

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Release prisoners brutalized  
by U.S. at Guantánamo!

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 66/NO. 12

MARCH 25, 2002

## Palestinians sharpen crisis of Israeli regime

Military onslaught may 'turn all Palestinians into fighters'

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

The Palestinian resistance to the brutal policies of the Israeli ruling class is sharpening the crisis of the government in Tel Aviv. Widening protests and more effective attacks against the occupying power have resulted in a growing death toll of Israeli soldiers and civilians.

In response, the Israeli government has unleashed its biggest military offensive since its invasion of Lebanon two decades ago, sending 20,000 troops and more than 100 tanks backed by warplanes and attack helicopters into the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Tel Aviv's forces have killed scores of Palestinians, rounded up hundreds more, and damaged countless homes and buildings.

"What they are doing is transforming every Palestinian into a potential fighter," said Palestinian leader Hanan Ashrawi of the impact of the Israeli onslaught, registering the depth of the fight for self-determination on the part of her people.

In the first 12 days of March, 159 Palestinians and 52 Israelis have been killed, making this the bloodiest period yet in 17 months of heightened conflict. Fifteen years ago one Israeli died for every 25 Palestinians killed by Tel Aviv's forces. The rising Israeli death toll includes 31 soldiers killed since last month.

Borrowing words from the U.S. government's justification for Washington's military aggression abroad, Israeli army officials said the virtual occupation of the two Palestinian areas was aimed at dismantling

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### Machinists walk out in contract dispute with Lockheed in Georgia



After overwhelmingly rejecting two contract proposals by Lockheed Martin, more than 2,500 Machinists walked off the job March 11. See article page 2.

Militant/Ned Measel

## Minneapolis press conference condemns cop killing of Somali youth; rally called

Make plans to attend the upcoming

### Regional Socialist Conferences

**'From the Escambray to the Congo': Report from Cuba**  
**Join the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialists**  
**Build the world communist movement**

**ATLANTA** — March 23—Reception 5:00 p.m., Meeting 6:00 p.m.  
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Hear

**Mary-Alice Waters**, Editor, *From the Escambray to the Congo* by Víctor Dreke; member of Political Committee of the Socialist Workers Party

**Jack Barnes**, National Secretary, Socialist Workers Party

**Arrin Hawkins**, Young Socialists leader and participant in Havana book fair

**Linda Joyce**, Pathfinder reprint project volunteer and participant in Havana book fair

**Brian Taylor**, participant in Havana book fair, member of United Mine Workers of America Local 2133

Sponsored by the Socialist Workers Party branches and Young Socialists chapters in the region.

The event will coincide with a meeting of socialist workers who are members of the United Mine Workers. Other regional conferences are being planned and will be advertised in future issues of the Militant.

BY BECKY ELLIS

MINNEAPOLIS—"Minneapolis has become a slaughterhouse. We call for the removal of the police chief," said Omar Jamal, the executive director of the Somali Justice Advocacy Center at a March 11 press conference here in response to the cop killing of Abu Jeilani, 28.

There has been an increase in cop harassment of people since September 11, and the "police are going around kicking some people's doors in," Jamal said. "And now this: just shooting them and killing them just like Mogadishu and civil war. This isn't what we expect."

Jamal and others held the conference, which was attended by 50 people, to protest the killing by Minneapolis police of Jeilani, a Somali immigrant with a history of mental illness. The killing had occurred the previous day, when police shot numerous bullets into Jeilani. They later said they believed he was charging them. Witnesses say the man had been walking down the street carrying a machete and a crowbar.

Word of the brutal assault spread quickly throughout the Somali community, and 40 people gathered at the scene of the shooting, demanding answers from the cops.

"He was mentally ill," Jeilani's brother, Alawi, told the press conference. "He wasn't doing anything."

Amal Yusuf, the executive director of the Somalian Women's Association, said, "I see this as an overutilization of police power. This is police brutality. It was a long knife

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## 'We are all the target of attacks by the bosses'

Socialist Michael Italie fights political firing by Goodwill Industries

BY FRANCISCO PICADO

ST. PAUL, Minnesota—"I am here to talk about the kind of movement we need in order to defend workers' rights," said Michael Italie at a meeting with five meat packers here. "I am not only talking about my own case, because we are all the target of the attacks by the bosses. We need to discuss out the road to defend all of us."

Italie, a socialist worker fired from his job as a sewing machine operator at Goodwill Industries in Miami, opened his tour here by having a wide-ranging political discussion with the meat packers, who work at Dakota Premium Foods and Lloyd's Barbecue Company. The three workers from Lloyd's decided to work together to collect signatures and win support for Italie's fight where they work. The following day Italie met four other workers from Dakota Premium Foods at a similar house meeting.

Last fall, as the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of Miami, Italie was outspoken in support of the Cuban Revolution.

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## Meetings will defend five revolutionaries from Cuba jailed by U.S.

BY GREG MCCARTAN

NEW YORK—In the first of a series of meetings to defend five Cuban revolutionaries framed up and imprisoned by the U.S. government, the Militant Labor Forum in New York's Garment District is sponsoring a March 22 meeting featuring Martin Koppel, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party and editor of *Perspectiva Mundial*.

Socialist workers and Young Socialists in

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# Machinists strike Lockheed in Georgia

BY NED MEASEL

MARIETTA, Georgia—Fighting company outsourcing of work and demands to increase health insurance payments, members of the Machinists union at Lockheed here walked off the job and set up picket lines March 11.

Of the 7,000 people who work at the plant, 2,700 are members of International Association of Machinists (IAM) Local 709. The last time the union struck was 1977. Over the past decade Lockheed has laid off thousands of workers. In 1990 there were 14,000 members of Local 709 who worked at the plant.

Lockheed Martin, a major contractor for the Pentagon, builds F-22 Raptor fighter planes and C-130J Hercules transport planes at the sprawling facility adjacent to Dobbins Air Reserve Base. Last year Lockheed won the largest defense contract in history from the U.S. government to build the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter for \$200 billion.

After they turned down the first contract offer by an overwhelming 96 percent of workers voting, the company quickly returned with a new proposal, which was turned down by 78 percent of those casting a ballot.

In its first proposal Lockheed offered a 3 percent annual wage hike for each of the three years of the contract and a \$500 signing bonus. The company bumped this up in its second proposal to a 4 percent raise in the first year and a \$1,000 signing bonus. The bosses also said they would increase pension payments from \$47 a month for every year of service to \$56. The union's negotiating team unanimously recommended rejection of the offer and for a strike to be called. Similar contracts were accepted at two smaller Lockheed Martin plants in Palmdale and Sunnyvale, California.

## Growing use of outsourcing

For workers interviewed here, the main issues in the strike are outsourcing of jobs, the pension plan, and health insurance payments. Outside the union hall while the second vote was underway, Harold Jones said a "raise is no good if you're not there to get it." He said in his work area he has seen work that is normally done by union members at the plant crated up by the company to be

sent elsewhere.

"The managers will tell you 'We'll let you do it this time,'" he said. By going on strike, "we want to make Lockheed bring the work back." Jones has worked for the company 22 years.

When asked if he thought the government would take action to avert a strike, Jones said that if "the government does anything it shouldn't let Lockheed do what it is doing. We're faced with terrorism every day with these people looking to take your job."

Roland Yap told the *Militant* that Lockheed Martin "made \$8 billion in the last four years yet they want to increase our insurance premiums and take away holidays. We are the ones doing the job and making that money, not them."

Another worker said the company takes \$14 out of a union member's weekly paycheck for health coverage for an individual. In the proposed contract Lockheed wants to increase the payment to \$30 a week for an individual and \$60 a week for two people. "The wage raise won't cover the increase in health insurance payments," he said. "If we accept this contract, in a week there'll be a lot less people working."

Rufus Cooper explained that there used to be 60 workers employed at his "cost center." Now there is one. He is signed up to



Militant/Ned Measel

Lockheed workers staff picket line March 13. Workers explain that the main issues in the strike are outsourcing of jobs, the pension plan, and health insurance payments.

cook for the pickets.

Another worker said he thought the lack of a cost-of-living increase in the pension plan was a major problem. "I know people who retired years ago when the pension was \$15 to \$18 a month per year of service and

that's what they're still getting," he said. The average age of workers at the plant is 53.

Arlene Rubinstein, a meat packer and member of the United Food and Commercial Workers union, contributed to this article.

## 300 in Watsonville demand drivers' licenses

BY ROLLANDE GIRARD

WATSONVILLE, California—More than 300 people joined a march here to demand that the state of California grant them the right to have a driver's license.

Many carried handmade signs in Spanish that read, "The license is not a privilege, it is a right that we deserve" and "We have rights, we are workers; a license; legalization for all; social security." Protest organizers waited to begin the action until Sunday Mass had concluded and invited the churchgoers to join the protest. Many did so.

The protest was organized by local defenders of immigrant rights and the Community Volunteers of San Jose. Over the last year the Community Volunteers have orga-

nized numerous protests in cities across the region to demand the right to a driver's license for all.

"We are united here to demand our rights," said José Sandoval, a protest leader. As the march wound its way through the city, participants invited people to join and to sign a petition which will be delivered to the state government in Sacramento. Many

people in passing cars honked their horns in support.

"We are not making bombs, we are working," said Gabriela, who volunteered to collect petitions.

"The majority of the people here work in the fields," said Ricardo Manzo Jimenez, a farm worker. "A lot cannot go to work be-

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## Krug winery workers approve contract, boss ends lockout

BY BILL KALMAN

SAN FRANCISCO—Winery workers at the Charles Krug Winery in Napa returned to work at the end of February after narrowly approving the company's latest contract proposal on February 16 by a vote of 16 to 12.

The workers, who are members of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) union Local 186-D, were locked out by the company last July. The lockout lasted more than seven months, making it the longest in California history. The Krug winery is the oldest in the Napa Valley and the last that is unionized.

The Krug bosses went after the 40 cellar workers after they rejected a concession contract that would have cut pay for some jobs and eliminated job classifications. The new three-year contract contains no wage

cuts and will limit the winery's use of non-union labor. Workers overwhelmingly rejected previous settlement offers by the company in August and January.

"I don't think anybody's happy," said cellar worker Kenny Drost, who noted that the unionists had nearly exhausted their unemployment benefits.

Many saw the struggle as an important way to defend immigrant rights. Most workers at the winery, and in the Napa wine industry, are originally from Mexico. "There are a lot of people coming into this country willing to work for eight-something an hour," said Frank Espinoza, who has worked at Krug for 42 years. "How are our children going to be able to survive on \$8 an hour?"

Bill Kalman is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 120.

## THE MILITANT

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# Washington prepares war against Iraq

BY JACK WILLEY

As Washington wraps up its bloody aerial and ground assault in the eastern mountains of Afghanistan—annihilating pockets of Taliban and al Qaeda fighters along with some civilians there—Bush administration officials are working to build a case to mount a military assault on Iraq.

U.S. president George Bush, having lost the momentum from September 11 in justifying military assaults abroad, has been pounding away on the theme of not allowing certain governments in the world to possess weapons of mass destruction.

"In preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction, there is no margin for error, and no chance to learn from mistakes," Bush said in a March 11 speech in Washington. "Our coalition must act deliberately, but inaction is not an option." Bush added that his administration "is now consulting with friends and allies about this greatest of dangers."

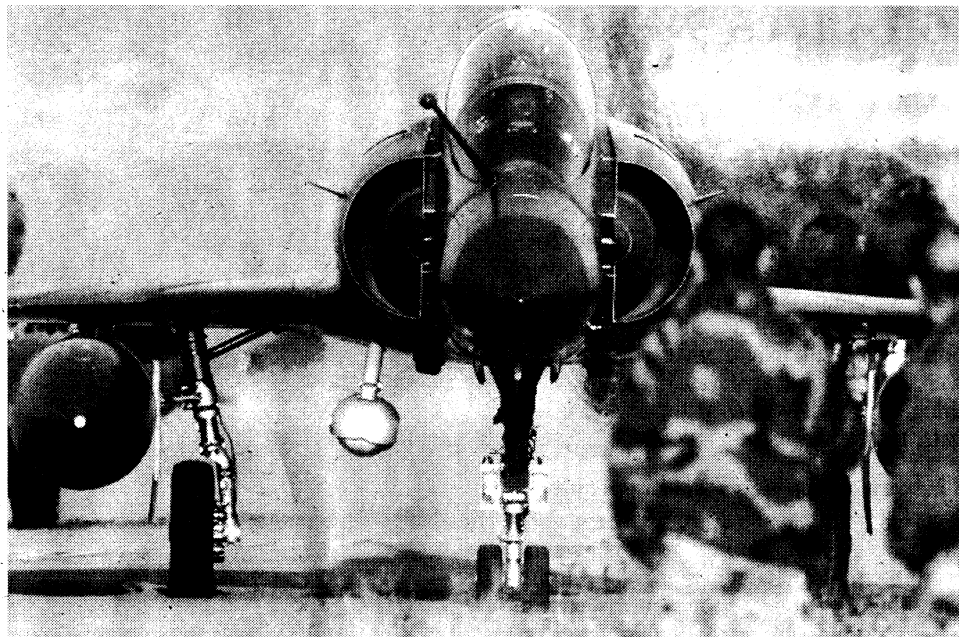
Articles in the big-business press, such as the *International Herald Tribune*, pointed out the remark was a "reference to the trip by Vice President Richard Cheney to several Gulf and Middle Eastern countries where he is understood to be seeking support for a campaign against Iraq."

In this context the disclosure over the same days of a supposedly classified Pentagon "nuclear posture review" raised Washington's belligerent stance in the world and brought a sharp rebuke from the governments of China, Iran, Iraq, and several other countries. The document poses the possible use of nuclear weapons by U.S. imperialism against seven countries in response to their use of, or to prevent them from using, weapons of mass destruction.

Although initially portrayed as a big departure for Washington, more sober press reports pointed out the policy has firm roots in the previous Clinton administration. As with other aspects of U.S. government moves since September 11, the nuclear posture review is part of the acceleration of trends under way long before the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

## Lining up 'coalition' for Iraq war

In his visit to London and seven countries in the Middle East, Cheney has sought



**French Mirage fighter jet taxis after landing at Manas airport in Kyrgyzstan. For the first time since the Afghan war, Washington and Paris are using the ex-Soviet republic as a platform for bombing assaults in Afghanistan. U.S. troops are also stationed in at least two bases in Kyrgyzstan as Washington consolidates its military presence in the region.**

to shore up support for an imperialist military assault on Iraq. The London *Guardian* reported March 10 that Washington "has asked Britain to draw up plans for 25,000 of this country's troops to join a U.S. task force to overthrow Saddam Hussein," the largest number of troops ever requested in peacetime. British troops would be part of a 250,000-strong ground force to invade Iraq, in the case of full-scale war to topple the regime, the paper stated.

In a manner reminiscent of the buildup to the U.S.-led 1991 slaughter in Iraq, Washington, under the banner of the United Nations, is cynically offering "negotiations" with the Hussein government. In this case, Washington is pressing draconian demands for "inspections" of weapons of mass destruction that would put the regime at the mercy of imperialism.

The *Wall Street Journal* on March 8 cautioned Washington against relying too much on the negotiations tactic. Pressuring Iraq to allow inspectors "raises the question of what will happen if Saddam Hussein says yes," and "buys...more time to acquire a nuclear bomb." A senior Bush administra-

tion official said the previous day that the push for inspectors would be a trap unless it is "the kind of go anywhere, any time sort of inspection regime."

Hans Blix, chairman of the UN arms inspection commission, said, "For the credibility of future inspection it is important that there are no sanctuaries and that access is without any delay that might permit the removal of evidence."

As UN officials claim they are pursuing a "peaceful" resolution, Washington is preparing for war. In the previous 1991 six-week air assault and 100-hour ground war, more than 150,000 Iraqis were murdered and millions left homeless by U.S.-led forces.

Washington is using a pro-imperialist wing of the leadership of the Kurdish oppressed national minority to legitimize its war moves. The U.S. rulers have enlisted the Kurdish Democratic Party and other groups that function under the cover of the U.S.- and British-enforced "no fly zone" in the north of Iraq. The *Guardian* reported that U.S. special forces are in the area training militias in preparation for an assault.

The Bush administration has offered to finance the construction of a radio transmitter in an attempt to foment resistance against the government. The Iraqi National Congress, a U.S.-backed group that also operates under UN protection, has supported the proposal and requests it be built on Iraqi soil.

