his closest allies broke with him and went over to the reactionary opposition, grouped around the shah. So did major figures in the Islamic clerical establishment who had supported the movement and helped mobilize for *Sieh Teer*.

Sections of the middle class, feeling the pinch of the economic embargo in their lifestyles, turned away from the movement. More and more deputies in the *Majles* turned against the anti-imperialist movement and went over to the shah's camp.

In a referendum on Aug. 4, 1953, people overwhelmingly voted in support of Mossadegh dissolving the *Majles*, which he later did in face of the impending coup. But after *Sieh Teer*, Mossadegh's liberal bourgeois government took no effective measures in the interests of the working people, such as an urgently needed land reform.

Under these conditions, Washington and London moved to overthrow Mossadegh's government and bring about a client regime that would suppress workers and peasants and safeguard imperialist interests in the region, acting as a bulwark of reaction against the Soviet Union.

Washington installs shah

The U.S. and British spy agencies resorted to elaborate plans to spread lies and carry out assassinations and other terrorist tactics to destabilize the country and create conditions for a military coup. The *New York Times* writes that Iranian CIA agents "pretending to be Communists threatened Muslim leaders with 'savage punishment if they opposed Mossadegh,' seeking to stir anti-Communist sentiment in the religious community." The paper also reports that according to the "secret history," the "house of at least one prominent Muslim was bombed by CIA agents posing as Communists."

The coup began the night of August 15 after a reluctant shah, with the memory of *Sieh Teer* still fresh in his mind, under "relentless pressure" from Washington, signed a decree replacing premier Mossadegh with Gen. Fazlollah Zahedi, whom the CIA

agents had groomed for the job.

But this immediately backfired. As pro-shah soldiers went around the city arresting senior officials, the Imperial Guard troops on their way to arrest Mossadegh were intercepted by pro-government troops and were themselves arrested.

The next morning, Tehran radio announced that a military coup against the government had failed. The next day the shah fled to Baghdad, then to Rome. The CIA station in Tehran cabled headquarters for advice: continue with the coup attempt or withdraw? The *Times* quotes the "secret history" as saying, "The message sent to Tehran on the night of Aug. 18 said that 'the operation has been tried and failed,' and that 'in the absence of strong recommendations to the contrary, operations against Mossadegh should be discontinued.'"

After the shah fled, some supporters of the Tudeh party demonstrated in the streets around the country, symbolically toppling the statues of the shah and his father. But no leader or organization made any call for the people to come into the streets to consolidate the victory, depose the shah, and chart a way forward. The Mossadegh regime ordered most pro-government troops, stationed around Tehran during the coup attempt, to their barracks. But the forces that had been put in motion by the CIA coup plot continued to unfold.

On the morning of August 19, pro-shah, pro-coup papers published the shah's decree deposing Mossadegh. And some of the CIA's local agents—"without specific orders," according to the "secret history"—organized violent pro-shah demonstrations, attacking pro-Mossadegh and pro-Tudeh newspapers as they moved toward the *Majles*. Demonstrators at the outset were hired thugs and lumpen elements. Then, as the word spread, pro-shah officers and soldiers joined them.

At the time of these events, I was a high school student living on Galamestan Avenue in south Tehran. As the news came that pro-shah thugs and lumpens were on a rampage, young people in the neighborhood gathered to figure out how to stop the reactionaries. The prevalent idea was that they had to be stopped physically in the streets. Some of those who had finished their two years of compulsory service in the army said they could use guns, and one said he could drive a tank. As far as I knew, no one there was a member of any political party. Then someone came saying we were to wait for orders from the Tudeh party to move into action.

Later I found out that gatherings of young people like the one in my neighborhood, who were looking to the Tudeh party for leadership, were not exceptional that day. Those orders never came, however. The Tudeh party leadership made no attempt to fight the coup. The counterrevolution succeeded and the masses suffered a defeat without a battle.

Donald Wilber, author of the 1954 "secret history," complained years later that plotters of similar U.S. operations around the world did not absorb the lessons of the Iran coup. He pointed to the 1961 U.S.-organized mercenary invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs, which was quickly defeated by the armed Cuban people. He can't understand that the U.S. rulers have failed to overthrow the Cuban revolution because the communist leadership there has led millions of working people in mobilizations in face of every challenge and threat.

For the Stalinist and bourgeois nationalist leaderships in Iran, the prospect of mass mobilizations against the 1953 coup, which would have put the taking of governmental power by the toilers on the agenda, proved more frightening than a pro-imperialist victory by the shah.

Not only reactionaries but many liberals welcomed the overthrow of Mossadegh's government at the time. A year later, the *New York Times* editors, referring to the struggle of the Iranian people to nationalize the oil industry, gloated that "underdeveloped countries with rich resources now have an object lesson in the heavy cost that must be paid by one of their number which goes berserk with fanatical nationalism."

Twenty-five years later, the Iranian people made a revolution and overthrew the U.S.-backed shah. They proved working people can defeat imperialism. And the events both of 1953 and 1979 through today underscore the need for working people to develop their own leadership, one that can lead them to the end in the struggle for emancipation.

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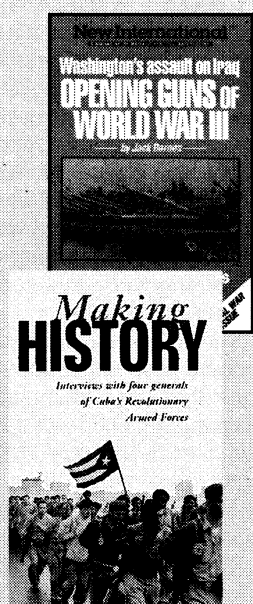
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Visitors to Tehran book fair hungry for lessons of struggle

BY JASON ALESSIO
AND TONY HUNT

TEHRAN, Iran—"My friends and I are trying to figure out if the 1917 revolution in Russia is still the model," said a student here at the 13th Tehran International Book Fair.

He purchased four books at the booth for Pathfinder Distribution, London. One was *The History of the Russian Revolution*, by Bolshevik revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky. The others were *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium*, by Jack Barnes, and two titles by Karl Marx, *Capital* and *The Poverty of Philosophy*.

The young man explained that some people have told him the Soviet Union fell apart in the 1990s because "Marxism doesn't work." He wasn't convinced and wanted to investigate for himself.

Interest in studying the experience of workers and farmers in revolutions around the world characterized many visitors to the Pathfinder booth at this year's fair. The top seller during the May 3-13 fair was *Che Guevara Talks to Young People*, a new collection of speeches by the Argentine-born leader of the Cuban revolution. Visitors to the booth purchased 18 copies of the book. Some youth literally rushed into the booth when they saw this book.

In all, the international sales team staffing the London distributorship's stand sold 236 copies of 84 different titles. Pathfinder's second-best seller was *Capitalism's World Disorder*, with 17 copies purchased.

Feminism and the Marxist Movement by Mary-Alice Waters, *The Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Problems of Women's Liberation* by Evelyn Reed, *Fascism: What It Is and How to Fight It* by Trotsky, and *Malcolm X Talks to Young People* were also high on the list.

Marx, women's rights titles popular

As in previous years the most popular authors were Marx and Engels—35 books by these founders of the modern communist movement were sold. Participants in the book fair also purchased nine books related to the Russian revolution. The most popular single subject category was literature on women's rights, closely followed by books by leaders of the Cuban revolution.

A woman read from the back cover of *Problems of Women's Liberation* that the author "explores the economic and social roots of women's oppression from prehistoric society to modern capitalism."

"This is exactly what I want!" she said.

Pathfinder's new title *Making History: Interviews with Four Generals of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces* attracted the attention particularly of several young airmen who passed by the booth. They were

especially interested in the interview with Div. Gen. Enrique Carreras, founder of Cuba's revolutionary air force. An older man who picked up the book noted that the fact that these generals have been leaders of the Cuban revolution for four decades dispels the myth "that Fidel's the only one."