The *Guardian* also reported that 5,000 U.S. armored vehicles that had been mothballed in Kuwait since the Persian Gulf War are now being overhauled.

The king of Jordan, a staunch U.S. ally, publicly cautioned Washington during Cheney's tour. A spokesperson for the monarch said the king would tell the U.S. vice president that "any attack on Iraq will be devastating for the whole region. It will be devastating in terms of spreading instability. It will be politically and economically devastating. It will be too much to take. With the Israeli-Palestinian situation the way it is, opening another violent front is not good for this region."

## Nuclear posture review

The Pentagon's Nuclear Posture Review has received backing from both Democratic and Republican politicians. The report picked out seven nations among many that Washington claims have or are developing weapons of mass destruction: China, Iran, Iraq, Libya, north Korea, Russia and Syria.

National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice said that the purpose of the report is for Washington to send "a very strong signal to anyone who might try to use weapons of mass destruction against the United States that they'd be met with a devastating response."

Democratic senator Joseph Lieberman gave his stamp of approval to the policy move on CNN's "Late Edition" program. "Frankly, I don't mind some of these renegade nations [thinking] twice about the willingness of the United States to take action to defend our people and our values and our allies," he said.

Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, tried to allay concerns that other big-business politicians raised, stressing the report is "not a plan."

"This preserves for the president all the options that a president would want to have in case this country or our friends and allies were attacked with weapons of mass destruction, be they nuclear, biological, chemical, or for that matter, high explosives," he said.

One recommendation in the report is the development of a new generation of nuclear weapons that have a lower yield and produce less nuclear fallout. Bombs that can penetrate deep bunkers are also a development priority, he said.

British, Australian, and Italian government spokespeople supported Washington's latest move. In Japan—the only country to be hit by nuclear weapons—government officials were largely silent.

Government representatives from the countries named in the report immediately condemned the threat. A spokesman for the Chinese government, Sun Yuxi, told the official state paper that "China, like other countries, is deeply shocked" to be in the group of seven and demanded an explanation.

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## Bloody assault shores up U.S. domination in Afghanistan

BY JACK WILLEY

The continued effort toward launching an attack on Iraq takes place as U.S.-led forces wrap up their "Operation Anaconda" mission in Afghanistan. Launched March 2, the operation has focused on a 70-square-mile battle area. That region has been pounded every day by a concentration of air power unprecedented in the Afghan war. U.S. forces have flown long-range bombers and tactical fighter jets; dropping hundreds of bombs, including 500-ton bombs into cave entrances, sucking out all the oxygen and suffocating anyone trapped inside.

More than 1,500 U.S.-led troops from Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Norway, and the government of Afghanistan have surrounded the area and slowly moved in to cut off all supplies and escape routes of fighters hiding in the mountains.

After eight U.S. soldiers were killed in combat, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld arrogantly stated that Taliban and al Qaeda forces sustained "much larger numbers of killed and wounded, and there will be many more."

Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, warned that al Qaeda forces face certain doom. "It seems they have chosen to stay and fight to the last, and we hope to accommodate them," he said.

## Cannot win war from 35,000 feet high

For the first time since Washington's post-September 11 bombing assault began, U.S. troops are in the forefront of ground combat, albeit after a brutal bombing assault and under the cover of air power. In addition to the eight troops killed in combat, dozens have been injured in what has been the fiercest ground combat U.S. forces have seen since their assault on Somalia in 1993.

At each step in the war and imperialist takeover of Afghanistan, ruling-class spokespeople have stated that the U.S. forces are far from finished in their effort to eliminate all organized resistance to Washington in order to set up an imperialist protectorate.

Lieut. Gen. Bernard Trainor, a retired Marine commander, told the *Washington Post* that while the tactical goal is to eradicate the al Qaeda forces, the even more significant strategic goal may be to show the world the depth of U.S. resolve.

"It gives lie to the belief that Americans can only fight from 35,000 feet," he said.

After reports of the first U.S. casualties, Rumsfeld said, "This will not be the last such operation in Afghanistan. I think we have to expect that there are other sizable pockets, that there will be other battles of this type."

Meanwhile, a reporter for London's *Financial Times* wrote that in the villages he has visited near the battle he found virtually no support among peasants and workers for the imperialist assault. Eyeing the bombing nearby, one peasant told the reporter, "For God's sake, please tell your Americans to spare our children!"

Local Afghans adamantly told the reporter that the people in the mountains were former Taliban supporters who were trying to simply hide out from the Americans. "Everyone was a Taliban," one said. "If they bomb Saifur Rahman," the leader in the area who headed up the group under U.S. fire, "why don't they bomb the ministries? All the bureaucrats in Kabul were Taliban too."

People in the area said that Saifur Rahman had sent an emissary to the local governor, inviting him to inspect Shah-i-kot, and was awaiting an answer when the imperialists and their allies launched their attack.

## Cuba and the Coming American Revolution

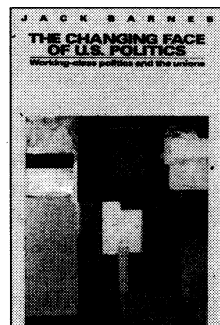
by Jack Barnes

**There will be a victorious revolution in the United States before a victorious counterrevolution in Cuba**

-- Fidel Castro, March 1961

*Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* is about the struggles of working people in the imperialist heartland, the youth who are attracted to them, and the example set by the people of Cuba that revolution is not only necessary—it can be made.

Preface by Mary-Alice Waters. In English, Spanish, and French. **\$14.95**



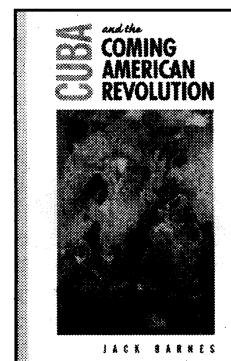
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# Meat packers in Minnesota welcome fired garment worker

Continued from front page

tion, in defense of unions and workers' rights, and in opposition to the U.S. war in Afghanistan. After he explained these positions in a televised debate with the Democratic and Republican candidates, he was fired October 22. Goodwill's CEO Dennis Pastrana told the *Miami Herald* that he had dismissed Italie for his political views. Since then Italie's supporters have waged a campaign to get his job back and make Goodwill pay a political price for its violation of his rights. At the center of this campaign to defend workers' rights is talking with and winning support from thousands of working people across the country.

At the meeting here, Marcos, a worker at Lloyd's Barbecue, said he is "angry about police brutality. One time I was brutalized by five cops for no reason at all. I was outraged when the cops who beat up Rodney King were let off the hook in Los Angeles in 1992. I am very interested in how to defend workers against these kinds of attacks."

"The cops who beat up workers like you are doing their job," said Italie. "The cops exist in order to intimidate working people and to defend the prerogatives of the rich. The source of cop brutality is capitalism. The problem of cop brutality poses the question of building a political party of workers that can take political power out of the hands of the capitalists."

Lloyd's Barbecue Company is a subsidiary of food giant General Mills. A series of attacks by the company on the workforce has made the plant floor the scene of frequent discussions on how to fight back. For instance, 10 days before the meeting with Italie the bosses laid off 43 workers, using the excuse that production had to be cut back. However, the company is now demanding that the remaining workers keep up the same level of production.

"The company spends lots of money on new machinery and we produce a lot more meat," stated Marcos. "This causes unemployment. However, they don't raise wages. And we get none of the benefit."

"You're exactly right," Italie said. "The companies are driven to make more money by getting us to produce more in less time. This also drives them to attack our rights. The companies don't want us to have any space to talk to each other and to organize against them."

"I am especially angry at Lloyd's management because of the manner in which

they laid off the 43 workers," stated José. "No one was given notice. They were marched out of the plant by a supervisor all the way to the parking lot without the opportunity to talk to any other workers. They were marched out as if they had done something wrong. It was as if they were criminals. It was insulting."

## The way bosses view working people

"This is the way the capitalists view working people," Italie said. "They wish we had no rights. They have no respect for our dignity. This is what is shown in my case as well. Goodwill Industries where I worked was just pushing a little harder and faster than other companies. One of the things that my case highlights is that the laws under capitalism do not protect workers. The laws protect the capitalists. Workers at Lloyd's will have to put up a resistance, like other workers who are under attack."

"We should also figure out what is the root of these attacks," Italie said. "I point out that it is the system of capitalism. Under this system the bosses are only concerned about maximizing the profits of the owners of industry and the banks. The fewer rights we have the easier it is for the bosses to maximize their profits."

Miguel, a leader of a union-organizing campaign at Dakota Premium Foods, said he thought that unemployment "is getting to be a big problem. What recourse do workers have who cannot get a job? Their situation is desperate. It's working people like these who participated in the Mexican Revolution."

Workers at Dakota Premium Foods launched a fight to establish a union in June 2000 with a seven-hour sit-down strike in the company cafeteria. They demanded the company slow down the line speed and stop forcing workers to work while injured. During the sit-down strike the workers were able to force the company to meet with them and to grant some concessions. The company has refused to recognize the union ever since, even though workers voted in their big majority for a union.

"Working people can only effectively resist the attacks by the bosses and their government when we act together," Italie said. "Workers are in the same boat. The capitalists push us together and we begin talking to each other about our common problems and we get to know each other. We begin to see this is a broader problem and learn of other workers who are also resisting. By

## Bronx janitors rally for a new contract



"What do we want? A new contract!" some 2,500 janitors and other building workers chanted on March 7, as they sat down in front of the Supreme Court in the Bronx, New York. The workers, members of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 32BJ, voted a week earlier to launch a strike on March 14, the date their present contract expires, if their demands around wages and benefits are not met. The wage of a super—a higher-paid SEIU member—of \$500 a week in the Bronx compares with \$750 in Manhattan and \$710 in Brooklyn. The workers explain that their health coverage and facilities are also much more limited. Local 32BJ covers some 70,000 workers, 15,000 of whom live in the Bronx.

going through experiences together it is easier to see our own strength and potential power as a class."

At Dakota Premium Foods, Miguel said, "We found the strength to resist together in the sit-down strike. We organized many people ahead of time. We discussed the fact that we had no alternative but to fight. The bosses talked to each worker individually and asked them to give up. Nobody buckled. We stood strong."

## Example of the Cuban Revolution

In addition to signing up thousands of workers and encouraging union members, striking workers, and people involved in protests against police brutality and other struggles to protest the firing by Goodwill, Italie said he also urges everyone "to read socialist literature like Pathfinder books. We

need to understand that we are capable of making a revolution in this country." He pointed to *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* by Jack Barnes, and *From the Escambray to the Congo: In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution*, a newly released Pathfinder title by Victor Dreke. "The main lesson of both books is that working people like us can do it, can take political power. We can defeat the capitalists. The example of the Cuban Revolution is clear. *Si, se puede*."

"In order to accomplish that goal, we need to build a communist party in the United States," stated Italie. "Without a conscious, tested, and disciplined leadership the struggles we are talking about today cannot be led to victory once and for all."

"As with the recent massive upsurge in Argentina, the capitalists will always find a way out of their crises until a revolutionary party is built that can lead millions of working people to replace the capitalist government with one of their own," he said. "That is what the Socialist Workers Party is all about. That is why you should get to know more about our party and work with us."

Supporters of Italie in the Twin Cities are also building a citywide meeting at the University of Minnesota.

# Houston meet condemns cop killing of worker

BY PHIL DUZINSKI

HOUSTON—Fifty people gathered March 3 at the Guadalupe Center here to oppose the killing of Luis Alfonso Torres, who died in the custody of police in adjacent Baytown, Texas, six weeks ago.

The candlelight vigil and speak-out hosted by the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) heard a range of speakers express their outrage at the January 20 killing of Torres in what Baytown cops called routine police procedure.

A construction worker and resident immigrant from Mexico, Torres was visiting his family in Baytown when he had an acute attack of high blood pressure. Relatives called an ambulance, but Baytown cops were called when Torres fled from medical technicians.

Participants in the meeting viewed a copy of the cruiser dashboard tape of the incident, which showed Torres calmly shaking one cop's hand. A second cop then approached and the two wrestled Torres to the ground. Loud cries of pain could be heard from Torres as they restrained him.

"This was not an accident," said Houston NAACP executive director Yolanda Smith. "It was a deliberate attempt to violate his human rights."

Local chairman of the National Black United Front, Kofi Taharka, pointed to the 1977 drowning of Joe Campos Torres, who was beaten by Houston cops and thrown into a bayou. Taharka said not a lot has changed

since then. Others pointed to the 1998 killing of Pedro Oregon who was shot 32 times by Houston cops.

Several days earlier, in an interview with the *Houston Chronicle*, Mexican Consul General Enrique Buj Flores said, "We are not utterly fools, and know sometimes there are acts of excessive force against Hispanics simply because they are Hispanic."

Harris County medical examiner Joye Carter ruled Torres's death a homicide resulting from mechanical asphyxiation, explaining this means that someone compressed his airways so that he could not breathe.

No illegal drugs or alcohol were found in his system, but the cops claim Torres appeared intoxicated. Capt. Jack Erickson, of the Baytown police, excused the killing by saying, "They could later be held responsible if that person were hit by a car or hurt somebody else."

Chairing the meeting, LULAC communications director Johnny Mata invited those in attendance to participate in an upcoming march that would demand justice be done in this case. The officers involved have been placed on paid administrative leave.

A statement issued by Anthony Dutrow, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Congress in the 18th district, pointed to the role of the cops in this and other similar incidents.

"The cops feel that with the recent war in Afghanistan and the anti-immigrant attacks in the name of the so-called war against ter-

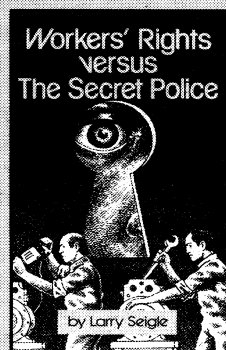
rorism, they have been given the green light to harass, beat, and use deadly force such as this against working people. My campaign demands these cops be prosecuted for this brutal murder."

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Larry Seigle

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## Widows' March to Demand Black Lung Benefits for Miners and their Families

March 15 -- 1:00pm kick-off rally at UMWA District 17 office, 1300 Kanawha Blvd. East, Charleston, West Virginia

April 15 -- Final protest rally at the Capitol in Washington, D.C.

For more information, contact Kawawha Valley Black Lung and Disabled Workers Association at (304) 595-2280. Funds for the widow's walk can be sent and made out to NBLA c/o Thomas Ellis, P.O. Box 632, Royalton, IL 62983.



# Forum builds march for black lung benefits

BY ALYSON KENNEDY

CRAIG, Colorado—"Discussion on Black Lung Saturday" ran a headline above an article on the back page of the March 7 *Craig Daily Press*. Reporting a March 9 Militant Labor Forum, the article said that "a panel discussion on black lung and other mining safety issues will be held in Craig on Saturday. The meeting will be held at 1:00 p.m. Saturday at the Pathfinder bookstore on W. Victory Way. The meeting is also to rally support for Black Lung Widows who are organizing a protest walk from Charleston W. Va., through Pennsylvania to Washington, D.C., while holding rallies along the way."

The article and subsequent forum were the first major publicity for the March 15-April 15 walk by widows of coal miners who are demanding full federal black lung compensation for miners and their spouses. The widows' walk is sponsored by the National Black Lung Association, the United Mine Workers of America, and the Ohio Valley Environmental Coalitions.

Widows are planning to kick off the action March 15 in Charleston, West Virginia. They will hold rallies in Fairmont and Morgantown, West Virginia, and other cities along the way.

The forum was widely publicized in the area, including with calendar notices in four local newspapers. Flyers were posted up in local mini-marts and grocery stores.

Jason Alessio, a member of UMW Local 1984 and a member of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists, was the featured speaker at the meeting.

"As the Bush administration is proposing cuts in Social Security, Medicare and other government-funded entitlements, and increasing funding to 'homeland defense' and the military budget," Alessio said, "coal

miners' widows are organizing a walk from the West Virginia coal fields to Washington, D.C., demanding black lung benefits."

The month-long action, he said, is a good example of how working people "can make history and transform the future—something we never learn in school or in any textbooks."

In addition to the widows' walk, the forum discussed the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision that imperils the 1992 Coal Act and benefits for retired miners; proposed cuts to the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA); and the attacks on mine safety that have led to an increase in the number of miners killed in the last several years. These issues have received no news coverage in western Colorado, a major coal

mining region of the United States.