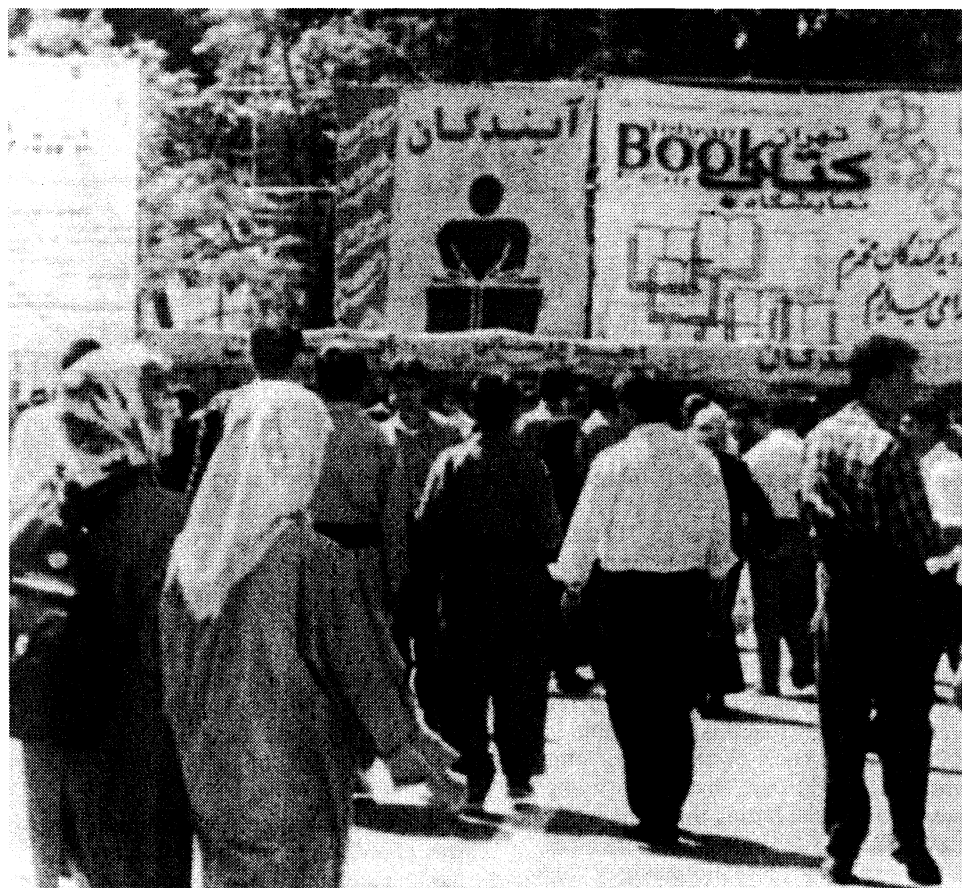
Three sets of the five-volume *How the Revolution Armed* were purchased. The collection includes detailed writings by Leon Trotsky as the head of the Soviet Red Army on its role in aiding workers and peasants in northern Iran to resist the troops of Britain and the shah in the early part of the 20th century. "This is priceless," commented a librarian from one government institution.

A high school student stopped at the booth after seeing books by Malcolm X and said, "The three people I look up to are Malcolm X, Che Guevara, and Fidel Castro." He convinced his older sister to buy him *Malcolm X Talks to Young People*. Later in the week the sister returned to buy her own copy.

A university student asked to see the Malcolm X titles and said he was only interested in works by Muslims. He was pleasantly surprised, however, when a Pathfinder sales representative suggested he also read a passage from *Capitalism's World Disorder* that quotes the "Appeal to All Toiling Muslims of Russia and the East" issued by the Soviet republic under V.I. Lenin's leadership in 1917.

Several Afghani immigrants visiting the fair spent time looking at the book *To See the Dawn: Baku, 1920—First Congress of the Peoples of the East*. They nodded their heads as they read sections of the congress proceedings that denounced British imperialist domination of their country and explained the fight for land by Afghani peasants.

Seven Pathfinder books that have been translated into Farsi, the official language in Iran, were on sale in the Farsi-language section of the fair. Visitors to the Pathfinder book stall purchased 300 such books, 92 of



Entrance to 13th Tehran International Book Fair. Visitors to Pathfinder booth were eager to study experience of workers and farmers in revolutions around the world.

them copies of *Socialism and Man in Cuba* by Ernesto Che Guevara.

Sales of the other Farsi-language titles were 72 copies of *How Far We Slaves Have Come!*, by Nelson Mandela and Castro; 52 of *Malcolm X Talks to Young People*; 22 of *Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle* by Thomas Sankara; 36 of *A Sea Change in Working-Class Politics*; 22 of *Imperialism's March Toward Fascism and War*; and 4 of *Opening Guns of World War III*, these last three titles by Barnes.

The Tehran International Book Fair started 13 years ago, a product of the 1979 Iranian revolution, which opened the doors for working people to education. Over the years, the Iranian government has heavily subsidized books published abroad that are sold at the fair, making it possible for Iranians to buy them. It has also provided substantial budgets to high schools and universities to transport students from outlying areas to the fair and to place foreign-published books in campus libraries.

This year, the economic squeeze on Iran was evident at the fair in the sharply lower

sales experienced by most publishers. Fewer people attended the fair, and many who did commented that it was a bigger financial burden to purchase books this year than in the past. Book fair authorities reported to a meeting of foreign publishers that while the government spent \$10 million on the first book fair, this year only \$6 million was allocated. The exchange rate of the Iranian rial to the U.S. dollar has shot up more than 100-fold in the same period of time.

More foreign publishing companies were present at this year's fair. For the first time in 10 years, several companies from Germany participated, and the French embassy sponsored a large booth on French culture. Most publishers from abroad, however, sent no representatives, hiring local Iranians to staff their booths.

Visitors remarked positively that Pathfinder was one of the few to send representatives from countries in the imperialist world. An Iranian television station broadcast an interview with Pathfinder London representative Tony Hunt, who was also interviewed by a student news agency.

U.S. rulers assault Fourth Amendment rights

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

During the Clinton administration the U.S. rulers have gained substantial ground in chipping away at the right of working people to be protected from illegal searches and seizures. The assault on the Fourth Amendment has taken the form of judicial rulings as well as the "war on drugs" involving police searches—many times ending with the cops killing people.

The U.S. Supreme Court announced May

1 it will decide next year whether cops can detain people from entering their own homes while police get a search warrant. The case began in April 1997 when police held Charles McArthur outside his home in Sullivan, Illinois, for two hours after he told the cops they could not search his home without a warrant.

When one cop returned with a warrant, they conducted a search and allegedly found marijuana in the house. "A seizure is not necessarily unconstitutional for the period of time necessary to secure the warrant," asserted Illinois attorney general Colleen Griffin.

Last year the High Court ruled on six Fourth Amendment cases, four of them involving cops searching cars for drugs. Three out of the four court decisions advanced the rulers' efforts to expand the powers of the police to search and seize cars without judicial approval. The states involved in these rulings were Florida, Maryland, and Wyoming.

The highest court in Maryland ruled cops could not search an automobile without a warrant. In Florida, the state Supreme Court decided a car subject to forfeiture could not be seized from a parking lot without a warrant. And in Wyoming the high court there ruled that the cops could not obtain objects from a vehicle without judicial approval. U.S. Supreme Court reached in and overturned each one of those state court decisions.

War on drugs spearheads assault

The rulers' so-called war on drugs has been the leading edge in the attack on Fourth Amendment rights. Much of their debate has focused on dumping the exclusionary rule adopted by the Supreme Court in 1914, which bars evidence obtained by cops without a search warrant from use in a trial. The

rule places some limits on the cops' ability to burst into a person's home without a warrant and conduct searches under the rubric of searching for drugs.

In 1995 the House of Representatives by a 2-1 margin passed the Exclusionary Rule Reform Act. It was referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee, which never acted on it. The measure would have codified legislation permitting prosecutors to use evidence that was illegally seized by cops without a search warrant.

That same year, the U.S. Supreme Court reversed an Arizona Supreme Court ruling that threw out evidence seized by police after they had arrested someone as a result of a clerical error. The man had been arrested because the state's computer system showed an erroneous outstanding misdemeanor warrant. The cops then searched the man's car and allegedly found drugs. The Arizona court had ruled the exclusionary rule should apply in this case, stating that there should be no distinction between the police and court employees in this situation.

Abolishing the exclusionary rule would open the door to further trampling of Fourth Amendment rights. Safeguards against illegal cop searches would be virtually nonexistent. Working people would become more vulnerable to police assaults that end with tragic consequences like the 1995 cop killing of Scott Bryant in Beaver Dam, Wisconsin.

Bryant was gunned down when sheriff's deputies burst into his trailer home while conducting a drug investigation. He was unarmed and offered no resistance.