Alessio described the social movement that developed in the coalfields in the 1960s and 1970s in the fight for black lung benefits, mine safety, and health care.

"In 1968 the Black Lung Association (BLA) was born in southern West Virginia," he said. "The BLA led some of the most important wildcat strikes in 1969, forcing the government to provide black lung benefits. At the height of the struggle, more than 40,000 miners from West Virginia alone were out on strike. Their motto was, 'No Law, No Coal.'"

"The black lung strike," the socialist said, "was instrumental in passing the federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969. This established in law that black lung is an

occupational disease and forced the government to mandate inspections of dust concentration levels in coal mines for the first time."

Participants in the meeting discussed why it is important for coal miners and other workers to support the demand by the widows for federal black lung compensation in any way they can. Linda Chapman, a leader of the walk, sent a statement to the forum (see below).

"People like Linda Chapman see themselves not as victims but as fighters," Alessio said. "In her message to this meeting she said, 'I knew something had to be done.'" With this kind of determination and fighting spirit, said the socialist, "working people are making history."

## 'We will not stop until the laws are changed'

The following is a message from Linda Chapman, a leader of the widows' walk demanding federal black lung benefits, to the March 9 Militant Labor Forum in Craig, Colorado. Debbie Wills, who is mentioned in the letter, is a leader of the National Black Lung Association and of the Kanawha Valley Black Lung and Disabled Workers Association in West Virginia. Alyson Kennedy is the chairperson of the forum series.

Dear Alyson,

You asked me if I would like to make a statement to your group out in Colorado. Nothing would give me more pleasure, so here goes:

First let me say, THANKYOU! And God Bless each and every one of you who have cared enough to take the time to see what you can do to help me to succeed. I am a

firm believer that "ONE" voice can make a difference and with wonderful people like you, it makes me have much hope.

When my husband Carson died I lost my one and only "soul mate" and in some of the darkest hours of my life when I had to face another new day without him, I wondered what was the purpose of my life without "BEAR"? What could it possibly be? And then I started meeting Widows just like myself with stories just as horrible or worse than mine. Being a person of "action" I knew something had to be done.

At one of our meetings in Montgomery I proposed that we do a WIDOWS' WALK. Realizing that so many of these fine women were older and in worse health than I was, I thought that maybe this was going to be an undertaking that I would probably have to do on my own. Being a total believer that

where there's a will there's a way, I started making some plans. Debbie Wills has been a "big force" behind this movement. She has known many of the doors that I have needed to knock on and she has opened many of these doors for me.

A reporter asked me this week what my name was? I love when this happens because it makes the perfect opportunity for me to make it very clear that this March to Washington, D.C., isn't about me and never will be.

So I give an answer such as: Hi, my name is Peggy Coleman. I'm 68 years old, my husband, Dean died in 1985 of a massive heart attack on our front porch and I have 19 appeals with my government. Hi, my name is Mrs. Mann, I live in Oak Hill, my husband died 3 years ago, and we have 13 appeals with my government. Etc. I try to make it very clear: this is not about me but the many widows out there who, after losing their husbands to this terrible disease, have to decide between food or their much-needed medicines.

When you drive through our beautiful state, you will see giant billboards that are advertising COAL. They read: "COAL KEEPS THE LIGHTS ON." Well it's time for our lawmakers in Washington, D.C., to hear about the widows in this country who have lost their husbands. Because after working for years for the coal companies and after keeping the lights on in this country they leave behind their widows who have a tremendous financial burden of medical bills and no financial means of keeping "her" lights on—unless she's able to work two jobs.

After my husband died I was about \$20,000 dollars short of paying all the medical bills after all his life insurance was paid out on medical bills and medical equipment that he needed to sustain his life. So after Carson's funeral I worked an average of 80 hours a week to keep my lights on. Don't get me wrong when I speak of this because I thank God above that he gave me the strength, willpower, and the determination to provide for myself.

But I have met many widows who are not able to work one job let alone two. So it is their voices that MUST be heard and their stories that MUST be told. I will walk to our nation's capital and will not stop until we get the LAWS changed that will lead to a change that will benefit these women who have been neglected by our government for too long. We also need to get the laws changed that have "tied" the hands of our coal miners for too many years.

We must be able to hire lawyers to represent us or we will never win our cases against the powerful coal companies. We literally have to face the Administrative Law Judge and the company lawyers with no one to represent us or to stand in our corner and we don't stand a "snowball's chance in Hades." I was talking to a local Judge in the county where I live and he told me he was pretty sure that this law that the Labor Department has forced upon us is UNCONSTITUTIONAL!

So as a widow of a coal miner it is obvious that we have many laws on the books that are an issue for all of us to address in the future, one step at a time. But as we become organized our numbers increase. Because they do increase with a new widow every six and a half minutes. Our fight will be long and hard but we will prevail!!!!

Sincerely yours,  
Linda Chapman

## Socialists sell 'Militant' to miners in Colorado



Militant/Bill Kalman

Militant supporters braved winter conditions to sell to coal miners at Seneca mine

BY ALYSON KENNEDY

CRAIG, Colorado—Socialist workers and Young Socialists in Western Colorado organized a one-week team to coal mines and working-class communities in the second week of March to sell the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and Pathfinder books, and to publicize a forum on the fight by coal miners and their spouses for black lung and health benefits.

The local *Militant* supporters on the team were joined by a socialist meat packer from San Francisco.

The team met a lot of interest in the *Militant's* feature coverage on the widows' walk to Washington demanding black lung benefits, and the U.S. Supreme Court ruling on the 1992 Coal Act that dealt a blow to the health benefit program for retired miners. There has been no other news coverage on these struggles in newspapers published in the Colorado coalfields.

The first stop was the Deserado Mine in Rangely, Colorado. In 1999, United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) Local 1984 struck the mine, owned by Blue Mountain Energy, for four months. Major issues in the strike were pensions and health care for retired miners.

Many workers driving in and out of the

mine slowed down to read the posterboard signs the team had taped to their vehicle in front of the mine portal. The signs read, "Widows Walk to D.C. to Demand Black Lung Benefits" and "U.S. Supreme Court Attacks Retired Miners' Benefits—Read the *Militant*."

A worker stopped his truck to read the signs, backed up his vehicle to talk to one of the team members, and bought a copy of the paper. He explained that he works as an engineer on the mine railroad, which takes Deserado coal to a power plant in Vernal, Utah. Like the surface and underground miners, the railroad workers are members of the UMW Local.

Two workers driving into the mine to put in job applications also stopped to talk. One had worked in a coal mine in southern Colorado. He said that after his grandfather died of black lung disease, his grandmother received no benefits. Both were glad to hear about the widows' walk, and took out \$2 to get the *Militant*. The workers also pocketed a leaflet advertising the upcoming Militant Labor Forum.

After the portal sale, team members went to an apartment building in Rangely, knocking on doors to talk to the workers and students who live there.

"I saw you at the mine today," said a coal miner who works at the Deserado mine. During a 30-minute discussion on questions ranging from the employers' attacks on coal miners to the U.S. occupation of Afghanistan, the miner observed that "the U.S. always tries to impose its culture on other countries."

Team members also spoke to several local college students who were interested in the widows' walk.

"I don't usually read socialist newspapers, but I want to see what you guys are talking about. It is a buck and a half?" said a miner going to work at the big Colowyo surface mine early the next morning. Workers at the nonunion mine, which is owned by Kennecott Energy, produced 5.7 million tons of coal last year, up from 5.1 million in 2000. Many miners who work at Colowyo live in Craig, the location of the Pathfinder Bookstore. Miners purchased five *Militants* and took away many flyers for the forum.

When the team returned to Colowyo later in the week, coal miners bought another seven copies of the *Militant*. One miner said that he "got one the other day. The union should come out here. They would get a good response."

Another team travelled to Twenty Mile coal mine. Owned by RAG American Coal Holding Company, the mine is one of the largest underground operations in the United States. Several miners stopped to buy the paper, including a mechanic who said he was glad to find out about the Pathfinder bookstore in Craig.

During the week's sales the wife of a coal miner told a team member who had knocked on her trailer door that she had read about the upcoming forum in the local paper. She was glad to see that there was a place in Craig to talk about subjects like black lung.

Another miner's wife had read the newspaper article about the forum. She liked the fact that someone was going door to door publicizing the meeting. "It's good to see someone believe in a cause," she said.

Three people, including a retired miner, came to the bookstore during the week because of the publicity about the forum.

On the last day of their trip, the socialist workers sold two more *Militants* to mine workers at the Seneca mine, a UMW-organized surface mine.

By that time a blizzard was under way and the team decided to call an end to a successful week of sales.

# Palestinians sharpen crisis of Israeli regime

Continued from front page

an "infrastructure of terror" in the areas. Dismissing criticism of the assault by United Nations secretary general Kofi Annan, a senior Israeli official retorted that Annan had supported the U.S. government's attack on Afghanistan. "We use milder measures than the United States used in Afghanistan," the official told a reporter for the *New York Times*, "facing a similar threat, if not a bigger one."

The Israeli army did stop writing identification numbers on the forearms and foreheads of Palestinians it rounded up after sharp criticism from some members of Parliament. "It is totally unbearable for me," said one survivor of the Nazi concentration camps in Germany during World War II. "This is something that was done to us in Auschwitz."

The nightly invasions of tanks and infantry have involved house-to-house sweeps and the detention of thousands of young Palestinian men.

On March 12, the Israeli government sent tanks and troops backed by Apache attack helicopters into the Jabaliya refugee camp in the Gaza strip. Up to 150 tanks rolled in to occupy the West Bank town of Ramallah and the adjacent Amari refugee camp, and other targets. Some 28 Palestinians were killed in the first hours of the raids.

Israeli tanks cut off the road to the Amari camp and demanded all men between the ages of 16 and 45 come to the courtyard of a school. The order from the army was blared through loudspeakers on the tanks.

Four days earlier, Israeli tanks, armored vehicles, and infantry, backed by warplanes, Apache helicopters, and naval gunboats, killed 44 Palestinians in a series of raids. At funerals in the Gaza Strip and in solidarity demonstrations in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and elsewhere in the Middle East, thousands of Palestinians rallied to express defiance at the Israeli assaults.

In spite of the ferocity of the attacks, however, Palestinian resistance to Israeli occupation, including public protests, suicide bombings, and surprise guerrilla attacks, has continued unabated.

## 'We must cause them losses'

The Israeli escalation came after Prime Minister Ariel Sharon promised "an aggressive and continuous campaign without letup" in a speech March 6 to troops and officials at a military checkpoint south of Jerusalem.

"We are in a hard war against a cruel and bloodthirsty enemy," he said two days earlier. "We must cause them losses, casualties...so that they understand they will gain nothing by terrorism. We must hit them, and hit them again and again, until they understand." Sharon's cabinet announced that it had ordered an "incessant and relentless intensification of the military pressure."

The prime minister reiterated that approach over the following days, even as he



Palestinians marched in solidarity with the struggle in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in the Yarmouk refugee camp in Syria on March 8.

scored headlines for his "concessions." Among the latter was a declaration that he would drop his previous insistence that no talks would occur without a seven-day halt to the Palestinian resistance. "There was nothing new here," said Saab Erekaat, the chief negotiator for the Palestinian Authority, of Sharon's so-called compromises. "He's trying to confuse people."

"We will continue our heightened activities against the terror infrastructure," Sharon said on March 10, as the Israeli armed forces pursued—in the words of a *New York Times* reporter—their "major military campaign to scour Palestinian refugee camps."

The failure of the widening Israeli offensive to curtail the Palestinian resistance, however, was brought home the day after the March 8 Israeli assaults, when a suicide bomber struck in a popular Jerusalem cafe, killing 11 people. Over the weekend, armed Palestinians attacked crowds at Netanya, in northern Israel, and the industrial port city of Ashdod, less than 20 miles from Tel Aviv.

## Unabated Palestinian resistance

In January and February, two Palestinian women joined those who have carried out suicide attacks on Israeli targets. Wafa Idris, 28, became the first female suicide bomber in the present conflict in late January, when she blew herself up in Jaffa Road, Jerusalem, killing one person and wounding others.

Darin Abu Eishah, 22, who wounded several Israeli policemen on February 27 at a checkpoint near the Israeli-West Bank border, said in a farewell videotape that she was "following in the footsteps of Wafa Idris."

"She was sure that we would be killed for nothing, maybe at a roadblock or when our houses are bombed, and she used to say that it is better to die for a reason," said Abu Eishah's brother, 31-year-old Tawfik Abu Eishah. "Her opinion was that women should participate with men in the uprising, and that there is no reason from a religious point of view that women should not participate."

Registering the tenacity of the Palestinian struggle, a March 6 *Times* editorial, arguing for "active American diplomatic intervention," stated that "force alone...has not battered the Palestinians into submission.... To the contrary, Yasir Arafat's secular militias have openly engaged in combat against Israel. Suicide missions have become far more frequent and attacks on Israeli soldiers more effective."

The *Wall Street Journal*, a backer of Sharon's military policy, reported on March 7 that "the most recent round of suicide bombings and brutal Israeli reprisals has made one thing clear to many Israelis: Palestinian militants aren't giving up, regardless of the military might Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon brings to bear on Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat and the roughly three million Palestinian residents of the quasi-independent West Bank and Gaza.... The Palestinians are forcing themselves back to the center of the international stage after being shoved into the wings by Presi-

dent Bush's war on terrorism."

In another indication of the depth and spread of the resistance, and the solidarity it arouses among Palestinians inside Israel, the Israeli Ministry of Justice claimed on March 11 that over the past months hundreds of "Israeli Arabs" have joined the Palestinian security services—established under the Palestinian-Israeli Oslo negotiations process—and other armed groups operating in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The ministry is proposing to make such a step punishable by up to five years in jail.



Israeli troops rounded up Palestinian men in Dheisheh camp on March 11, blindfolding them and binding their hands. Hundreds have been held and interrogated.

The failure of Sharon's widening military action to stem the resistance is forcing to the surface long-standing fault lines in his cabinet. Although Labor MPs like Shimon Peres, the foreign minister, have advised Sharon "not to escalate the situation," they have presented no alternative course.

## War-weariness, polarization

The divisions reflect the repudiation of Sharon's military actions among layers of the Israeli population. One political scientist observed in a March 7 *Jerusalem Post* column that "as more peace rallies are planned and more people attend them, as more violence takes place and casualties, particularly civilians, mount on both sides, and as the polls begin to shift, Labor is finally starting to wake up."

That growing war-weariness is juxtaposed to intensified polarization, expressed in a Tel Aviv demonstration of tens of thousands of people calling for stiffer action against the Palestinian struggle. "Defeat Arafat, destroy terror" read one banner.

At a March 9-10 Cairo meeting, foreign ministers from Arab League nations declared their support for a proposal floated by the government of Saudi Arabia, offering recognition to Israel in return for its withdrawal

from the West Bank and Gaza Strip and all other territories seized since the 1967 war. Expressing the views of the governments and ruling classes of nations throughout the Middle East, who fear both Israeli military power and the impact of the Palestinian struggle, the Jordanian foreign minister described the proposal as "a serious initiative. It is a near consensus by the Arab world that the time has come to end the conflict."

## U.S. sends envoy

On March 7 the White House announced that special envoy Gen. Anthony Zinni would travel to the Middle East at the same time Vice President Richard Cheney is in the region to drum up support for further assaults on Iraq by Washington.

The big-business press openly describes Zinni's mission as one of tamping down the violence so the Israeli aggression against the Palestinians doesn't cut across support Washington is trying to garner in the region for its own military attacks on Iraq.

"If they're going to keep the focus on Iraq, [U.S. officials] are going to have to do something about trying to calm" down the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, said Martin Indyk, a former U.S. ambassador to Israel.

Reflecting the U.S. rulers' concern at the irrepressible Palestinian struggle and the escalating conflict, Colin Powell, the U.S. secretary of state, said on March 6 that "Prime Minister Sharon has to take a hard look at his policies to see whether they will work. If you declare war against the Palestinians thinking that you can solve the problem by seeing how many Palestinians can be killed, I don't know that that leads us anywhere." The Secretary of State's comments apparently had little impact on Tel Aviv.

Washington has devoted special efforts to trying to ensure the Israeli rulers' cooperation with any offensive against Iraq. Writing in the March 11 *New Yorker* magazine, Seymour Hersh reported that U.S. officials briefed Sharon about their plans during his February visit to the White House, and tried

to persuade him to delay a response to any attacks on Israel by the Iraqi military.

During the 1990-91 Gulf War the U.S. armed forces withheld "friend or foe" codes from the Israeli air force, rendering impossible any action by its planes against Baghdad, which was peppering Israel with inaccurate Scud missiles.

"But the Israeli leaders refused to give the White House an assurance that it would not retaliate," wrote Hersh. A senior Israeli official told the reporter that "the United States should assume, in its considerations, that if Israel is to be hit, Israel will hit back. We took a hit in 1991 and did not hit back because we could have ruined the United States-Arab coalition. Our lack of retaliation was seen in the West as very smart, but in the Arab world it had a serious negative effect on Israel's deterrence posture," the official said. The "deterrence posture" referred to is long-standing Israeli policy that any attack on Israel will be met with an immediate and massive counterstrike. The policy is the only way the garrison state has survived in the region as a outpost for imperialism.

The official continued, Hersh writes: "If someone thinks it can hit Israel and not be hit ten times as strongly back, it is a serious issue. It won't happen again."

## FROM Pathfinder

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# Meetings will defend framed-up Cubans held in U.S. prisons

Continued from front page

the city and elsewhere in the country will be organizing similar events, including house meetings with co-workers and unionists, forums on college campuses, and presentations to groups involved in struggles against the employers and their government.

"We are organizing to get out the truth about the case," said Koppel. "We are explaining that Gerardo Hernández, René González, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, and Fernando González were on an international mission to defend their country and revolution from attacks by the U.S. government and Cuban counterrevolutionary forces based in the United States.

"The five are working-class heroes, who have risked their lives to defend the first socialist revolution in the Americas," Koppel said. "As with any class-war prisoner in the dungeons of U.S. imperialism, the most basic task of working-class fighters is to ensure the five are not isolated as they face continuing pressure from the U.S. rulers.

"There are thousands of working people and youth who are resisting the assaults by the bosses and the government who will want to learn about this fight, come to identify with these five brothers, and join in the demand that they be released and allowed to return to Cuba," Koppel said.

Washington refuses to recognize the five as political prisoners, Koppel said. It has sent them to five separate federal prisons across the United States. "The purpose of the brutal treatment in dividing them up is to degrade and force them to their knees," Koppel said. "Their treatment is parallel to that being meted out to the 300 prisoners who were kidnapped and taken by U.S. authorities to Washington's naval base in Guantánamo, Cuba. Even under the czar of Russia and the Batista dictatorship in Cuba, opponents of the government were not separated and isolated from each other, as U.S. authorities are doing with the five Cuban revolutionaries.

"This frame-up is part of the U.S. employers' offensive against working people here at home," he said. "It is an attack on fundamental rights and is aimed at intimidating anyone who opposes the bosses' assaults or U.S. government policies."

## Prosecution's frame-up

In 1998 the FBI announced with much fanfare and media hype that it had discovered a "Cuban spy network" in Florida. Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González and René González were arrested and charged with trying to "infiltrate" the U.S. Southern Command, passing U.S. "military secrets" to Havana, and "infiltrating" and "disrupting" right-wing Cuban-American groups in Miami that seek to overthrow the revolu-

tionary government of Cuba. A charge of "conspiracy to commit murder" was tacked on later against one of the five.

On June 8 a jury in a federal courtroom here handed down guilty verdicts against the five men on all 23 charges of "spying" for the government of Cuba. Gerardo Hernández was found guilty of the unprecedented charge of "conspiracy to commit murder" for allegedly providing Cuban authorities with flight plans of the four Brothers to the Rescue pilots whose planes were shot down in 1996 by the Cuban air force. A number of defense witnesses offered ample evidence that these rightists provocatively violated Cuban airspace and refused to heed warnings to head back before they were downed near Havana.

In mid-December, Hernández was given two consecutive life terms plus 80 months in jail on these trumped-up charges. Days later, Ramón Labañino was sentenced to one life term; René González received a 15-year sentence; and Fernando González got 19 years in prison.

These convictions and sentences are an attack directed not only at revolutionary Cuba but at workers' rights in the United States. FBI agents broke into their homes repeatedly over the three years prior to the arrests, violating the Fourth Amendment protection against arbitrary search and seizure. The prosecution's "evidence" consisted of information the FBI claimed to have collected in these raids, and from short-wave radio transmissions government agents asserted they intercepted between Havana and the defendants.

The judge refused a defense motion to move the trial out of Miami, even after several potential jurors, especially Cuban-Americans, disqualified themselves for fear of reprisals if they voted "not guilty." No evidence of any military secrets being stolen from the United States and turned over to Cuba was ever presented by the prosecution.

As with Washington's attacks on workers' rights under the guise of fighting terrorism since September 11, the U.S. rulers used the "spy scare" case against the five Cubans as a means to justify broader powers for the FBI, including sanctioning break-ins and electronic eavesdropping, frame-up trials on scanty evidence, and harsh prison conditions, such as extended solitary confinement solely based on the character of the charges against the defendants.

## Cuban government campaign

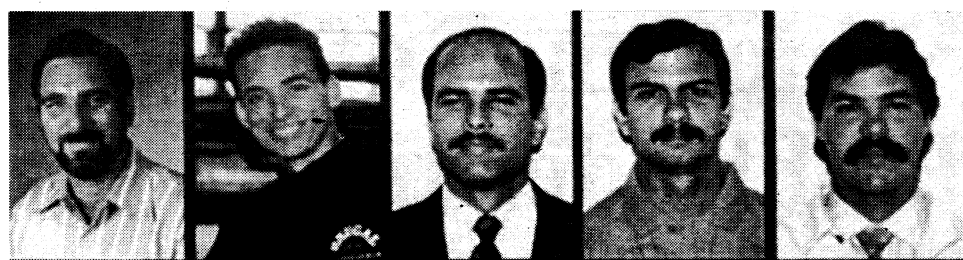
All five defendants have stated they were reporting on activities of right-wing Cuban-American groups in Florida with a record of violent activities against Cuba, carried out with knowledge and complicity from Washington. They have announced they will fight their convictions through appeals. Responding to the verdict, Guerrero said that if "I were asked to do something like this again I would do it with honor."

The Cuban government, which has launched an international campaign in defense of the five, called a special session of the country's National Assembly December 29. With a unanimous vote, the Assembly named the five patriots "Heroes of the Republic of Cuba," because they carried out "with exemplary dedication, dignity, and steadfastness the sacred mission of defending the nation and protecting it from terrorism."

The year 2002 has been dedicated as the "Year of the Heroic Prisoners of the Empire" in Cuba because of the importance of the fight to free the political prisoners. Rallies, meetings, national "round table" discussions, and other events have sought to deepen the education of the Cuban population on the fight.

## History of attacks against Cuba

During the trial defense lawyers for the five were able to present extensive information on how U.S.-based Cuban-American groups have carried out attacks against Cuba since the 1959 revolution, as well as those in Miami who have stood up to oppose Washington's economic war on the coun-



Top photo, five Cuban patriots framed-up and sent to five U.S. prisons. From left to right: René González, Antonio Guerrero, Gerardo Hernández; Fernando González, and Ramón Labañino. Bottom photo, thousands of Cubans mobilize all over the country to demand the release of their compatriots.

try. The defense also succeeded in exposing how the U.S. government has provided a base of operations for these organizations and refused to take any effective steps to halt their activities.

For example, a series of bombings of tourist spots in Cuba in 1997 was "organized, planned, and financed from the United States," declared Roberto Hernández Caballero in the trial. Hernández, currently a lieutenant colonel for the State Security Department of the Interior Ministry of Cuba, testified as a defense witness.

This evidence further boosted the defense case that the five men face frame-up charges that should be dropped. Testimony by a series of witnesses brought to the stand by defense attorneys shed further light on Washington's unceasing cold war against Cuba.

Retired U.S. Air Force colonel George Buchner testified March 21 that evidence from the records of the U.S. government's National Security Agency shows that the Brothers to the Rescue pilots were well inside Cuba's airspace when they were shot down. This contradicted earlier claims by Washington, and by a 1996 United Nations Security Council report, that the planes were brought down over international waters. Buchner's testimony and similar evidence presented in a federal courtroom received little media coverage beyond Miami.

Brothers to the Rescue leader José Basulto had tried to portray himself in earlier testimony as a "nonviolent resister" to "Castro's tyranny" and a follower of Martin Luther King and Mohandas Gandhi.

After the defense grilled him on the stand for five days, however, Basulto testified March 16 that he would do nothing to stop illegal arms shipments to Cuba because "he broadly supports exile groups bent on overthrowing Fidel Castro violently," according to the March 17 *Miami Herald*.

## Washington's lies

Washington's campaign around Cuba's shooting down of the Brothers to the Rescue planes is a good case to review. That Gerardo Hernández is serving a life term for "conspiracy to commit murder" in relation to the provocative assault on Cuba is a historic injustice.

Before the United Nations and at other international forums in 1996 officials of the Cuban government meticulously dismantled the lies peddled by the U.S. government about the incident. Roberto Robaina, Cuba's Foreign Minister at the time, reported to the United Nations General Assembly the history of infiltrations and armed pirate attacks from southern Florida, including 25 incursions into Cuban airspace by Brothers to the Rescue planes the previous year and a half. The U.S. Federal Aviation Agency had even revoked Basulto's pilot's license, citing 14 violations of Cuban airspace between 1990 and 1996.

"The government of Cuba takes full responsibility for the patriotic action that was carried out in legitimate defense of the country's sovereignty and security," Robaina told the UN meeting. "This incident was not the consequence of a deliberate act by Cuba. It was not we who could prevent these violations from continuing. The U.S. government," he said, "from whose territory these

acts of aggression were launched, was the only one that had this opportunity in its hands."

At the time the *Militant* noted the "tragedy was not what happened but what was averted. Acts of terrorism and aggression by armed, U.S.-based 'civilians' have been slowed. Who can doubt that it has now become more difficult to recruit pilots and others to carry out provocations and terrorist acts against the Cuban Revolution?"

The driving force behind the attacks and economic warfare against the Cuban people is not the counterrevolutionary Cuban groups in Miami, Koppel noted. It is the imperialist ruling class in the United States, whose holdings were expropriated by the working people of Cuba and who will never forgive or peacefully accept the challenge to capitalist property and prerogatives that the socialist revolution in Cuba offers, and the example it provides, to millions of toilers around the world.

Koppel said the campaign to defend the five revolutionaries offers working people and youth a great opportunity to discuss these questions as broadly as possible, to defend workers' rights in the United States, and to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the Cuban people. The socialist leader also encouraged supporters of this fight to write to the five prisoners and said both the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* will be sending each one a subscription to the publications.

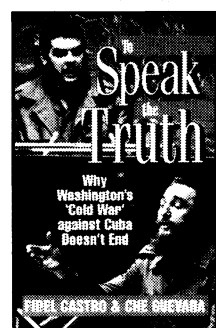
"I recently attended in Cuba a presentation on the new Pathfinder title *From the Escombray to the Congo: In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution* by Victor Dreke," Koppel said. "During the meeting Dreke presented copies of the book to Magali Lloret, the mother of Fernando González, one of the jailed Cubans. It was evident at the meeting the degree of support the five have in Cuba, and how they are seen as part of the struggle against U.S. imperialism."

Koppel said the dedication written by Dreke in each of the books to be sent to the imprisoned revolutionaries captured this spirit. Dreke wrote: "To the five heroic prisoners of the empire: I congratulate you for your firmness and bravery. You are worthy representatives of Martí, Maceo, Camilo, Che, and Fidel. I send you the book with all the respect and affection you deserve. The old oak trees are proud of the new pines."

## From Pathfinder

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Why Washington's Cold War against Cuba Doesn't End  
Fidel Castro and Che Guevara



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## Write to the five Cuban revolutionaries

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Antonio Guerrero, #58741-004, U.S.P. Florence, P.O. Box 7500, Florence, Colorado 81226;

Gerardo Hernández, #58739-004, U.S. Penitentiary-Lompoc, 3901 Klein Blvd., Lompoc, California 93436;

(for Fernando González) write to: Ruben Campa, #58733-004, F.C.I. Oxford, P.O. Box 1000, Oxford, Wisconsin 53952-0505;

(for Ramón Labañino), write to: Luis Medina, #58734-004, U.S.P. Beaumont, P.O. Box 26035, Beaumont, Texas 77720-6035.



# Wide range of Pathfinder titles reach Cuban readers

ARRIN HAWKINS  
AND MARTÍN KOPPEL

HAVANA—On the final day of the Havana International Book Fair—a Sunday—Pathfinder Press made every title in its booth available to fair-goers in Cuban pesos. The fair was officially open at 10:00 a.m., but by 9:15 a.m. the Pathfinder booth was mobbed by people waiting to purchase books and pamphlets. By noon it was virtually picked clean.

Just about every last title in French, including many copies of the magazine *Nouvelle Internationale*, had been sold to Haitian students and other French-speaking visitors to the fair.

Over the course of 10 days more than 225 different Pathfinder titles were sold at the fair. In addition, visitors to the booth bought dozens of copies of the *Militant* and hundreds of copies of *Perspectiva Mundial*. This response is one indication of the interest in revolutionary literature among working people and youth in Cuba.

The final day of sales in pesos has become a tradition of Pathfinder's participation in the fair. Many people who have visited the booth over the years eagerly await the opportunity to expand their access to books on the international class struggle, U.S. politics, the history of the communist movement, the fight for women's liberation, and many other questions.

Pathfinder supporters organized successful sales and donations, not only at the annual Havana International Book Fair and the three book launchings held as part of it, but also at nine other events in Havana and throughout Villa Clara at which the new book, was presented.

Three Pathfinder titles were the subject of special presentations during the Havana Book Fair itself. They were the Spanish-language editions of *From the Escambray to the Congo: In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution* by Víctor Dreke; *Playa Girón/Bay of Pigs: Washington's First Military Defeat in the Americas* by Fidel Castro and José Ramón Fernández; and *Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle*, by revolutionary leader of Burkina Faso, Thomas Sankara, which was featured at a joint presentation with the *Social Participation of Mozambican Women*, recently published by Cuba's Tricontinental Editions.

## Sales at the book fair

The three Pathfinder titles above were among the best sellers at the publisher's booth during the 10-day book fair in Havana. Other popular titles included the Spanish-language editions of *Making History: Interviews with Four Generals of Cuba's Revolutionary Armed Forces*; *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* by Jack Barnes; *Malcolm X Speaks*; the *Communist Mani-*

*festo* by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels; *Lenin's Final Fight*; *The Revolution Betrayed* by Leon Trotsky; and *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning* by Jack Barnes.

*Nueva Internacional* no. 5, including "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War," and the English-language *New International* no. 6, featuring "The Second Assassination of Maurice Bishop," were also among the best-sellers.

## New book presented at meetings

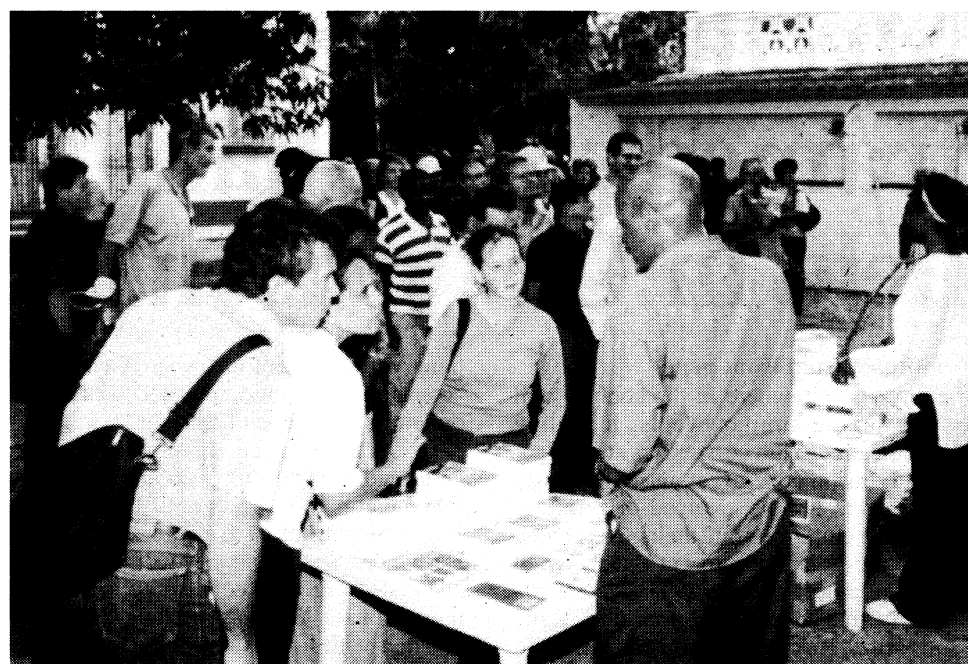
During the week following the Havana Book Fair, *From the Escambray to the Congo* was presented at events in a half-dozen cities in central Cuba, the area where the book's author, Víctor Dreke, was born, fought in the 1956-59 Revolutionary War to overthrow the Batista dictatorship, and later helped lead the battle against the counterrevolutionary bandits in the Escambray Mountains. Six members of the international Pathfinder team, bringing with them 20 cartons of books and pamphlets, traveled with their Cuban hosts in two vans throughout the region.