In 1994 a police SWAT team in Boston broke down an elderly resident's apartment door, supposedly searching for drugs. The elderly man, who was tackled and handcuffed by the cops, suffered a heart attack during the "search" and died that afternoon.

for further reading

Capital

Karl Marx

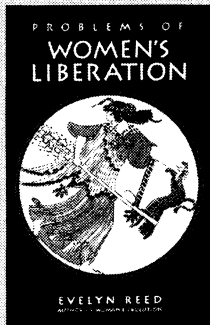
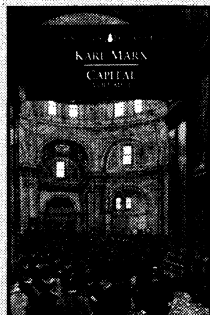
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Death at Alaska Airlines spotlights company safety record

BY PAUL MORRISSETTE

SEATTLE—The recent death of a baggage handler on the job here at Alaska Airlines occurs amidst new revelations about the airline's safety record both in the air and on the ground.

Eighteen-year-old Donovan Thater, who had been working at the airline for only three weeks, was killed at the Seattle Tacoma Airport when he was pinned against a plane by a baggage tug he had been using to deliver last minute bags to a departing flight.

A number of baggage handlers here expressed the view that this death could have been avoided. Many of the newer, younger workers thought that Thater was trying to stop the tug from hitting the plane when he was killed.

One explained that a probationary worker is automatically fired if he or she damages an airplane. He added, "It's drummed into you that the worst thing of all is to hit a plane. Not only is the damage costly but then the cancellations cost tens of thousands."

Another worker said that the company should have carriers on the tugs to bring out the last minute bags.

Since Alaska's tugs don't have them, the ramp workers have to put the bags on the hood of the vehicle or on the seat next to the driver. Many of the ramp workers here believe that Thater probably had a bag on the seat next to him when he drove up to the plane. A bag will often slide off the seat and

this can disengage the emergency brake. Still another worker said that since last minute bag delivery has to be done in a hurry and therefore can be unsafe the practice should be stopped altogether.

The bosses at Alaska have commented very little on the cause of Thater's death except to deflect any blame from themselves, thus putting it totally on Thater. In contrast to their callousness, two bouquets of flowers were delivered to the baggage handlers break room offering sympathy for the loss of a fellow worker. One bouquet was from flight attendants and the other was signed by dozens of customer service representatives.

At the same time that Donovan Thater was killed, more information has come to light concerning the maintenance record of the MD-83 aircraft used by Alaska Flight 261, which crashed off the coast of California January 31, killing all 88 people on board. Alaska had been under investigation even before the crash since a mechanic had exposed safety problems at the carrier well before this.

It is widely accepted that the cause of Flight 261's crash was the failure of the jackscrew assembly that moves the horizontal stabilizers which in turn control the up and down motion of the aircraft.

The jackscrew assembly found at the crash site lacked grease needed for its operation and the gimbal nut had come off leaving its threads wrapped around the jackscrew. The pilots of Flight 261 reported problems with the stabilizer just before the crash.

The May 21 *Seattle Times* states that the jackscrew assembly in question was cleared by the airline from close monitoring in September 1997 by only one thousandth of an inch. This "microscopic margin" was discovered a day after mechanics, in their initial check, had decided that the jackscrew needed to be replaced.

The written order to replace the jackscrew was scratched out and instead mechanics were told to retest the part. Criminal investigators are looking into whether the several tests conducted after the first were ma-

Anti-Fujimori protests mark Peru elections



Thousands of supporters of bourgeois opposition candidate Alejandro Toledo demonstrate against President Alberto Fujimori, whose initially popular image as an iron-handed guarantor of 'stability' soured over the years with his economic austerity measures and attacks on civil liberties. Mass protests forced him to concede a runoff ballot. After Toledo called for a boycott alleging electoral fraud, Fujimori won the second round on May 28 by a comfortable margin. In a typical display of imperial arrogance, the Clinton administration, posturing as a champion of "democracy," intervened to pressure Fujimori with threat of sanctions. U.S. rulers are worried not about democracy but about social volatility in a region they consider a haven for profitable investment.

nipulated so that the plane would be cleared. Federal officials noted that the plane was scheduled for flight soon after the maintenance check and that no replacement jackscrews were available.

Alaska employers had John Young, a 10-year mechanic at Alaska Airlines in Seattle, kicked off their maintenance area May 26 and suspended from work for having spoken out publicly about safety at the airline. A few days before Young was interviewed on television and quoted in the *Los Angeles Times* as saying, "I know planes have gone out in unsafe condition."

More than one mechanic has expressed the view that the attack on Young is an attempt to intimidate him and other Alaska workers who may want to speak out about safety problems at the company.

Even though it poses great risks to their jobs, a number of mechanics have spoken of the safety problems at Alaska. John Liotine, a mechanic from Alaska's Oakland

maintenance base, was suspended months ago.

Liotine's allegations in 1998 of falsified maintenance records led to recommendations from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) that the licenses of three supervisors to work on Alaska planes in Oakland be suspended.

In March, 64 Alaska mechanics in Seattle signed a letter addressed to the company complaining of a manager's pressure on them to cut corners on their work.

Mildred Thater, Donovan Thater's aunt and a reservations agent at United Airlines in Seattle, told the *Seattle Times*, "They've been showing disregard for human safety lately. It's been costing lives."

Concerning the death of her nephew, she went on to say that Alaska officials claim that "they were trying to piece the story together, which I think is a bunch of crap. They knew why it happened. They're just not telling us."

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

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Black Liberation and Socialism. Speaker: Brock Satter, Socialist Workers Party, and member of UNITE. Fri., June 9, 7:30 p.m. 683 Codman Square, Washington St., Dorchester. Donation: \$4. Tel: (617) 282-2254.

NEW YORK

Upper Manhattan

Socialist Workers campaign for an alternative to capitalism in 2000. Speaker: Laura Garza, 1996 Socialist Workers candidate for Vice-President. Sat. June 3, 7:00 p.m. reception, 7:30 p.m. program. 540 W 154 St, Washington Heights. Donation: \$5. Tel: (212) 740-4611.

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The Elián González Case: In Defense of the Cuban Revolution, in Defense of the Working Class. Fri., June 9, 7:00 p.m. 47 The Cut. Donation £2. Tel: 020-7928-7993.

CALENDAR

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Building, Understanding, Creating Change: AFL-CIO Midwest Forum on Immigrant Workers' Rights. Sat., June 3, 10:00 a.m. *Chicago Journeymen Plumbers L.U. 130 U.A., Stephen M. Bailey Auditorium, 1340 West Washington Blvd.* Tel: 312-492-6569.

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Contract 2000 Rally. A day of solidarity with General Electric workers fighting for a contract. Sat., June 10, 2:00 p.m. *McCulloch Park, Broadway & Parkview Ave.*

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Tribute to Pedro Albizu Campos: A Benefit for Vieques. Speaker: Ismael Guadalupe, leader of the Committee for the Rescue and Development of Vieques. Live bomba and plena music and dance; various performing artists; food. Sat., June 10. Doors open 2:00 p.m. Forum: 6:00 p.m. Sponsors: Charas/El Bohio and Vieques Support Campaign. *Charas/El Bohio Community Cultural Center, 605 E. 9th St. (off Ave C).* Donation \$5. Tel: (212) 852-5859.

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'One of greatest atrocities of modern war'

The excerpt below, on the slaughter unleashed by Washington that culminated the 1990-91 Gulf War, is taken from the beginning of "The Opening Guns of World War III," the lead article in issue no. 7 of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist*. Copyright © 1991 by 408 Printing and Publishing Corp. Jack Barnes is the national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party and a contributing editor of *New Internationalist*. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

BY JACK BARNES

The U.S.-organized carnage against the Iraqi people is among the most monstrous in the history of modern warfare. Is not "was?" Death and dislocation continue today, as does the imperialists' culpability for them.

We may never know the actual numbers of toilers killed in Iraq and Kuwait during the six weeks of incessant allied air and sea bombardment and the murderous one-hundred-hour invasion launched by Washington Feb. 24, 1991. But the one common media estimate that as many as 150,000 human beings were slaughtered is conservative, if anything. Just think about the impact of a massacre of that magnitude on the less than 19 million people of Iraq. Compare the blow of this number of deaths, and many additional maimings, and the relatively short period over which they mounted, with the impact many of you can remember in the United States, a country of 250 million, of the 47,000 U.S. combat deaths during Washington's nearly ten-year—not ten-week—war to prevent Vietnam's reunification.