Speaking at the events were Víctor Dreke; Pathfinder president Mary-Alice Waters, one of Dreke's interviewers and editor of the book; and Iraida Aguirrechu, who organized editorial assistance on the book in Cuba. Some 240 copies of the title were purchased on the spot at these meetings or were left to be sold later, including 54 in Dreke's hometown, Sagua la Grande. Another 54 were sold in Trinidad, the proceeds from which were donated to the museum of the *Lucha Contra Bandidos* (Struggle against the Bandits—the name by which the campaign against the counterrevolutionary forces in the Escambray mountains of the early 1960s is known in Cuba). Thirty were left for the museum to sell in its store.

Other meetings were held in Santa Clara, Placetas, Sancti Spiritus, and Manicaragua.

The book was also presented at two well-attended events in Havana, parallel to the book fair itself. Participants in a workers assembly of some 70 people at the National Union of Caribbean Construction Enterprises (UNECA) bought more than 50 copies. UNECA is a Cuban construction enterprise that works on development projects in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and elsewhere—including hospitals, roads, airports, and schools. Dreke is currently director of UNECA's work in Africa.

Among those participating in that meeting was Magali Llor, a UNECA employee and the mother of Fernando González, one of the five Cubans framed up in U.S. federal court on charges of conspiracy to commit espionage. González was sentenced to 19 years in prison. Two defendants were jailed for life, and the others received sen-



Top, Pathfinder book table outside presentation of *From the Escambray to the Congo* in Sagua la Grande, Cuba. A line of people waited to buy the books. Middle left, Víctor Dreke speaks at Sagua meeting. With him on platform is Iraida Aguirrechu to his left, and Mary-Alice Waters. Audience at meeting can be seen bottom left. Middle and lower right, Pathfinder booth at February 7-17 Havana International Book Fair.

tences of 10 and 15 years. Dreke presented Llor with five copies of *From the Escambray to the Congo*, dedicated to each of the five compañeros, which she promised would be rapidly forwarded to them.

Another 75 copies of the book were sold at a meeting sponsored by the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution in Nautico, the Havana neighborhood where Dreke lives. Among the many prominent guests in the audience of more than 100 at that gathering were Manuel Cardero, general secretary of the Sugar Workers Union, and Teofilo Stevenson, the former world heavyweight boxing champion.

Some 50 copies of *From the Escambray to the Congo* were donated to the Combatants Association to distribute to their leadership across Cuba, and more than 200 were presented as complimentary copies to those who helped bring the book to fruition and other collaborators in Cuba, as well as to the Communist Party, People's Power, and Combatants Association hosts in the cities visited on the tour.

Added to the 160 sold at the launching during the Havana Book Fair, and the 75 sold from the booth, a total of some 1,010 copies of the Spanish edition of *From the Escambray to the Congo* were distributed during the February events in Cuba.

## Other titles distributed and sold

Hundreds of copies of *Playa Girón/Bay of Pigs: Washington's First Military Defeat in the Americas*, and *Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle*, the other titles presented at the Havana Book Fair, were also distributed through these efforts.

The 135 copies of *Playa Girón* sold during the fair—60 at the book launch and 75 from the booth—were supplemented by 35 during the trip to Villa Clara and Sancti Spiritus. In addition, Pathfinder supporters used the occasion of the launching to present Cuban vice president José Ramón Fernández with 50 hardback copies that had been set aside by volunteer workers during a Red Weekend at the Pathfinder Building in January—part of a major reorganization of the publisher's printing and distribution

operation.

Fernández said he will present these books to the battalions that fought at Playa Girón when they hold their annual meetings between now and April 19. At the end of the

Continued on next page

## Books for Cuba Fund

### 'A good reason to contribute'

"The results at the Havana International Book fair and other events in Cuba are a good reason to contribute to the Books for Cuba Fund," said Jack Willey, business manager of the *Militant*. Special collections for that fund will be organized at the upcoming regional socialist conferences, he said, and "we encourage anyone who can't attend those meetings to send their contribution directly to the paper."

The *Militant* sponsors the Books for Cuba Fund, which makes it possible for books and pamphlets published by Pathfinder Press to be sent to organizations and institutions in revolutionary Cuba, and to be sold at affordable prices at book fairs and other book-related events.

Please make out checks to the *Militant* and mail them to 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.



Militant/Linda Joyce  
Pathfinder stall at this year's book fair attracted lively discussion.

## FROM Pathfinder From the Escambray to the Congo

In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution

Interview with Víctor Dreke

In his account of how easy it became after the 1959 victory of the Cuban Revolution to "take down the rope" that for decades had segregated blacks from whites at dances in town squares, yet how enormous was the battle to transform the social relations underlying this and all the other "ropes" inherited from colonialism, capitalism, and Yankee domination, Víctor Dreke captures the historical challenge of our epoch.

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Infantry battalion of Rebel Army after climbing highest mountain in Pinar del Río, 1959.

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# The difference a revolution makes: textile factories in the U.S. and Cuba

BY BRIAN TAYLOR

SANTA CLARA, Cuba—During a tour of a half dozen cities in central Cuba by a team of volunteers expanding the circulation of Pathfinder's newly published book *From the Escambray to the Congo*, by Victor Dreke, we had an opportunity to visit a large textile mill here on February 18. The "Desembarco del Granma" (Landing of the *Granma*) factory complex, which also encompasses a sewing factory, produces not only the textiles themselves but a range of finished products, including uniforms for the Revolutionary Armed Forces and others.

Having been a textile worker myself for a year and having experienced the accelerated "productivity" drive of mills throughout the South of the United States, I was nearly blown away by how much better the conditions are for textile workers in Cuba.

In the United States, many textile workers work 12-hour shifts, three to five days a week. This extended workday was widely imposed over the last two years as part of the capitalist bosses' stepped-up drive for profits. Supposedly you work three days one week and four the next, to total 84 hours in two weeks. But many workers, unable to live off those wages, "voluntarily" work an extra day or two each week. This is especially true for immigrant workers who, in addition to trying to cover their own living expenses, often send sizable portions of their checks back to their families in their countries of origin.

Workers at the Cuban plant I visited normally work an eight-hour day, five days a week. Currently they are working two six-hour shifts in order to reduce electrical consumption—6:00 a.m. to noon and noon to 6:00 p.m., with a 15-minute break.

At the plant where I worked there was no set lunch break. Workers are paid according to how much they produce, so those who are not fast or need extra money feel pressure not to take a lunch break at all, or to take a very short one. These conditions are common.

Layoffs have been sweeping the textile industry throughout the South. The plant where I worked laid off more than 50 workers in the winding department, in a plant of roughly 300.

In Cuba if there is no work, you don't simply get thrown into the streets. Workers who are "temporarily laid off"—due to lack of raw materials, machinery, breakdowns, or similar causes—maintain their jobs and continue to receive their wages during the time that production is interrupted.

If your job is eliminated altogether due to restructuring of the enterprise, you are considered an "available" worker and your employer, working together with the union, is responsible for retraining you for another job in the same factory. If there are no jobs in that plant, you are given training and offered work in another factory, whether in that industry or a different one. While being trained and relocated, the factory pays you one month at full salary and up to three years at 60 percent of your previous wage.

## Tending up to 18 machines in U.S. mill

In the textile mill where I worked, I was a "doffer," a very physically demanding job the way U.S. bosses organize it. I was responsible for tending 12–18 machines where yarn gets spun onto little hollow tubes

called bobbins. When the tubes are full you have to "doff" them, that is, take a cart and zoom down the machine removing full bobbins and replacing them with empty ones. Each machine has as many as 120 bobbins.

In contrast, workers in the plant in Santa Clara are responsible for tending only five machines, and the demanding doffing process is almost completely automated! The winding department has about eight machines to a worker. And the pace workers keep in the factory here is steady but less physically exhausting than in the capitalist world.

In a textile mill, cotton dust is a particular hazard to workers' health. It can cause "brown lung," a progressively debilitating and sometimes fatal respiratory illness. The factory I visited here was well ventilated, including in the doffing department, which is usually the most dusty. At the plant where I worked it was so dusty that a short stint left you covered with white fuzz, eyelashes and all. Workers at the Cuba plant had little or no dust on their clothes at the end of the day.

Most plants I am familiar with in the United States have a doctor present—at least from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.—who runs breathing tests on workers a couple of times a year. They are also supposed to take air dust samples regularly. The role of the company doctors, however, is to help the bosses cover up the unsafe working conditions, get injured or ill workers back on the job as quickly as possible whether they are well or not, and undercut workers' efforts to hold the bosses responsible for injuries on the job or demand improvements in conditions.

In the Santa Clara plant, as in all Cuban workplaces, there is a doctor and nurse, available at all times. They do regular tests to monitor dust levels and prevent lung damage. Their main concern is the health needs of the workers.

After a 12-hour shift at the plant where I worked, you don't have much time for anything except what's necessary to sleep and prepare for the next day. Life is especially challenging for single mothers, who struggle finding and paying for child care. Other tasks of everyday life become more difficult, too.

The Desembarco del Granma textile factory has a child-care facility, a hairdresser, a bank, bicycle and TV repair shops, and other similar services. The factory also organizes transportation to pick up the workers near their homes—24 different routes! Other mills and factories in Cuba make similar arrangements to help meet the needs of workers.

## It takes a revolution

How is all this possible?

More than 40 years ago working people in Cuba carried out a successful revolution. Led by the July 26 Movement and the Rebel Army under the direction of Fidel Castro, Raúl Castro, Ernesto Che Guevara, Camilo Cienfuegos, and others, they took power from U.S.-backed dictator Fulgencio Batista and brought into being a workers and farmers government. They mobilized their collective force and began carrying out deep-going political and social measures to begin to reverse the social and economic devastation created by the system of imperialist domination and capitalist exploitation that prevailed before the revolution.

## Pathfinder books welcomed in Cuba

Continued from Page 8

trip, another 40 copies of *Playa Girón* were donated to the Combatants Association.

More than 100 copies of Sankara's *Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle* were sold at the Pathfinder booth, the meeting, and other events. In addition, 100 copies were presented to the Federation of Cuban Women, 80 to Tricontinental Editions, 20 to the Combatientes Association, and 100 to other institutions and individuals in Cuba.

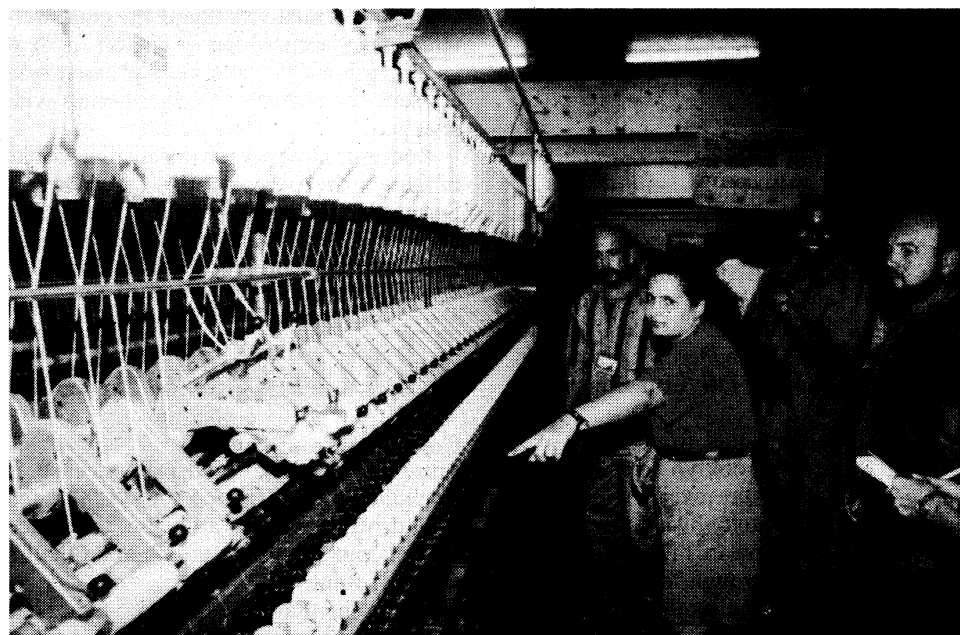
*Making History and Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* also featured prominently in the sales and distribution organized by Pathfinder supporters during and after the fair. More than 65 copies of *Making History* were sold, and 40 copies

were donated to the Combatants Association and others interviewed in the book.

Cubans bought some 85 copies of *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* by Jack Barnes and another 50 were distributed as complimentary copies.

All told, when the Cuban pesos were converted to dollars at the rate of 27:1, more than \$950 had been raised in sales of Pathfinder literature during the month-long trip.

The communist literature sold to individuals and presented to various organizations in Cuba will pass through many hands and be put to good political use for years to come by workers, farmers, and youth, including many whose paths will cross with communists from North America, Europe, and Asia and the Pacific.



Above and below, workers at Desembarco del Granma textile mill show guests the weaving machines. Banner on wall reads, "Besides justice, socialism is efficiency and quality."

They expropriated the great landed estates and guaranteed land to every working farmer. They nationalized the factories and began producing to meet the needs of the Cuban people, not to maintain profits for a wealthy handful of families. And in so doing they earned the undying wrath of the U.S. government, which to this day is trying to roll back the revolutionary gains of the Cuban people.

In the United States and around the capitalist world, workers and farmers are always hit the hardest by any economic crisis. We are discounted by the ruling rich, who throughout the roaring nineties boasted of an economic boom while most of us were figuring out how to pay the gas bill.

In socialist Cuba, however, where politi-

cal and economic power is in the hands of working people, the natural resources, the organization of labor, and the creativity of women and men throughout society are directed to meet different class interests.

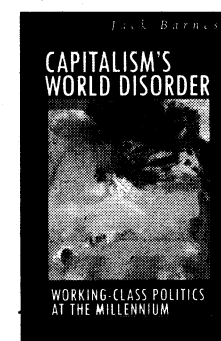
The people of Cuba, too, are the victims of a world capitalist market they cannot escape from, and a brutal economic war directed at them by the U.S. government. But the revolutionary government in Cuba relies on workers and farmers acting together to open a road out of the economic crisis imposed on them and implements policies to minimize its toll on working people.

Brian Taylor is a coal miner and member of United Mine Workers of America Local 2133 in Alabama.



Militant

from Pathfinder

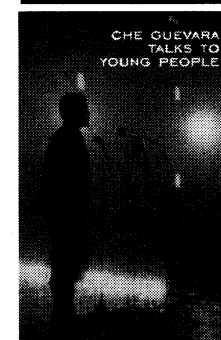


## Capitalism's World Disorder

Working-Class Politics at the Millennium

Jack Barnes

The social devastation and financial panics, the political turmoil, cop brutality, and military assaults accelerating all around us are not chaos. They are the inevitable product of lawful forces unleashed by capitalism. But the future the propertied classes have in store for us can be changed by the united struggle and selfless action of workers and farmers, conscious of their power to transform the world. Also available in Spanish and French. \$19.95



## Che Guevara Talks to Young People

"We are attacked a great deal because of what we are. But we are attacked much, much more because we show to every nation of the Americas what it's possible to be. What's important for imperialism — much more than Cuba's nickel mines or sugar mills, or Venezuela's oil, or Mexico's cotton, or Chile's copper, or Argentina's cattle, or Paraguay's grasslands, or Brazil's coffee — is the totality of these raw materials upon which the monopolies feed." —Che Guevara, July 28, 1960 (from *Che Guevara Talks to Young People*). Also available in Spanish. \$14.95

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# Court excoriates New York welfare agency

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Ruling on a class-action lawsuit brought on behalf of women who have had their children taken from them by New York officials, a federal judge excoriated the city's Administration for Children's Services, saying they submitted the women to a "pitiless double abuse."