The most concentrated single bloodletting was organized by the U.S. command in the final forty-eight hours of the invasion, as Iraqi soldiers fled Kuwait along the roads to Basra. While publicly denying that Iraqi forces were withdrawing from Kuwait, Washington ordered that tens of thousands of fleeing Iraqi soldiers be targeted for wave after wave of bombing, strafing, and shelling. These were people who were putting up no resistance, many with no weapons, others with rifles packed in bedrolls, leaving in cars, trucks, carts, and on foot. Many civilians from Iraq, Kuwait, and immigrant workers from other countries were killed at the same time as they tried to flee.

Washington's 'killing zone'

The U.S. armed forces bombed one end of the main highway from Kuwait city to Basra, sealing it off. They bombed the other end of the highway and sealed it off. They positioned mechanized artillery units on the hills overlooking it. And then, from the air and from the land they simply massacred every living thing on the road. Fighter bombers, helicopter gunships, and armored battalions poured merciless firepower on traffic jams backed up for as much as twenty miles. When the traffic became gridlocked, the B-52s were sent in for carpet bombing.

That was the killing zone. You couldn't move down the road. You couldn't move up the road. You couldn't move off the road. You couldn't surrender, wave a white flag, or give yourself up. The allied forces simply kept bombing and firing—at every person, jeep, truck, car, and bicycle. One allied air force officer called it a "turkey shoot." Others called it the biggest of the "cockroach hunts." That's the American way—carpet



Road to Basra, Iraq, in February 1991 after bombing and shelling by U.S. armed forces, in what military brass referred to as a "turkey shoot."

bombed, and shot in the back.

This slaughter, along with similar unreported operations during Bush's heroic hundred hours, ranks among the great atrocities of modern warfare. It was the Guernica, the Hiroshima, the Dresden, the My Lai of the U.S. war against Iraq.¹

The imperialist coalition and the Baghdad regime both have their own reasons for covering up the truth about the bloodbath. As a result, we'll never know how many people died in the massacre. In late March Gen. Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was asked by a reporter to provide an estimate of the number of Iraqis killed as a result of combined allied bombing and ground operations. Showing a little of the true face of imperial arrogance and racism, Powell replied: "It's really not a number I'm terribly interested in."

Neither has Baghdad made any attempt

to give an accounting to the families of the workers and peasants in uniform slaughtered in the trenches, in the foxholes, in the open desert, and on the highways in Kuwait and southern Iraq. As during the Saddam Hussein regime's 1980-88 war against Iran, tens of thousands of families in Iraq had their sons, brothers, nephews, and husbands sent off to war and then never saw them again or heard of their fate.

The U.S. government slaughter was not an operation with any military purpose per se. The victims were not part of military units or of an organized retreat. They had become individual human beings simply trying to get away from the war. It was a mass rout. By established "rules" of modern warfare they were not soldiers fighting; they were refugees fleeing. Even during the massive slaughter of World War II, both the Allied and German officer corps sometimes allowed soldiers flee-

ing down roads from battle to get away without this kind of murderous bombardment. But not the bipartisan killing machine organized by U.S. secretary of defense Richard Cheney (Republican), Gen. Colin Powell (Independent), and Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf (Democrat), commander of the U.S. forces in the Gulf.

This onslaught against Iraq was a modern "total war," in the true and terrible sense that term has taken on since the last year of the U.S. Civil War, when Union general William Sherman led his forces through Georgia on his "march to the sea." Sherman's troops demolished warehouses, stores, crops, wagons, livestock, horses, silos, farmhouses and anyone who got in their way as they did so. The aim was to put the torch to anything that could conceivably aid the Confederate army and to send the secessionist regime a message that the entire population would suffer the consequences of the refusal by the Confederate States of America to surrender.

That was the objective of the allied bombardment of Iraq. But with modern weapons technology, and the massive firepower brought to bear on Iraq under the banner of Washington's moral mission. The allied targets were the total industrial, agricultural, transportation, and communications support system of the country.

The death toll of Iraqis was cold-bloodedly discounted by the White House and Pentagon before the slaughter began. Their stress on the "precision" of the bombing and "smartness" of the bombs was damage control from day one—pure, cynical public relations. It was later reported that only some 7 percent of the bombs dropped were "smart" bombs, and of the total tonnage dropped on Iraq some 70 percent missed their "military" targets. What's more, Washington planned on the "collateral damage" done by the bombing outside Baghdad being qualitatively worse than in the capital city itself.

Farmers rally for milk price supports

BY MARTIN BOYERS

BOSTON—Fifty Massachusetts dairy farmers rallied at the statehouse May 22 to protest an attempt to withdraw this state from the Northeast Dairy Compact. They were joined by representatives of environmentalist groups and state legislators.

The compact, which was established in 1996 and currently includes the six New England states, establishes minimum prices to be paid to farmers for class I milk, the type sold for direct consumption, as opposed to milk processed into butter, cheese, yogurt and other products. The price is currently set at \$1.50 per gallon.

The draft state budget, proposed by the Senate Ways and Means Committee, cuts Massachusetts from the pact together with a \$3 million dollar subsidy to dairy farmers. Any additional subsidies would have to be passed in future budgets. Massachusetts farmers received \$4.6 million from the compact from July 1997 to December 1999.

The compact has not stopped the decline of dairy farms in Massachusetts. In 1950 there were 6,760 dairy farms in the state. In the two years of the compact, the number has dropped from 334 to 290. Despite this, farmers see the compact as some protection from the workings of the market, which has ravaged dairy producers in recent years.

In an interview at the rally, Wayne Facey Jr., a dairy farmer from Leyden and executive director of the Massachusetts Association of Dairy Farmers, explained that the compact "balances our income. If we were able to maintain a \$14 cut [per hundredweight], we would be financially stable. Without the compact, prices vary between \$11 and \$17."

Pete Williams, who milks 40 cows in Shelburn, explained, "This is the future of dairy in the northeast."

Dairy farms in Massachusetts average 67 milking cows and 418 acres of land. This is much smaller than the average in other parts of the country. Milk costs farmers an average of \$16.77 per hundredweight to produce, but sells for only \$13.88.

Speakers at the rally included representatives of the Audubon Society, Public Interest Research Group, Environmental League, Conservation Law Foundation, and several members of the state assembly and

senate. The only farm organization to have a speaker was the Farm Bureau, which represents capitalist farmers.

Jonathan Healy, state commissioner of food and agriculture, and Bob Durand, state secretary of environmental affairs, are on record opposing the proposal to withdraw. It was reported at the rally that an amendment has been filed in the state assembly to strike out the proposal to withdraw from the

compact.

However, the state senate voted May 25 to begin the withdrawal of Massachusetts from the compact. Gov. Paul Celluci said he would veto that measure if it makes it into the final state budget.

Martin Boyers is a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees.

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—

25 CENTS
THE MILITANT
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

June 13, 1975

The U.S. Justice Department revealed May 23 the existence of Cointelpro ("Counterintelligence Program") operations that targeted the Puerto Rican independence movement for an extensive FBI disruption program from 1960 through 1971.

Like the previously disclosed Cointelpros against the "New Left," the antiwar movement, Black groups, the Socialist Workers party, and others, the operation against the Puerto Rican independence movement was aimed at disrupting and destroying a force the government feared could win mass support.

The largest program, thirty-seven separate actions, was—in Attorney General Edward Levi's words—"aimed at militant and violence-prone groups" that sought Puerto Rican independence. This is a classic example of making the victim look like the criminal, as Puerto Rican independence groups have been among the most prominent targets for acts of violence by right-wingers and cops.

The program began in August 1960, a year after the Movimiento Pro Independencia (Proindependence Movement) was founded in Puerto Rico and shortly after the 1959 victory of the Cuban Revolution. The fear that Puerto Rican militants might find the victorious revolution an attractive model for their own U.S.-dominated island must have been one motive that prompted the FBI program.

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June 12, 1950

The AFL National Farm Labor Union has called on Governor Earl Warren to bring pressure on the large cotton growers in the West Side of Fresno County to halt wholesale evictions of hundreds of striking farm workers. The union has been on strike several weeks against wage rates of 55 to 65 cents per hour. It has demanded 85 cents.

William Swearingen, Fresno County organizer for the AFL National Farm Labor Union, reported: "The Murietta Farms Company, a Giffen holding, has served eviction notices on 40 Mexican-American families involving some 175 men, women, and children. This is in one camp alone. We expect similar action to follow in other camps..."

He said that the workers who are striking against the 65-cent chopping wage have resided in the Giffen Camp the year round. "The growers are now feeling the impact of the strike and now intend to force people to work under threat of eviction..."

"These eviction notices are proof that there is an effective strike on," Swearingen said, and, further, the responsibility for the strike falls directly in the hands of the growers and certain county agencies who refused to meet with the union and settle the matter peaceably." The 3,200 strikers are facing dire want and need immediate material aid from the labor movement if they are not to be starved back to work.

¹ During the Spanish civil war the German air force aided Spanish fascist forces. They bombed and strafed the fishing village of Guernica in April 1937, killing more than 1,600 men, women, and children and wounding nearly 1,000. The people of the Japanese city of Hiroshima were the first target of an atomic bomb, dropped by U.S. forces August 6, 1945; Washington was responsible for the death and maiming of more than 100,000 people and the destruction of 90 percent of the city. Five firebombing raids against the German city of Dresden—a city with little military significance—during the spring of 1945, killed some 100,000 or more civilians and consumed most of the city in flames just weeks before the German government's unconditional surrender. Some five hundred unarmed men, women, and children in the South Vietnamese village of My Lai were lined up and shot by U.S. forces on March 16, 1968, after their houses had been dynamited and burned all on orders of the U.S. officer corps.

Lebanon: a victory for our side

Workers and farmers around the world should salute working people in Lebanon and those Palestinians living there who, through two decades of resistance, brought an end to the Israeli occupation of the country. A national celebration swept Lebanon as resistance fighters marched together with triumphant workers and farmers to reclaim their homes and land in the wake of an ignominious and hasty withdrawal by Israeli troops and the puppet South Lebanon Army.

The retreat from the self-proclaimed "security zone" in southern Lebanon by the Israeli armed forces is a victory in defense of national sovereignty, as well as another blow to the ability of the Israeli Zionist regime—still Washington's closest ally in the region—to impose its will on the Arab people, especially the Palestinians.

At the same time, working people need to condemn the threats of military assaults by the Israeli government on Lebanon, as well as any moves toward imperialist intervention, such as placement of "peacekeeping" troops under United Nations guise on Lebanese soil.

For more than two decades Israeli authorities have claimed the right to invade, occupy, bomb, and terrorize the people of Lebanon. The Zionist rulers, aided by Washington, turned reality on its head by justifying their assaults and repression on the basis that they were defending Israel, a small country under assault by hostile forces. In truth, it is Israel that was imposed through a bloody reign of terror on the Palestinian and Arab population and maintained as a military garrison state to do the bidding of imperialism in the region.

In 1982 the Palestinian resistance fighters, outnumbered and outgunned by the Israeli army, which was equipped with the most advanced weapons in the world, waged a heroic battle in Beirut against the invasion by the Zionist rulers. Despite suffering tremendous blows, they staged an orderly retreat with their weapons, dignity, and heads

held high. Since that time Palestinian and Lebanese people have organized armed resistance, staged strikes, organized marches, and held other actions against the occupation and sometimes daily bombing of Lebanon.

This struggle undercut support in Israel itself for the government's occupation. As the cost of this military operation mounted and more Israeli soldiers came home dead or wounded, the regime was forced to negotiate a withdrawal. But even then it underestimated the Lebanese people. The Israeli rulers hoped that the rightist South Lebanon Army they created would remain in place to defend the military prerogatives of the Zionist regime. However, once the Israeli army started heading south, the whole house of cards collapsed.

Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak suffered "one of the greatest military humiliations in the country's history," the *Wall Street Journal* editors whined. Humiliating for the imperialists, yes. But it registers something that has already happened: the declining place of the Israeli regime in maintaining the imperialist order in the Middle East, as well as the fact that it has been unable to defeat the Palestinian struggle for self-determination.

The hundreds of thousands of Palestinians who wound up in Lebanon after being expelled from their homeland by Israeli troops have not given up their aspirations for a nation-state. Despite the obstacles to the Palestinian struggle for national rights, including a leadership that continues turning its eyes away from the ranks of the Palestinian masses and relying more on accommodation with Washington and the Arab regimes in the region, the resistance remains unbroken.

Let the Palestinian people return to their homeland!
End all military assaults on Lebanon!
Respect Lebanese sovereignty! No UN or foreign "peacekeepers!"
Self-determination for the Palestinian people!

Oppose Ottawa's trade war

Working people, especially in Canada, should oppose the Canadian government's trade war against Brazil, launched on behalf of the owners of Montreal-based Bombardier, the world's third-largest airplane manufacturer. This is a vicious attack by an imperialist power against a semicolonial nation.

Ottawa's demand that the Brazilian aerospace company Embraer, Bombardier's main competitor, stop selling planes during trade talks—which Ottawa might let drag out for years—is characteristic of the arrogance of the Canadian rulers.

The World Trade Organization's siding with Bombardier against Embraer is no surprise. It gives the lie to the claim by Canadian union officials and radical middle-class organizations that the WTO is "infringing on Canadian sovereignty." The WTO is an instrument of the main imperialist powers, including Canada, both in their conflicts among themselves and in extracting more wealth from the countries they plunder.

The Canada-Brazil dispute is a good illustration of the fact that the source of the problem for working people isn't the WTO—it's the ruling classes whose headquarters are in Ottawa, Washington, and other imperialist capitals. These trade wars are fueled by the relentless drive by the employers to get an edge over their international rivals in the fight for markets and profit margins. These attacks abroad go hand in hand with the bosses' efforts at home to speed up production, lengthen working hours, drive down wages, slash social benefits, and weaken the unions.

Workers and farmers in Canada have no interest in siding with Canadian capitalists against Brazil. Ottawa is the main enemy of working people in Canada, as the 10,000 hospital workers in Alberta can testify to. They just led a successful strike—decreed "illegal"—for better wages and health care for the population as a whole.

The Canadian government has for years been leading a brutal drive to cut social services, aid the bosses' squeeze on workers, and curtail democratic rights. Ottawa enforces the denial of the national rights of the Quebecois and other oppressed nationalities in Canada. It has escalated its attacks on working people coming to Canada from other countries, such as the hundreds of Chinese immigrants jailed the day they set foot in Canada and those who have been deported.

We are told that by supporting Bombardier against Brazil, working people in Canada will save "Canadian" jobs. But we will never be able to organize—let alone win—a fight for jobs by siding with "our" employers—the very source of our exploitation. The attempt to make workers identify themselves as "Canadians" is a trap to pit workers there against working people elsewhere in the world.

The trade union officialdom in Canada has been complicit by its silence in face of Ottawa's trade assault on Brazil. Instead, the labor movement should vigorously oppose Ottawa's trade war, campaign for the cancellation of Brazil's onerous debt to Canadian and other imperialist banks, and join in solidarity with the ongoing struggles of workers and farmers in Brazil.

U.S. rulers debate Cuba embargo

Why is there a heightened debate among U.S. ruling circles on moving away from Washington's four-decade-long trade embargo against Cuba? The fundamental reason is that the wealthy families that rule the United States have failed to achieve their aim—to weaken and destroy the Cuban revolution.

The embargo is part of the policy of aggression—from military attack to attempts at political isolation—that all nine U.S. administrations, Democratic and Republican alike, have waged since the victory of the Cuban revolution in 1959. The Clinton administration is no exception. If anything, William Clinton, who signed the 1996 Helms-Burton law to tighten the trade ban, has a more aggressive record than others.

This embargo is not the product of an "irrational" policy somehow detrimental to "U.S. interests." It's an expression of cold-blooded moves to protect the class interests of the billionaires that Clinton and other U.S. officeholders loyally serve.

The debate is not about easing Washington's implacable hostility toward revolutionary Cuba—over which there is no disagreement among the rulers—but about *how* to do it. Some argue for the Big Stick. Others hope to undermine the revolution by fostering pro-capitalist forces

within Cuba that would be lured by the dollar and the dog-eat-dog mentality that goes with it.