The suit and trial last summer exposed the fact that the department routinely removed children from the homes of battered women by claiming the mothers were "engaging in domestic violence." Agency officials testifying at the trial said case workers and supervisors followed "normal agency procedures." The lawsuit was filed by Sanctuary for Families, a battered women's organization, and the law firm Lansner & Kubitschek.

Judge Jack Weinstein from the Federal District Court in Brooklyn said the "evidence before this court reveals widespread and unnecessary cruelty by agencies of the City of New York towards mothers abused by their consorts, through forced unnecessary separation of the mothers from their children on the excuse that this sundering is necessary to protect the children." He noted that the agency executes this policy about 1,750 times a year.

Weinstein sent a letter explaining his decision to lawyers involved in the case and said he would make a formal ruling within two weeks with the same conclusion. "To blame a crime on the victim," he wrote, "desecrates fundamental precepts of justice."

Last December Weinstein issued an injunction directing the city to stop taking children away from their mothers on the grounds that the women are victims of domestic violence. He said removing the children was a violation of the mothers' constitutional rights.

Weinstein had also ordered the state to increase the fees paid to lawyers representing women with low income who find themselves facing the loss of their children. In his March 4 ruling the judge said the miserly payments to lawyers appointed to represent the women effectively deprived them of their right to legal counsel, which is also a violation of their constitutional rights.

A 1963 Supreme Court decision acknowledged that an indigent defendant in a serious criminal case has a constitutional right to a lawyer. In New York State the legislature has set a limit of \$40 an hour for court time and \$25 for work outside court as the fees paid to lawyers representing indigent clients. As a result, women are often left with lawyers who do not investigate their cases or confer with them. Calling this setup "largely a sham," the judge directed the state to pay lawyers of women facing the loss of their children \$90 an hour.

One of the 10 cases detailed in the judge's ruling involved April Rodriguez who fled

with her children to the home of relatives after the children's father pushed her down during an argument in August 2000.

Several weeks later, while living with her children at a relative's home, the child welfare agency accused her of neglect for "engaging in domestic violence" and case workers sent her children to foster homes with strangers.

Rodriguez lost her job during nine weeks of fighting the Administration for Children's Services to return her children. The agency agreed to give back the children if Rodriguez took them to the Emergency Assistance Unit

in the Bronx and requested a place in a homeless shelter.

"We went through hell," said Rodriguez, who now lives in an apartment with her children. "If it wasn't for my lawyers, we'd still be there. But we haven't won until we actually know they're not going to do this to somebody else."

The injunction was "a very important decision for all battered women across the country because now we have a legal opinion that says the government may not penalize the mother for being a victim of a crime," said Lynn Rosenthal, executive di-

rector of the National Network to End Domestic Violence.

While lawyers for the city did not challenge charges of low pay to court-appointed lawyers, according to the *New York Times*, city and state officials said they were planning appeals against Weinstein's March 4 opinion.

According to articles covering the case, the situation in New York is not unique. Child welfare agencies across the United States have been increasingly separating children from abused mothers, according to the National Network to End Domestic Violence.

## Hundreds rally for drivers' licenses

Continued from Page 2

cause they don't have a driver's license. If someone buys a car for \$800-\$1,000, and if he drives it without a license, the police will take it away. It is a month-and-a-half's worth of wages."

His brother Salvador Manzo Jimenez has been a farm worker in the California fields for 14 years. Several years ago he was part of the fight for a union at Coastal Berry, the largest strawberry grower in the country. The company responded with a vicious anti-union campaign that included bringing thugs in to intimidate workers.

"The union election was a fraud," Jimenez said. "The company cheated on people, offering bonuses to some and firing others. We were just asking for a fair wage." There is renewed interest in the union now, added the farm worker.

The protest here, like others around the state, is in response to state government regulations requiring anyone applying for or renewing a driver's license to have a valid Social Security number. Last year, state officials began verifying Social Security numbers through a linkup with the Social Security Administration. The Department of Motor Vehicles is also verifying all existing licenses with the same body.

These measures began to be implemented in compliance with the 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act passed by Congress under the Clinton administration, which required a Social Security number to be included on drivers' licenses by the year 2000. This measure was later set aside, but many states continue to move ahead with the proposal.

The requirement to show a Social Security number effectively prevents undocumented workers from Mexico and other countries from having a driver's license, a crucial form of identification not only to drive legally but for all kinds of other activities as well. In many parts of the United States the inability to drive severely limits job opportunities.



Militant/Deborah Liatos

Workers march in Watsonville, California, March 10 for right to have drivers' licenses.

The series of protests come as the federal government is taking additional steps to turn the state driver's license into a national identification card. Washington is working with state governments to develop a uniform license that electronically stores an individual's identification information.

Under instructions from Congress, the

Transportation Department is developing a new national standard that would allow a license from one state to be verified and recorded anywhere in the country.

Initial steps in 1981 and 1986 to set up a federal ID card were shelved due to widespread opposition among working people and others.

## Reclamation Bureau will now allow Oregon farmers use of irrigation water

BY BILL KALMAN

SAN FRANCISCO—The U.S. government's Bureau of Reclamation announced in late January that it will make "full water deliveries" to farmers in the Klamath River Basin in southern Oregon who depend on irrigation to grow crops.

The decision reverses the bureau's action of a year ago, in which the agency cut off all irrigation water to the 1,400 farm families in the region. The government said the reasons for the cutoff were an ongoing drought in the Pacific Northwest and the need to protect the sucker fish in Upper Klamath Lake and the coho salmon downstream. Both fish are covered by the Endangered Species Act.

Farmers in the region responded with large protests, backed, and sometimes organized by, local businesses and others. The government action sharpened the divisions between the farmers on the one hand, and fishermen and the Klamath Indian Tribes—both of whom depend on the fish for a livelihood—on the other. The Klamath Indian Tribes have treaties with the U.S. government going back to 1864 guaranteeing water rights to support fisheries and other resources.

The plight of the farmers became a rallying point for many rightist organizations in the area who seized on the situation to rail against "big government" and "environmental groups that are trying to eliminate rural lifestyles in the Klamath basin."

In face of the protests the federal government announced it would release some water and promised to provide some compensation payments to affected farmers.

But in early February, the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) concluded that there was no scientific basis for the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) decision, which was based on a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service

directive last April that water diverted for farm irrigation would threaten the two species of fish.

As with other court decisions and government rulings citing environmental concerns as the reason to carry out a certain policy, many farmers in the Klamath basin said the BOR's move to cut off irrigation water had nothing to do with protecting the fish.

Gloria Palacios, a former raisin grower, said that behind the water crisis are "always big corporations that are using the environment issues for their own interests."

One example of this, farmers said at the time, was the energy monopolies. In the midst of skyrocketing prices charged by the electrical companies, cutting off water to farmers had a double benefit for big business. One was that electricity contracted by farmers at a lower rate was not used, making it available for sale at a much higher price on the open market. Additionally, water not used for irrigation adds to the flow downstream, where Pacific Power and Light owns and operates six hydroelectric projects along the Klamath River.

The BOR itself is an arm of the most powerful imperialist government in the world and serves the interests of the giant agribusinesses and energy monopolies. The agency is the largest wholesaler of water in the country and controls water access for one out of five farmers in the West, irrigating land that produces 60 percent of the nation's vegetable crop and 25 percent of its fruits and nuts. The agency runs 58 power plants that generate 40 billion kilowatt hours a year, making it the second largest producer of hydroelectric power in the western United States.

Bill Kalman is a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union.

### Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State

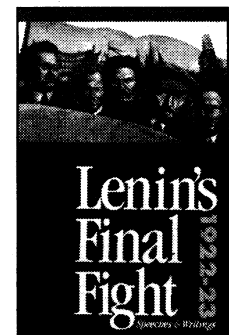
Frederick Engels

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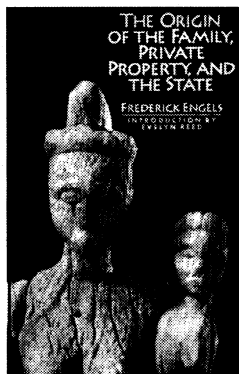


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# Socialist candidate in Newark presents revolutionary road

BY WILLIAM HOWARD

NEWARK, New Jersey—"The problem with both Sharpe James and Cory Booker," said Maurice Williams, the Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Newark, "is that they both represent the capitalist two-party system. In the political arena, working people are forever presented with the 'choice' of voting for the lesser evil of two parties representing the interests of the tiny handful of superwealthy families that run New Jersey and the entire United States."

Williams was responding to newspaper accounts of an "undercover smear campaign" between the two Democratic Party candidates in the May 14 elections for mayor of this city. According to the *Star-Ledger*, Booker's campaign has produced and distributed a slick poster indirectly blaming James for the deaths of two young sisters who died in a February 4 fire that destroyed an apartment building riddled with housing code violations. The poster asks, "How many more of our children will have to die in fire traps before the mayor takes action against Newark slumlords?"

An anonymous letter, presumably from the James' campaign, accuses Booker of "trying to sell Newark to the highest bidder by accepting campaign contributions from wealthy businessmen around the country," according to the *Star-Ledger*. James himself told reporters that Booker paid drug dealers to distribute campaign literature at-

tacking him "at 9 and 10 o'clock at night. I know because they delivered one to my mama," he said.

According to the daily newspaper, the candidates deny involvement in the underground campaigns. Both, however, said they believe the messages about their opponents are accurate.

"I think some of what Booker and James say about each other is accurate," said Williams, "and I have no comment on what the supposed drug dealers gave to Sharpe James's mama. All of these accusations are a diversion for working people in this city, who face some of the worst economic and social conditions in the entire state."

"We need to rely on our own power, to extend solidarity to struggles against police brutality and the fight of coal miners and their spouses for black lung benefits, and to chart a working-class political course independent of the two parties of the superwealthy rulers," Williams said. "Only by charting such a road can we begin to fight for a government of our own and open up the possibility of addressing the wretched conditions capitalism has forced on workers and farmers across this country for decades, particularly here in Newark."

This reporter caught up with Williams as he and his campaign supporters were collecting signatures of workers and young people on the streets of Newark in their ef-



Militant/Janet Post

While petitioning to get on the ballot in Newark, Maurice Williams pointed to the need to chart a working-class course independent of the two parties of the super-rich.

fort to obtain ballot status for the socialist candidate. Williams, 45, is a staff writer for the *Militant* newspaper.

The Socialist Workers candidate said that although the mayoral race is officially non-partisan, it is still the same electoral con game. Sharpe James has been mayor for 16 years and has an entrenched political machine. He touts the "experienced leadership" he has provided for the capitalist rulers. For his part, Booker has attracted some wealthy backers, such as Jack Kemp, a former secretary of housing, and Harold Goldfield, a former legal adviser to Ronald Reagan. Booker is trying to garner votes by snipping at James's heels over the state of housing, education, health care, and employment for workers and their families in the city.

"A mayoral victory for either candidate will not change anything for working people in this city," Williams said. "Slum landlords, housing violations, unemployment, and other social problems are part of capitalist society. These problems won't be eliminated by electing a Democrat or a Republican. They can only be addressed through the social struggles of working people, the beginnings of which we are starting to see today."

"Workers and farmers will only be able to begin to fight to address racism, unemployment, oppression of women, and other hallmarks of capitalist society," he said, "by waging a revolutionary struggle to bring our class to power."

Williams responded to an "anticrime" campaign by the city's rulers that is aimed primarily at Black youth. A recent *Star-Ledger* article, headlined "Influx of ex-cons and a weakened economy help murder rate soar," asserts that "murder made a comeback in Newark and other major cities last year." It stated that there were 96 murders in Newark last year, up from 59 in 2000, and promoted the Greater Newark Safe Cities Initiative that keeps tabs on 100 young men "considered most likely to be the victims or perpetrators of shootings." All are either on parole or probation.

State authorities, reported the article, have imposed tighter restrictions on inmates by curtailing paroles, reducing family prison visits, and increasing the use of solitary confinement as punishment for "misbehavior." Many "amenities" inside prisons have already been eliminated, including education programs that allowed inmates to obtain college degrees while behind bars.

"This anti-crime, pro-cop campaign leads to more working people getting locked up and victimized by cops, especially if they are Black or Latino youth," said Williams. "It is aimed at driving divisions among workers who find themselves incarcerated, and reinforces acceptance of the worst dog-eat-dog values of capitalist society. And it tries to make working people view a section of our class as 'criminals' unworthy of humane treatment."

## Protest against secret detentions

Williams said the capitalist rulers have used their media in the same way to justify the bipartisan "anti-terrorism" dragnet mounted by the Bush administration after the September 11 events, which resulted in the arrest and secret detention of more than 1,100 immigrants. Many are currently incarcerated in New Jersey. "The rulers' war on crime, war on drugs, and war on terrorism are all aimed at assaulting workers'

rights and gaining acceptance for using greater repressive measures against workers," he said.

Immigrants detained in New Jersey are being held in Hudson, Passaic, Middlesex, and Bergen county jails. A Justice Department spokesperson announced March 6 that 327 people were being held nationwide as of February 15. Although none have been charged with participating in "terrorist activities," the government refuses to release their names or any information about their cases, including the charges under which they are held.

Deportation hearings have been held in a Newark courtroom on a near-daily basis, although no public record is kept of the proceedings, or even of whether a hearing took place. Friends, family, and the media are chased out before the hearings begin.

A typical case involved Malek Zeidan, a Paterson doughnut shop worker who was paid a visit by an Immigration and Naturalization agent. When Zeidan admitted to the cop that he had overstayed his visa he was told to report next day to the INS office in Newark, where he was then arrested. Among those ushered out before the hearing began were reporters for the *New Jersey Law Journal* and the *Herald News*.

The New Jersey American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), the Center for Constitutional Rights in New York, and other legal groups filed a federal lawsuit on behalf of the two publications. The ACLU asserted that the U.S. government's policy of holding closed hearings violates First Amendment rights guaranteeing access to court proceedings.

"I call for the release of all 327 people the Justice Department acknowledges are being held across the country," said socialist candidate Williams. "All working people have a stake in demanding that these secret detentions be stopped immediately."

## Cop murder

Continued from front page

that he was holding his hand. They could have used Mace."

Witness to the shooting Dendell Holley said, "It seemed like they just unloaded their guns on him."

One young immigrant from Somalia who stepped out of work to join the Monday morning protest told the *Militant* that he thinks the shooting was a message to the Somali community.

Earlier incidents involving Somalis include the death on October 22 of 66-year-old Ali W. Ali, who was injured while waiting for a bus. Police ignored witnesses who said that a large white man had punched Ali in the face.

On November 7 the FBI raided several money transfer businesses serving the Somali community in the area, cutting off their ability to send money to relatives in Somalia. The government says that 10 of the 40 Somalis deported nationally by the Immigration and Naturalization Service are from Minnesota.

The Somali Justice Advocacy Center has called a march in Minneapolis for March 23 beginning at 1:00 p.m. to demand justice for Abu Jeilani, the prosecution of the cops who killed him, and the removal of the police chief.

## Pathfinder bookstore holds grand opening in N. Carolina

BY LOUIS TURNER

KANNAPOLIS, North Carolina—Some 20 people participated in a grand-opening celebration of the new Pathfinder bookstore here March 9. The event, titled "The Place of Pathfinder Books in Today's World," was also a celebration of the publication of Pathfinder's latest book *From the Escambray to the Congo: In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution*, by Victor Dreke.

This event marked a milestone in a more than two-year effort by the communist movement to reach deeper into the Southeast, noted Dennis Richter, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party and a member of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE). Participants came from Charlotte and Greensboro, North Carolina; Birmingham, Alabama; and Atlanta.