But the U.S. rulers face a dilemma: Cuba has a revolutionary leadership that the U.S. empire has been unable to buy off, intimidate, divide, or divert from responding to the interests of working people. And Cuban workers and farmers in their millions are organized politically and militarily to defend their state power, as they have done repeatedly.

The U.S. rulers' giddy predictions a decade ago that the Cuban government would crumble like the Soviet Union have become ashes in their mouths. They now grudgingly acknowledge that the Cuban people have weathered the worst of the world economic crisis of the past decade. Cuban economic production continues its gradual recovery. For workers and farmers engaged in struggle here, the question is different: How have the Cuban people succeeded in standing up to the mightiest power on earth? These fighters are increasingly receptive to read books that truthfully answer that question, and to hear from others like themselves—such as recent groups of fighting U.S. farmers who have visited Cuba—who are explaining what they have learned from fellow fighters in Cuba for our own struggles here.

Foreign policy rifts widen in U.S. elections

Continued from front page

to Russia now come from rogue states, terrorist groups and other adversaries seeking weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them," Bush claimed in his statement, echoing the justifications used by the Clinton administration for developing a more limited system than that proposed by Bush. "Rogue states" is how U.S. capitalist politicians refer to governments that don't do Washington's bidding, from Cuba to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to Iraq.

Washington has been trying to win acceptance from Moscow for its plans to deploy an antimissile system, a move that would require changes in the 1972 Antiballistic Missile Treaty signed by the U.S. and Soviet governments. Bush scored the Clinton administration for moving too slowly in developing a missile system and said it is too limited in scope.

The U.S. rulers' long-term goal is to gain a nuclear first-strike capability, one whose first target would be China, which has as few as 24 nuclear-tipped missiles capable of reaching the United States. Both Moscow and Beijing have resisted these moves. The development of the hydrogen bomb by the Soviet Union deprived Washington of a first-strike capacity after World War II, and military doctrine has since been based on what has been termed a "nuclear balance of terror."

China: 'We won't sit on our hands'

Several weeks earlier Chinese foreign ministry official Sha Zukang said in an interview with the *New York Times* that if the U.S. government moved ahead to deploy an antimissile system, "we will not sit on our hands." Dismissing the idea that Washington was developing the missile shield to protect itself from North Korea or Iraq as "ridiculous," Sha said, "How can we base our own national security on your assurances of good will?"

"To defeat your defenses we'll have to spend a lot of money, and we don't want to do this," he said. "But otherwise, the United States will feel it can attack anyone at any time, and that isn't tolerable."

Bush backed the Clinton administration in the debate on extending permanent normal trade privileges to China, helping to win overwhelming support by Republicans in Congress to assure passage of the legislation. But he attacked Clinton and vice president Albert Gore for placing "their confidence in the Chinese regime as a 'strategic partner' of the United States. I know they are a competitor."

Bush added that if elected president, "China will have no doubts about our power and purpose in the region, about our strong commitment to democratic allies throughout Asia. But this is accomplished by confident diplomacy, strong alliances, and the military might to back them up." Bush said later that by trading "with China we're encouraging a group of entrepreneurs and small-business owners to be able to get a taste of freedom, we're giving them an opportunity to grow."

Bush's statement reflects the minimal progress in re-establishing capitalism in China and the small number of capitalists that have emerged there. There remain enormous obstacles before U.S. imperialism in overturning the nationalized property relations won through the Chinese revolution in the 1940s and in creating a capitalist class there. By seeking to deepen capitalist penetration of China through increased trade, and preparing to hold a nuclear sword at the country's throat, the U.S. rulers hope to advance their ultimate goal of restoring capitalism to the country.

Bush also attacked Gore as unfit for president, claiming "entire Army divisions are not prepared for war. Military recruiting fell thousands short of its goal. And 6,000 United States soldiers are on food stamps." He said he would add \$1 billion to salary increases, among other moves to spend more on the U.S. war machine.

"With recent statements on trade with China, arms-control policy, and the urgent need for an effective missile defense," wrote former Republican presidential candidate John McCain in an opinion column published in the *Wall Street Journal*, Bush has shown he "intends to be a forceful advocate for American interests and values abroad."

McCain raised concerns about the sharp divisions between wings in Congress and the U.S. president on key foreign policy questions. He praised those who, by voting for the China trade bill, "appreciate the important distinctions between the customary and constitutional roles assigned to legislators and to the commander-in-chief in the conduct of American foreign policy." He urged members of the Senate to "reject the attempted assault on the authority of the office he [Bush] intends to inhabit." A strong imperial presidency has been a cornerstone of U.S. imperialism since it began to gain world dominance in the 1930s.

McCain criticized Washington's "European allies" for not sharing "the burden of our military commitments on their continent," terming this a "distressing constant in our relationship with them." He attacked the European capitalist powers for "almost surreptitiously" withdrawing soldiers from Kosovo. The senator said legislators had "every right to be angered by our allies' bad faith," but urged continued support for the U.S. occupation forces in Yugoslavia.

Euro declines as U.S. rulers hold edge over European rivals

BY CARL-ERIK ISACSSON

STOCKHOLM—Sixteen months after its buoyant introduction as Europe's common currency, the euro fell to another record low in late April. The fall highlights the powerlessness of the European Central Bank, which the same day increased interest rates to 3.75 percent from 3.50 percent, a move aimed at bolstering the currency.

In the following week the euro slid to 89 cents, which is down from US\$1.17 at its introduction Jan. 1, 1999. It has so far lost 25 percent of its value against the dollar.

Hints by the European Central Bank that, for the first time, it would use intervention in the open market to support the euro have pushed its value up a few cents. But intervention will not have any lasting effects if it is not internationally coordinated, something that is excluded as the U.S. Treasury and Federal Reserve firmly oppose it.

Further downward pressures hit the euro when the U.S. Federal Reserve nudged up interest rates from 6.0 to 6.5 percent May 16. Rates are expected to be raised further this summer. The European Central Bank is reluctant to raise interest-rates out of fear such

a move could cripple the upturn in the business cycle under way in Europe, especially in Germany.

But interest rate differentials between Europe and the United States are not the main cause of the decline of the euro. Since the launch of the euro, capitalists in Europe have invested \$150 billion in the United States while only a small fraction of that amount has headed from the United States to Europe.

The reason for this capital flight is that over the last two decades the U.S. rulers have been more successful in getting concessions from unions, enforcing speedup on the job, and holding the line on wage increases than their European rivals. With the partial exception of the United Kingdom, the capitalist powers in Europe are years behind the U.S. rulers in "downsizing," cost cutting, and imposing what the employers call "labor flexibility." They are behind in extending both the workday and workweek, slashing wage rates, and implementing multitier wage agreements.

Although the rulers in France and Germany have made some headway lately, such as on flexible hours, pensions, and taxes, the gap is mostly widening between Europe and the United States. For example, coming out of a recent strike in Norway, workers will get more vacation time each year, something also won in the general strike in Denmark two years ago.

Contractual wage increases won in Norway and through strikes in Finland are higher than in those agreed to by IG Metall in one German province, unsettling what the employers hoped would be seen as a norm for Germany and all of Europe.

The European Central Bank, from a position of weakness, has actually stood aside as the euro has declined in value. This has made goods produced in Europe cheaper in the United States, sparking an export-led spurt in growth, especially in Germany and France, the two countries that make up about half of the euro zone's economy. The French economy added 142,300 jobs in the first quarter this year, the most since record keeping began in 1970. In Germany, the business research institute IFO said that a monthly survey of 6,000 executives in April showed business confidence at the highest level since German reunification in 1990.

Differences between Paris and Bonn

In mid-May, France's prime minister, Lionel Jospin, stressed the need to bolster the euro, while Chancellor Gerhard Schröder of Germany said that while he thought the euro would rebound, its weakness has helped by making exports cheaper. "There is no other country in the world that is more dependent on exports than Germany," he said. "We should not cry when our exports benefit." The German Bundesbank, in a statement issued in late May, criticized the German

Ohio Steelworkers rally against Kaiser



Militant/Jay Paradiso

Hundreds of locked-out Steelworkers, supporters, and family members marched on Kaiser Aluminum plant in Heath, Ohio, May 20. They chanted "One day longer" and carried signs reading "USWA Local 341 Locked Out!" More than 2,900 Steelworkers have been locked out since January last year at five Kaiser plants nationwide. The workers refuse to accept company proposals, including cuts in wage levels and retiree health insurance benefits.

government's neglect of the problems with the decline in the euro.

"The temporary competitive advantages from depreciation cannot in any case outweigh the possible damage to confidence," the statement from the German central bank said May 24.

Another sign of the worries over the decline of the euro in the ruling class in Germany were demands by conservative politicians that Greece be barred from adopting the euro for several years. The European Commission had recommended in early May that Greece be allowed to join. Edmund Stoiber, the head of state in Bavaria, blamed the euro's decline in part on the news about Greece.

The decline of the euro is strengthening forces in every country in Europe that oppose the European Union and the euro. Exchange rate problems are one of the reasons that Rover in Britain is slashing jobs and thousands are getting laid off at the Ford Dagenham plant in London.

The pound sterling has risen with the U.S. dollar, making goods produced in Britain expensive compared to goods produced in continental Europe. In Denmark, a referendum will be held on whether Denmark will adopt the euro in September this year. The rulers in Denmark are worried about a "no" vote like that which voted down the Maastricht accord in 1992.

In Sweden the rulers want to postpone a decision on joining the euro as they also are worried that it would be defeated in a referendum if the euro continues to decline.

The euro is a set of social relations that reflects the relatively weak standing the ruling classes in Europe have in relation to both the working class at home and to their capitalist rivals in other parts of the world—especially the United States—on military, political, and economic fronts. By adopting a common currency and measures to break

down national barriers to the free flow of trade and commerce, the ruling classes in most European countries sought to cobble together a counterbalance to the huge U.S. market and bolster their competitiveness with U.S. imperialism in the world.

A weak currency

The euro was the political solution agreed upon to try to tackle a whole range of problems the ruling classes in Europe are facing—especially how to take Europe out of the crises caused by falling rates of profit and their competitive disadvantage vis-à-vis the United States.

But within the first year after the "birth" of the euro, the European imperialist powers became even more dependent on the United States. On the military side, the conflict in Kosova proved the irreplaceable role of Washington's war machine on the European continent. Economically, the United States became more than ever the motor of the whole world economy. It is clear, for example, that a recession in the United States would bring with it devastating conditions around the world.

Since its birth, the euro has lost its shine, and the underlying weaknesses of the European imperialist powers have come to the fore. Without a common foreign and military policy, for example, a stable monetary union cannot hold over an extended time. The recent war in Kosova demonstrated tensions between governments in Europe over Yugoslavia and the expansion of NATO and the European Union into Eastern and Central Europe.

Tensions between Paris and Berlin constantly come to the surface over the euro, interest rates, taxes, fiscal policy, farm subsidies, and other questions.

Carl-Erik Isacson is a member of the metal workers union in Södertälje, Sweden.

Unionists score gain against Wal-Mart

A judge lifted a restraining order May 26 sought by the owners of Wal-Mart against the United Food and Commercial Workers union (UFCW). The bosses wanted to ban union supporters from signing up co-workers inside its stores. Union representative Mike Leonard said in a statement that the decision "put a stop to Wal-Mart's heavy-handed bully tactics."

Wal-Mart spokesperson Jessica Moser argued that the ruling "by no means gives the unions a free pass to trespass in our stores," and threatened to seek temporary injunctions against unionists recruiting on store property.

The owners of the retail giant, which employs more than 1 million people and operates close to 3,500 stores internationally, have maintained a notoriously antiunion stance. The bosses were set back, however, in a couple of recent organizing efforts at Wal-Mart stores. In February, meat cutters at its Jacksonville, Texas, store voted 7-3 for UFCW representation. Meat workers in a store in Palestine, Texas, held a union representation election in April. An outlet in Windsor in Ontario, Canada, became the first to be unionized in 1996. After a three-year campaign the company managed to have the union decertified.

LETTERS

Antiracist fight in Iowa

Thanks for printing a letter updating the Charles Lovelady case here in Des Moines. [see letter in May 22 issue on the strangling of a Black man after he was told to leave for not adhering to a nightclub's dress code.] There are two additional things that I believe readers of the *Militant* would find worth knowing.

Some of the club owners in Des Moines have now decided to not ban entrance to people wearing specific designer labels. Those of us in the Citizens for Justice see this as a partial victory in the fight against racism. But one of the TV stations did an undercover profile of night clubs here and found that whites and Blacks wearing the same clothes were treated differently. Whites were admitted and Blacks were denied entry.

This ongoing movement in Des Moines is not only about getting justice for Charles Lovelady. It is also about exposing and helping

end a form of institutional racism that probably exists elsewhere.

*Edwin Fruit
Des Moines, Iowa*

Janitors march for union

More than 200 students from Stanford University in Palo Alto, California, rallied and marched May 25 in support of the demands of janitors at the campus and in the San Francisco Bay Area for an increase in wages and benefits. The march was one of several held in the area recently by Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 1877, which represents some 5,500 janitors. Rallies also occurred in San Jose, Pleasanton, and in front of Hewlett-Packard's headquarters in Palo Alto. In all, close to 1,000 janitors and their supporters demonstrated.

Chanting slogans in English, Spanish, Chinese, and Hindi, beating drums and blowing whistles, the students marched through the cam-

pus to the offices of ABM (American Building Maintenance), the service contracted by Stanford, which employs 80 janitors on campus. Once there the students met a delegation of 20 janitors and other SEIU members to take the demand to ABM that they cease the intimidation of union members on campus. The students, organized into a support committee for the janitors, had also collected more than 1,000 signatures on petitions, which were presented to the Vice Provost of Facilities demanding the university publicly support the union's demands for higher wages and maintain its contract with a union contractor regardless of the outcome of the current negotiations. The current contract expires May 31.

*Raul Gonzalez
Redwood City, California*

Socialist campaign

John Sarge, Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress in

Michigan, opened his campaign with a public forum assailing the INS assault in Miami as an "attack on democratic rights of working people in the United States" and a continuation of the relentless attacks on Cuba's "sovereignty and revolution." Sarge, an auto worker, is running in Detroit's 15th Congressional District.

Workers and farmers for two centuries "fought bloody battles for the Bill of Rights," Sarge said. "My campaign will continue to defend" democratic rights of working people, which suffered a serious blow with the INS commando-style assault in Miami.

Linking the INS Miami raid to the military assault on the island of Vieques, Sarge urged every "worker and young person to join in protests opposing this act of aggression against a colonized people."

Sarge and his supporters campaigned at the annual Cinco de Mayo celebration held in the city's

Latino community. In a media statement and leaflet that was well received at the event, the Socialist Workers candidate denounced the FBI and U.S. marshals' raid on Vieques demanding, "U.S. hands off Vieques!"

Sarge walked in an afternoon picket line at the federal building with others organized by the Detroit Justice for Cuba Coalition. Two days later he campaigned at a rally in the Middle Eastern community opposing the U.S. sanctions on Iraq.

Bill Schmitt

Detroit, Michigan

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.

Fiji coup targets Labour government

BY MICHAEL TUCKER

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—Military rule was declared in Fiji May 29, 10 days after a rightist coup was launched to oust the Labour Party-led government. The rightists had occupied Fiji's parliament and taken hostage 34 members of the government, including Prime Minister Mahendra Chaudhry. As we go to press, the hostages were still being held.

Following the imposition of martial law, Fiji's new military ruler, Commodore Frank Bainimarama, announced that all of the rightists' demands were being met. The government and president Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara were dismissed, the country's 1997 constitution was revoked and its 1990 constitution restored, and the organizers of the coup were granted amnesty.

The May 19 takeover of parliament was led by George Speight, described in the press as a "part-Fijian" businessman who returned to Fiji from Australia four years ago. He was accompanied by seven members of the Counter Revolutionary Warfare Unit (CRWU), an elite army unit set up under Sitiveni Rabuka. Rabuka led two military coups in Fiji in 1987 that prevented a previous Labour government from taking office, and ruled Fiji until elections in May last year.

Hundreds of supporters were allowed to enter the parliament and reinforce the rightist siege during the days following the takeover. Speight demanded that the Labour-led government be replaced by a government run by "indigenous Fijians".

The attempted coup was launched as 5,000 opponents of the government were marching through the capital city of Suva. The rightist Taukei movement and opposition parties linked to Fiji's hereditary ruling chiefs organized the march as part of a campaign to undermine the Labour-led government. These forces raise demands for "indigenous rights" in order to assert their claims to political power, while attacking the Labour-led government as "Indian-dominated" and stirring resentment against Fijians of Indian descent. As news of the coup spread, gangs began attacking Indo-Fijian-owned stores in central Suva, looting 167 and torching 20. President Mara imposed a state of emergency and curfew.