Richter read a list of struggles that the socialist movement has participated in over the past two years that led the way toward the successful opening of the Pathfinder bookstore. They include the fight against the frame-up of the Charleston Five; a picket by garment workers in Tignall, Georgia; a march in Washington in support of the Palestinians' right to return to their land; a conference of coal miners fighting for black lung benefits

in West Virginia; events around the victory won by Blacks in Stanly County; the fight against linking the Martin Luther King Jr. national holiday with a holiday to celebrate Robert E. Lee; and many more. The SWP and Young Socialists "will be using this office and bookstore as a springboard to do more of these things," Richter emphasized.

The featured speaker was James Harris, a textile worker and National Committee member of the SWP. "More is to come," commented Harris, who read a passage from Victor Dreke's book. "When I was young my father used to tell me 'Don't get involved in anything,' and 'fortunately I didn't listen.'"

Harris commented, "How many of us have heard the same common sense advice? He [Dreke] avoided the common sense advice and went for the truth. He did not see his fellow fighters as futile, but as revolutionary, able to change the world and his life is proof of that."

Mike Ellis, a Young Socialists member and a Concord High School student, explained, "The bookstore will deepen our roots in the working class." One goal of the YS is to deepen our proletarianization. YSers in North Carolina have been driving toward this goal by staffing communist literature tables, selling the *Militant* at factory plant gates, and participating in door-to-door sales in working-class neighborhoods, as well as having one of our members as part of a fraction of socialist workers in UNITE, Ellis reported.

Ellis reported the YS recently helped organize a tour for Michael Italie. In doing so they met several youth interested in carrying out common activity with socialists.

Diane Shur, a Pathfinder digitization volunteer, pointed to the need for books containing the history and continuity of working-class struggle and reported that 66 percent of Pathfinder titles have been digitized—240 books in total—with the goal of having 75 percent ready for print by June.

"We have sold two books in the textile mills in the past weeks," Richter reported, "and we're about to sell two others—one to a co-worker who promised to pay for a book and another who is waiting for a copy of *Farmers Face the Crisis of the 1990s*, a shipment of which just arrived yesterday."

Three copies of *From the Escambray to the Congo* were sold at the meeting and \$750 was collected toward fixing up the bookstore.

## Self-determination for Western Sahara

Continued from Page 16

dent Abdelaziz Bouteflika visited the Polisario Front headquarters at the Smara refugee camp, the first such trip by an Algerian president since the start of the liberation struggle against Morocco. The visit coincided with the 26th anniversary celebrations of the SADR.

Resistance has continued in the occupied territory of Western Sahara. The Western Sahara Weekly News reported that the Association of Sahrawi Unemployed has held demonstrations demanding recognition of their organization by the Moroccan authorities. In spite of being assaulted by police February 14, they and others have continued protests.

Annalucia Vermunt is a member of the Meat Workers Union in Christchurch, New Zealand.

# U.S. gov't prepares attacks on port workers

BY BILL KALMAN

SAN FRANCISCO—The U.S. House of Representatives is putting together new attacks on waterfront workers in regulations that would bar anyone convicted of capital crimes, smuggling, or sedition in the past seven years from working certain jobs at the nation's 361 seaports. In addition, the new law would establish special port "security" committees and require all dockworkers to wear special ID cards.

The House Transportation Committee is to hold five hearings on the new legislation in order to piece together a so-called maritime "antiterrorism" bill. By raising the specter of the U.S. ports as "wide open" to security threats, Washington is seeking to deepen its intervention on the waterfront.

The U.S. Senate has already passed a similar bill. Sen. Ernest Hollings of South Carolina said, "This is a gaping hole in our national security that must be fixed, and it must be fixed before enemies of the United States try to exploit our weakness."

Hollings, a Democrat and the chairman of the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee, first introduced the Port and Maritime Security Act in July

2001 along with Sen. Robert Graham of Florida.

Subcommittee chair Rep. Frank LoBiondo of New Jersey said, "A critical facet of protecting our ports is ensuring the identity of all people working in these areas and knowing who belongs, and more importantly, who does not." Steve Stallone, spokesman for the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) based here in San Francisco, said the union is opposed to these measures.

"People who have already paid their debt to society have come back and gone through the hard work of getting into the union, have gotten their lives together, and are making a good living," he said. "And now suddenly you get thrown out of your job for something you did years ago? This sounds like double jeopardy."

Stallone also objected to adding the crime of sedition to the list. Many ILWU members participated in protests against the World Trade Organization, he said. "Is that going to be a factor?"

The federal legislation is in addition to state laws that are being discussed. For example, the state of Florida has passed a new law requiring longshoremen, laborers, and even truck drivers at the state's 14 ports to

undergo criminal background checks. The workers will be fingerprinted and checked by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement.

One aspect of the harsher security requirements for maritime workers is "re-credentialing" seafarers and issuing them an electronic card that they would carry from ship to ship.

## Union, bosses prepare for talks

These steps taken against maritime workers come as contract talks begin between the ILWU and West Coast waterfront employers and their trade group, the Pacific Maritime Association. According to a report in the *Journal of Commerce*, "This year's negotiations promise to be contentious. Terminal operators, carriers, and shippers already are talking openly about the possibility of a strike or lockout in the heart of the annual peak import season."

At the same time, U.S. officials received a cool reception at a meeting of the 161-member International Maritime Organization (IMO). Washington is urging biometrics examinations—such as fingerprinting and retina scans—and background checks for all seafarers, and security plans for ships, ports, and offshore terminals. The *Finan-*

*cial Times* noted that "the requirement for background checks on seafarers is expected to be controversial, as it could contravene some countries' civil liberties legislation."

Indeed, Rear Admiral Paul Pluta of the U.S. Coast Guard, who headed up the U.S. delegation, said that Washington's proposals received "virtually no support" at a special working group of IMO's maritime safety committee.

One controversial measure proposed by the U.S. delegation was "vessel-port interface," which would open foreign port facilities to U.S. inspection. Clay Maitland of International Registries pointed out that other countries "don't want the U.S. to have its own personnel in major ports overseas looking at the security of the terminals, which is conceivably something that could happen. You could have the [U.S.] Coast Guard in a major port...doing spot checks of containers."

U.S. Customs officials have broached a plan to "push the borders out" by installing their own security checkpoints at foreign ports where intermodal containers are bound for the United States.

*Bill Kalman is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 120.*

## MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

### IOWA

#### Des Moines

**The Irish Freedom Struggle and the Deepening Crisis of British Imperialism Today.** Speaker: Laura Richards, Socialist Workers Party. Sun., Mar. 24, 2:00 p.m. Lunch at 12:30 p.m. Lunch donation \$5.

**Oppose Israel's War against the Palestinian People.** Speaker: Mary Martin, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Mar. 29, 7:30 p.m. *Both events at 3720 6th Avenue. Tel: (515) 288-2970.*

### NEW JERSEY

#### Newark

**Miners March for Black Lung Benefits: Universal Health Care for All!** Speaker: John Hawkins, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Mar. 15, 7:30 p.m. 506 Springfield Ave., 3rd Floor. Donation: \$4. Tel: (973) 643-3341.

### NEW YORK

#### Brooklyn

**The Fight for Women's Equality Today: Celebrate International Women's Day.** Speaker: Gerardo Sánchez, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Mar. 15, 7:30 p.m. 372A 53rd St. (at 4th Ave.) Donation: \$5. Tel: (718) 567-8014.

#### Garment District

**U.S. Intervention in the Philippines.** Fri., Mar. 15, 7:30 p.m. 545 8th Avenue 14th Floor. Donation: \$4. (212) 695-7358.

#### Upper Manhattan

**Israel's War against the Palestinians: Why Israel Can't Win.** Fri., Mar. 15, 7:30 p.m. **Venezuela: U.S.-Backed Capitalists Seek to Oust Chávez.** Speaker: Stu Singer, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Mar. 22, 7:30 p.m. *Both events at 599 W. 187th Street, 2nd Floor. Donation: \$5. Tel: (212) 740-4611.*

### AUSTRALIA

#### Sydney

**The Fight for Irish Freedom Today.** Sun., Mar. 24, 4:00 p.m. 1st Floor, 3/281-287 Beamish St., Campsie. Donation: \$4. Tel: (02) 9718-9698.

### NEW ZEALAND

#### Christchurch

**Bloody Sunday and Britain's Brutal Occupation of Ireland.** Featuring new documentary on Jan. 30, 1972, massacre by British troops of civil rights marchers. Fri., Mar. 22, 7:00 p.m. Gloucester Arcade, 129 Gloucester St. Donation: \$3. Tel: (3) 365-6055.

## CALENDAR

### MINNESOTA

#### Minneapolis

**March for Justice for Abu Kassim Jailani, Somali Man Killed by Minneapolis Cops. Prosecute the Police, Remove the Police Chief!** Sat., Mar. 23, 1:00 p.m. Rally at Corner of Franklin Ave. and Chicago Ave. (site of killing) and march to City Hall. Sponsored by the Somali Justice Advocacy Center. Tel: (651) 602-9912.

## Continued from Page 16

raveled, Australia's rulers are becoming concerned at the "erosion of morale" in the ranks of the navy, both over the callous orders to turn back desperate civilians at sea and the Howard government's blatant manipulation of the military for electoral purposes.

An article in the *Australian Financial Review* noted that, "like other arms of the federal bureaucracy," the Australian military "appears to have been undermined and divided by years of relentless politicization and pressure to tell ministers what they want to hear rather than what they do not want to know." The finance capital daily called it a "calamity unmatched in peacetime."

"It is a grim prospect when more than 5,000 Australian troops are serving in East Timor, Afghanistan and elsewhere, and when the government is significantly increasing defence spending," the article said, and concluded that "in a dangerous world, Australia

cannot afford a divided high command."

## Questions over 'Pacific solution'

Questions about the lies and the cover-up continue to surface. Following an initial Senate hearing, the opposition Labor and Democrats, who have a majority in the Upper House, are launching a further inquiry to examine not only the "children overboard" scandal but also the Howard government's "Pacific solution" arrangements with Papua New Guinea and Nauru to house asylum-seekers.

At the same time as it has been buffeted by embarrassing leaks exposing its lying election propaganda, the Howard government has proposed a new law that treats any unauthorized disclosure of information by public servants as if it involved espionage or a leak of official secrets.

This has already been met with opposition among sections of the ruling class. For

example, in a letter to the federal attorney-general, Daryl Williams, the Fairfax media group, owners of the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Melbourne Age*, threatened to challenge the new law in court because it would impinge on constitutional rights of freedom of communication.

"The bill may not be aimed at preventing public discussion, but it would clearly have that effect. [It] hampers public discussion by criminalizing receipt—that is today legal—of information about the workings of government." It would be "used to plug leaks," the Fairfax letter said.

On January 29, the *Sydney Morning Herald* bluntly editorialized against the growing restrictions on press freedom: "The coincidence of an election campaign, the Tampa affair and the September 11 terrorism atrocities has reinforced authoritarian tendencies in the Prime Minister, John Howard, and his colleagues."

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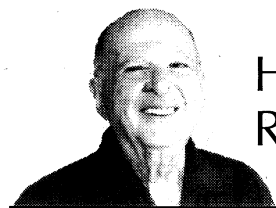
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'Essence of capitalism'—The Pentagon calls it an "odor bomb." Their researchers are studying noxious odors strong enough to disperse demonstrations or repel enemy



Harry Ring

troops. So far the leading contenders are human fecal waste and rotting food. Will it work? "Well," says

a modest researcher, "one time I managed to evacuate the building."

**Read it and retch**—"The United States found fault with the human rights records of allies in the war on terrorism, but said closer contact at least provided a chance to talk with them about abuses."—News item.

**Went easy on the feed bag**—Those five London bankers who got sacked for sipping \$62,700 worth of choice wine and putting it on company swindle sheets didn't get a fair shake. The restaurant gave

them their dinner on the house and the tab was less than \$100 apiece. We'd guess that in a joint like that \$75 would barely cover chips.

**Speedy cops and crooks**—DENVER, Colorado—"The city suspended its photo-radar program and dismissed all pending tickets issued under the system. A judge ruled that the photo-radar program illegally gave police powers to a private contractor. He also said it violated state law by appearing to compensate the contractor based on the volume of tickets issued."—News item.

**Really?**—"The desire not to sit through a commercial sales pitch is a common one."—Roger Bray, columnist, the *Financial Times*, London.

**A pinch of truth**—"Female supervisors have more liberty to touch their workers, which for them can create an atmosphere of trust, warmth and professionalism, according to researchers. Men, on the other hand, consider themselves boxed into the formality of a handshake."—*USA Today*.

**Remember, the 40-hour**

**week?**—On average, workers in Britain are now putting in a 43.6-hour week.

**Footloose or settling down?**—In Beverly Hills, a roomy house. Buy it for \$4.85 million, or rent it for \$24,000 a month.

**Class struggle heats up**—The departing president of the Connecticut state police "union" is suing the top cop. He says he was penalized for efforts on behalf of his members. For example, he was reprimanded for failing to salute the chief at a negotiating meeting.

## Farmers discuss need to respond to crisis on the land

BY TED LEONARD

IRVING, Texas—A turnout of 1,000 farmers here for the National Farmers Union convention and an increase in the membership in the organization in many states reflects the desire of many working farmers to respond to the continuing crisis on the land.

The National Farmers Union (NFU) celebrated its 100th anniversary at its convention here March 1-4. The organization has approximately 300,000 members in 26 states, mainly throughout the West and Midwest. Oklahoma has the largest number, with 121,650, followed by North Dakota with 36,371.

"The need for the Farmers Union is as great today as 100 years ago," said NFU president Leland Swenson in an address in nearby Point, Texas, the small community outside of Dallas where the NFU was founded a century ago.

A local newspaper distributed at the convention explained the conditions small farmers faced 100 years ago. "Farmers were virtual slaves to the soil and the insidious credit system. Interest rates became so high in Texas, credit prices were 26.9 percent higher than cash prices, and there was little, if any, cash," it read.

"There were large corporations which controlled the markets and always cheapened farm produce prices at the specific time of harvest," the paper noted. "Railroads overcharged freight rates on the necessities which the farmer had to buy. The farmers justly felt that the railroads and corporations conspired to defraud them of the fruits of their and their families' labor."

Today, Swenson reported, the Department of Labor estimates that over the next decade some 328,000 farm and ranch families will lose their land. In addition, according to a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) report, he said, there will be a "20 percent drop in farm income next year. That is the average," he added. In particular, he said, the price farmers will receive from the grain monopolies will drop by 22 percent for soybeans, 28 percent for corn, and 30 percent for wheat.

Last year membership increased in more than half of the states where the Farmers Union exists. The newly formed Missouri Farmers Union received charter status at the convention after signing up 1,250 members.

"I think a big impetus to farmers joining NFU were the 9 cents hogs. People realized things weren't working," said Jay McCallie, 38, a Missouri calf producer.

In December 1998, farmers were paid \$9.00 a hundredweight for hogs for slaughter, or 9 cents a pound. The break-even-point for raising hogs is around \$35 a hundredweight. Especially upsetting to farmers is that while they were paid rock-bottom prices by the packing companies, the price of pork in the grocery stores remained virtually the same.

Ron Seitz, a beef farmer and formerly a dairy farmer in Minnesota, said the main problem facing farmers is, "Price, price, price."

On the final day of the gathering the 180 delegates discussed and adopted a "Policy of the National Farmers Union."

The framework of the discussion at the convention was on what NFU members want to be addressed in the 2002 Farm Bill. Both the Senate and the House have passed farm bills, which are now in committee to prepare a final piece of legislation. The centerpiece of the bill is massive federal subsidies to a handful of capitalist farmers and agricultural businesses.

Tom Buis, the NFU's top Washington lobbyist, said Congress needs to "resolve the bill before Easter. Farmers and ranchers need certainty. We have no idea what the safety net will be. The safety net [for farmers and ranchers] is the lowest in modern history." This session was broadcast live on the radio show Agri-Talk.

The first hand that shot up in the discussion was of a delegate from Minnesota who proposed that the NFU's policy document be amended to add that the "NFU shall strive for no less than 50 percent of parity for all commodities in the short term with the long-term goal of 100 percent."

Parity is a calculation that is used to describe the relationship between prices farmers receive for their commodities and the costs they incur for production and living expenses. The index used to determine this relationship is based on the years 1910-1914 when there was a relationship between costs and prices supposedly favorable to farmers.