Workers and farmers responded to the



More than 3,000 Fijians and supporters marched May 21 in Auckland, New Zealand, to protest rightist coup in Fiji. Similar protests have taken place in Australia and on the West Coast of Canada. Workers in Fiji responded to the coup with a 24-hour strike.

coup with a 24-hour strike May 22 that brought the country to a standstill, closing workplaces, schools, and transportation. The Fiji Trades Union Congress (FTUC), which represents trade unions and organizations of working farmers, called the strike to demand that the Labour-led government be restored to office. The Labour Party was formed by the FTUC in 1985.

Fiji's Great Council of Chiefs began meeting in Suva May 23 to broker a deal with the coup leaders. While opposing Speight's coup and calling for the hostages to be released, they seized the opportunity to press their interests, concurring that the Chaudhry government should be removed and replaced by a government dominated by "indigenous Fijians." The council, however, voted to continue backing Kamisese Mara as president.

Mara announced May 27 that he had dismissed the Labour-led government, which is still imprisoned at parliament, and was appointing a new government. He also said he was considering amnesty for Speight and his gunmen.

Under the 1997 constitution, the Great Council of Chiefs appoints the president, who is head of state and commander of the armed forces. The constitution acknowledges the council as the body from which authority derives. Rabuka, although a "commoner," is chairman of the Great Council of Chiefs.

The Labour Party won a landslide victory in Fiji's May 1999 elections, gaining 37 seats in the 71-seat parliament, an outright majority. Its two coalition partners in the election campaign gained an additional 15 seats. Labour leader Mahendra Chaudhry, who became prime minister, had been a longtime leader of the Fiji Trades Union Congress and secretary of the Public Service Association and of the National Farmers Union.

An opinion poll six months ago showed 62 percent of voters supported Chaudhry as prime minister.

The main party representing the chiefly aristocracy and local capitalists, Soqosoqo Ni Vakavuewa Taukei (SVT), led by Rabuka, was soundly defeated in the elections, win-

ning only eight seats. Speight was a SVT candidate in the elections. A number of reactionary nationalist parties, critical of Rabuka, drew votes away from the SVT. Its coalition partner, the National Federation Party (NFP), won no seats, losing its electoral base to the Labour Party. The NFP, dominated by Indo-Fijian capitalists, had previously been the main opposition party in Fiji, drawing its electoral support from Indo-Fijian workers and farmers.

The Labour-led coalition won the support of workers and farmers who are Indo-Fijians and indigenous Fijians, cutting across the tradition of voting along racial lines. Although two-thirds of the government cabinet were indigenous Fijians, the capitalist media routinely describes the government as "Indian-dominated."

During its year in office the Labour-led government had begun implementing a number of measures that are in the interests of working people. This included lowering taxes and introducing price controls on basic foodstuffs, electricity, health care, housing, and education; introducing social benefits for the unemployed and elderly for the first time; and restoring jobs lost under privatization programs of the previous government.

The population of Fiji is more than 800,000, of whom 51 percent are indigenous Fijians and 43 percent Indo-Fijians. The country was a British colony until 1970, and its economic life today is dominated by Australian and New Zealand banks and businesses.

The Great Council of Chiefs was established by the colonial authorities as a prop to British rule. Ownership of the bulk of the land in Fiji was vested in the chiefs, and remains the source of their income and authority. The vast majority of working people, whether indigenous Fijians or Indo-Fijians, cannot own the land they work.

Workers from the Indian subcontinent were brought to Fiji in the late 19th and early 20th centuries to work on the vast colonial sugar plantations, first as indentured laborers and later as tenant farmers. Colonial laws sought to segregate indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijians and ascribed them separate legal and political rights. This set-up was largely retained at independence, with a racially segregated electoral system designed to ensure continued political rule by the chiefs, backed by local and foreign business interests.

Breaking down of divisions

The development of a large modern working class, however, has undermined this social system, increasingly drawing working people of all nationalities together in the factories and on the land. At the same time, working people have forged trade unions and organizations of working farmers, and a Labour Party based on these, to advance their demands for social and democratic rights.

These gains are what reactionary forces are targeting with the coup, the ouster of the Labour-led government, and the demands by the chiefly aristocracy backed by prominent local capitalists for the restoration of "Fijian domination."

The 1997 constitution was drawn up by Rabuka in collaboration with the Australian and New Zealand governments. It replaced the constitution introduced by Rabuka in 1990 following the 1987 coups, which had sought to enshrine the rule of the chiefs and diminish the voting rights of Indo-Fijians.

While hailed by the imperialist powers as "restoring democracy" to Fiji, the new constitution merely removed the most discriminatory clauses of its predecessor, while maintaining the racially segregated voting system and upholding the ultimate authority of the Great Council of Chiefs.

The imperialist powers with interests in Fiji, principally Australia, New Zealand, Britain, and the United States, have threatened sanctions against Fiji unless the coup attempt is resolved constitutionally.

Ottawa seeks trade sanctions on Brazil

BY MICHEL DUGRÉ

MONTREAL—The Canadian government officially asked the World Trade Organization (WTO) on May 22 for authorization to impose trade sanctions against Brazil. The government in Ottawa claims the right to impose sanctions totaling Can\$5 billion over seven years on Brazilian goods entering the country (Can\$1=US 67 cents).

This represents Canadian capitalists' biggest trade war ever. The government here had taken retaliatory measures twice before under WTO rules—against the European Union and Australia. Both cases, however, involved relatively small trade sanctions.

The Canada-Brazil conflict stems from the fierce competition over the lucrative market for regional jets between Empresa Brasileira de Aeronautica (Embraer) and Montreal-based Bombardier, the world's third-largest airplane manufacturer.

In early May, the WTO sided with Bombardier and asked the Brazilian government to end its financing program for planes sold by Embraer. Within hours of that decision, officials in Ottawa, under pressure from Bombardier, pulled out of high-level talks with Brazilian representatives over the dispute and said they were asking the WTO for permission to slap Brazil with sanctions.

The Brazilian government had been offering to eliminate subsidies on future sales of regional jets, while refusing to undo contracts signed in the past for jets that have not been delivered. "It is not a question of

wanting to or not. We have to honor the sales contracts already signed," said José Alfredo Graça Lima, a Brazilian government official.

The Brazilian government offered to compensate Canadian business and Bombardier for past sales by giving Bombardier privileged access to Brazilian state contracts. Ottawa and Bombardier rejected the offer as insufficient and said Brazil must promise to stop selling planes as a condition of any further talks.

'Unprecedented' trade war

"This is unprecedented in the history of the World Trade Organization [and its predecessor]," said Valdemar Carneiro Leao, director of the economic department of Brazil's foreign ministry.

"Indeed, far from being a feud over airplane subsidies, the dispute appears to be shaping into a battle between north and south," noted an article in the *Toronto Globe and Mail*. The Brazilian government will be asking its partners in the Mercosur customs union—Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay—and other third world nations for support in its trade war with the Canadian government, said Brazilian foreign minister Luiz Felipe Lampreia.

In Canada, the Aerospace Industries Association is lobbying to win support for Ottawa's position among aerospace companies in Britain, France, Germany, Japan, and the United States. "This issue is larger than

the interests of one company or one industry sector, or for that matter, Canada alone," commented the Association's president, Peter Smith.

Embraer said that Ottawa is being intransigent by not recognizing that Brazilian companies cannot offer direct financing to clients with rates as low as those provided by companies in more economically developed countries.

"We're definitely dealing with a very important issue for the future of emerging nations. One thing that countries like Brazil, trying to get into high-tech markets, must have is the right to compete and the same kind of playing field," said Henrique Rzezinski, Embraer's vice president of foreign relations.

None of the unions to which thousands of Bombardier employees in Canada are affiliated have yet commented officially on this trade war between an imperialist power and a semicolonial nation. However, in a March 2000 "Statement on International Trade," Canadian Labour Congress officials took a decidedly nationalist, pro-company stance. The statement denounced "the secretive decision-making process of the WTO that has resulted in attacks on Canadian industries," among which they cited the aerospace industry.

Michel Dugré is a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees in Montreal.