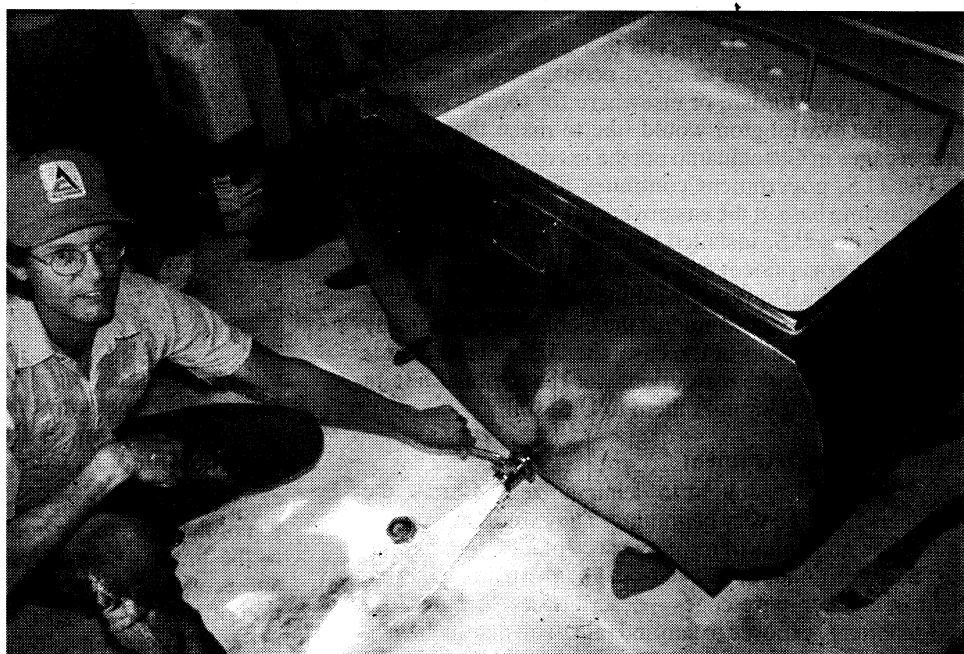
Today 100 percent parity for corn would be \$6.54 a bushel and 50 percent would be \$3.27. The price farmers receive from the grain monopolies for corn today is \$2.01. To break even on the production of corn farmers need around \$2.50 a bushel.

### Crisis facing dairy farmers

The largest number of amendments to the policy document proposed from the floor were about dairy farming. They were spearheaded by the delegations from Minnesota and California.

Joaquin Contente, president of the California Farmers Union and a leader of the California Dairy Campaign, which in recent years has led milk dumpings and other protests by dairy farmers, circulated an article he wrote last November that outlined the problem facing dairy farmers.

"The California dairy producer is bracing himself for another roller-coaster ride again as the price paid for that milk has plummeted about 40 percent within the last month," said the article. "Just as producers were healing from the low prices experienced in the year 2000, again the unexpected abrupt downturn came swiftly crashing the butter and cheese markets down to below the cost of production levels.... There lies



Francis Goodman

Joel Geeno, president of American Raw Milk Producers Pricing Association, spills milk July 4, 2000, in Wisconsin in protest against low prices paid to dairy farmers. Some 55,000 dairy farmers have been driven off their farms over the past decade.

the primary problem; when over 75,000 producers sell to basically only three marketers, then the balance of market power is obviously tilted towards the less than handful of marketers."

According to information distributed at the convention, some 55,000 dairy farmers have been driven off their farms over the past decade.

David Frederickson, president of the Minnesota Farmers Union and a past state senator in Minnesota, was elected the new national president of the NFU.

Ted Leonard is a meat packer in the Boston area. Karen Ray, a garment worker from Minneapolis, and Tony Dutrow, a meat packer from Houston, contributed to this article.

## —25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—



March 25, 1977

FBI Director Clarence Kelley, in response to a Freedom of Information Act request, recently turned over to the *Militant* more than 1,300 pages of files on Malcolm X.

The files show that from the time of his break with the Nation of Islam in March 1964 until his February 21, 1965, assassination, Malcolm X was the subject of one of the most intensive spy operations conducted by the FBI.

When Malcolm X emerged as an independent Black leader in March 1964, a new mood was sweeping the Black communities of the country. Tired of waiting for an end to segregation, growing ever more impatient with gradualism, Blacks were demanding "Freedom now!"

This new mood burst dramatically onto the scene in two marches of more than 200,000 people—one in Detroit, the other in Washington, D.C.—in the summer of 1963.

In 1964 the "Freedom now!" slogan lent its name to the independent Black party that challenged the Democrats and Republicans in the Michigan state elections.

Malcolm X, more than any other individual Black leader, articulated and sought to embody in organization and action these new militant sentiments.

He brought to the Black movement a revolutionary perspective. He championed independent Black political action—at the polls and in the streets.

Malcolm X was clearly dangerous in the estimation of the FBI and the government. The newly released files document their

concern. The files help penetrate the secrecy surrounding the FBI's surveillance of Malcolm X. However, they are far from complete.



March 24, 1952

Backed by American banking interests who control the Cuban economy and with the secret connivance of the U.S. State Department, General Fulgencio Batista on March 10 set up a military dictatorship over Cuba. Boasting "I did it with captains and lieutenants...we formed a military junta of fifteen or twenty of them," Batista violently overthrew the constitutionally elected government of president Carlos Prío Socarras.

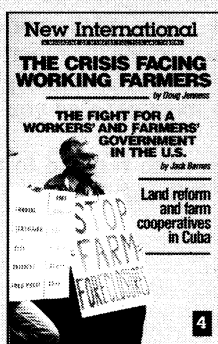
Batista, who ruled Cuba from 1933 to 1944 with a brutal military dictatorship, staged his latest seizure of power three months before presidential elections scheduled for June 1. He cynically claimed he acted to forestall an alleged attempt by Socarras to suspend the elections by "gangster" actions. This claim is "accepted with general skepticism," conceded the March 11 *N.Y. Times*, as "it has been General Batista, rather than Prío Socarras who anticipated defeat at the polls."

Formally and publicly, the U.S. State Department has adopted what the *Times* calls a "wait-and-see" attitude toward recognition of Batista dictatorship. But Batista will be recognized "in due time if Washington is satisfied that the regime actually was in control, that it had come to power without foreign help, and that it had demonstrated its intentions to live up to the country's international obligations."

### In New International no. 4

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# Free the Guantánamo prisoners!

Working people around the world can strike a blow against U.S. imperialism's brutal treatment of the men it is holding at the Guantánamo naval base in Cuba by demanding: Release the prisoners now!

Washington has no right to hold a single one of them, and their treatment at the hands of the U.S. military is an outrage. It is meant to make working people the world over get used to harsher treatment of anyone whom Washington deems it has the "right" to capture, interrogate, transport, and jail indefinitely.

The U.S. imperialists are holding the men without charging them with any crime. They have denied them access to lawyers and stripped them of any rights. And although U.S. president Bush continually claims his government and class are part of the "civilized world," nowhere else in the annals of modern history have prisoners been forced to live in open-air cages like animals.

Admissions by U.S. officials that it has become common practice for them to arrest people abroad and take them to Egypt, Jordan, or elsewhere for torture sessions shows that Washington would like to make the outdoor prison cages in Guantánamo not the exception but the rule.

The U.S. government continues to illegally occupy Guantánamo base at the eastern end of Cuba under a lease signed with a U.S.-installed regime in 1903. Since 1959 the Cuban government has called for the removal of the military facility. However, Washington has refused to give up this military foothold against the Cuban Revolution. By holding the prisoners at the base, the U.S. government is bound by neither the restrictions nor the political fallout it would face if it brought them to U.S. soil.

## Dehumanizing treatment

Washington has sought to dehumanize and break the prisoners from the very beginning. They were transported in the freezing holds of military cargo planes, under sedation and with hoods or blacked-out goggles over their eyes; held in chicken wire cages—described as "kennels" by one reporter—exposed to sun and rain, with one-inch thick foam mats as beds; and constantly shackled and handcuffed.

The Pentagon has termed the men "unlawful combatants," refusing to even acknowledge that they are prisoners of war—a classification that would require its actions to be judged according to the 1949 Geneva Convention on such prisoners. POWs, according to that convention, include members of militias and "volunteer corps, including those of organized resistance movements, belonging to a Party to the conflict and operating in or outside their own territory," with the proviso that they serve under a command structure and openly carry weapons.

While claiming that Camp X-Ray "will be humane," Marine Brig.-Gen. Michael Lehnert stated, "We have no intention of making it comfortable."

In January U.S. defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld said that some prisoners at Guantánamo would face indefinite detention. "The issue as to what happens to those people will follow the interrogations and the process of getting as much information out of them as we can," he stated.

The U.S. government has tried to portray those incarcerated at Guantánamo as exclusively prisoners captured in Afghanistan. But protests in Bosnia helped to break the information blockade. Six men who were all married to Bosnian women were turned over to Washington after U.S. authorities accused them of having links to al Qaeda. Some 300 friends and family members mobilized in support of the six as they were being transferred to U.S. custody by Bosnian officials. Police armed in riot gear dispersed the crowd.

The ongoing hunger strike by prisoners at the base shows they have neither lost their spirit of resistance nor allowed their imperialist captors to break them.

## Rationalizing imperialist brutality

Why should workers and farmers the world over consistently oppose Washington's wars, jailing of prisoners, and use of torture, the death penalty, and other weapons of terror against working people?

From its birth as an imperialist power Washington has justified every war and assault on working people as part of the struggle of a just nation to bring peace to the world, to oppose fascist tyranny or totalitarian regimes, or to rid the world of drugs and terrorists. They now claim their next war will be to keep the "civilized" countries safe from "weapons of mass destruction"—something the rulers of the "civilized countries" have in abundance and don't want the "less civilized" to get their hands on.

But each justification is simply window-dressing to advance the interests of a tiny handful of superwealthy ruling families in the United States, both against working people at home and abroad. The U.S. rulers know no bounds to the brutality they will use, and are "civilized" only to the extent that the struggles of workers and farmers have carved out rights and political space. The true face of the U.S. imperialist masters can be seen in their record, from the colonization of Puerto Rico, through the



U.S. military personnel with barefoot and blindfolded prisoner at Camp X-Ray at the U.S. naval base in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba.

use of the two atomic bombs against the people of Japan, to the litany of countries devastated by imperialist war and economic deprivation. It can be seen in the imposition of Jim Crow segregation, through the Palmer Raids, to the concentration camps for people of Japanese descent in World War II.

There is no further evidence needed anytime Washington imprisons its war victims to justify a vigorous campaign to demand their immediate release.

During World War II the *Militant* and the Socialist Workers Party campaigned to expose similar lies by Washington that sought to hide the class truth of its brutal rule.

In 1943, in the midst of the inter-imperialist slaughter, the U.S. post office canceled the *Militant's* second class mailing privileges. Among the exhibits used to justify this undemocratic act was an Oct. 24, 1942, editorial entitled, "Yes, punish the war criminals." The offending paragraph read:

"The English imperialists are not waging a war to destroy fascism. In order to preserve their smallest colony they would readily destroy every democratic right at home. They are sending the masses into slaughter only in order to preserve their empire. America's Sixty Families pursue aims no less predatory, reactionary and imperialist than do the Krupps, the Kirdorfs, and Boersigs of Germany.

"They all bear the real responsibility for the war. They are all equally guilty. They, together with their real political representatives, are the war criminals.

"We are wholeheartedly in agreement with the idea of bringing all these criminals and their respective Hesses to trial without delay. When the workers of all countries have said their final say, this is precisely what they will do. . . ."

## Fight to free German prisoners of war

Three years later the *Militant* campaigned for the immediate release of the German prisoners of war held by Washington. In the United States alone some 350,000 were held in slave-like conditions. Reading the articles about the conditions the prisoners were subjected to brings the decades together as if in a day.

"There is no coddling of the German prisoner," one capitalist newspaper read. Many prisoners were placed on bread and water in a solitary cell "with nothing on the concrete floor but a mattress for a period of up to two weeks," another reported. Thousands of prisoners were supplied to factory and agricultural firms as cheap labor gangs.

"How long these prisoners of war will be held here is not known," the *Militant* reported. "Against them war is being continued indefinitely. Now that 'peace' has been proclaimed in Europe, all American troops ought to be withdrawn without delay. And the German prisoners in this country should be given transport back to their homeland."

This past week a prisoner at the Guantánamo base somehow caught the ear of a CNN crew. "We need the world to know about us!" he yelled at a van carrying the reporters. "We are innocent here in this cage. We have no legal rights, nothing. So can somebody know about us? Can you tell the world about us?"

Working people everywhere need to respond to this appeal and press the fight for the U.S. imperialists to release the prisoners now.

# Hunger strikers demand right to wear turban

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Some 300 prisoners are currently incarcerated at the U.S. naval base in Guantánamo Bay, Cuba. Most were seized by the U.S. military during its assault on Afghanistan. About 200 participated in a hunger strike that was sparked when guards stripped an inmate of his turban February 27.

The inmates are held in chicken wire cages, exposed to rain and sun, and are provided with one-inch thick foam mats as beds. Some have tested positive for tuberculosis. Press reports indicate they have had their beards forcibly shaved off.

"We have no intention of making it comfortable," said Brig. Gen. Michael Lehnert, commander of the detention camp dubbed Camp X-Ray.

The U.S. government has barred the media from making contact with prisoners. The only way military officials allow journalists to get near detainees is through touring the facilities in a van.

One detainee who is being held in an area reserved for "troublemakers" was able to shout a message in English to reporters from CNN as they passed by the area in a van. "We are on a hunger strike. We've been on a hunger strike for 14 days and nobody cares," he yelled out. "We need the world to know about us. We are innocent here in this cage. We have no legal rights, nothing. So can somebody know about us? Can you tell the world about us?"

The *Washington Post* reported March 11 that the U.S. government has secretly arrested and deported dozens of people from other countries who it deemed have links to alleged terrorists. U.S. officials have bypassed extradition procedures and legal formalities.

According to the *Post*, some of these countries include Egypt and Jordan where they can be "subjected to interrogation tactics—including torture and threats to families that are illegal in the United States." In some cases U.S. spies remain closely involved in the interrogations, the paper said.

"After September 11, these sorts of movements have been occurring all the time," an unnamed U.S. diplomat told the *Post*. "It allows us to get information from terrorists in a way we can't do on U.S. soil."

# U.S. prepares for war against Iraq

Continued from Page 3

tion by the U.S. government. The Russian foreign minister made similar remarks.

A report in the *Washington Post* reminded its readers that the basic outlines of the nuclear policy were developed under the Clinton administration. During the Gulf War U.S. president Bush wrote to Saddam Hussein saying any Iraqi use of biological or chemical weapons against U.S. force would be met with the "strongest possible response," a threat widely interpreted as use of nuclear weapons.

Several years later Clinton's defense secretary, William Perry, said that "if some nation were to attack the United States with chemical weapons, then they would have to fear the consequences of a response from any weapon in our inventory. We could make a devastating response without the use of nuclear weapons, but we would not forswear the possibility."

The article details Clinton-era directives for the Pentagon to target small nations "seeking weapons of mass destruction," including constant updates on facilities in Iran, Iraq, and north Korea. One official knowledgeable of the Clinton directives and the current report told the *Post* that "nothing has changed" from the Clinton administration and the report sent to Congress in early January.

# Berbers gain victory

Continued from Page 15

from 1830 until 1962, when workers and peasants won their independence after a long liberation struggle that took the lives of hundreds of thousands of Algerians at the hands of French imperialism. To the detriment of Paris, the Bouteflika government has deepened its ties with Washington, which is interested in gaining more of a foothold in the strategic and oil-rich north African country.

Berber organizations that led the protests last year are divided over whether or not to continue their boycott of the national elections. Those who command the most support in Kabylia rejected an invitation to meet with Bouteflika and said their broader demands are nonnegotiable. They announced the boycott will continue unless all demands are met, while the government has flatly rejected the complete withdrawal of the gendarmes from the region.



# Engels explains transition from ape to man

Printed below is an excerpt from *Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State* by Frederick Engels. This is one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for March. The item quoted is from one of the appendixes entitled "The part played by labor in the transition from ape to man," which was written by Engels in 1876. Copyright © 1972 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted with permission.

BY FREDERICK ENGELS

Labor is the source of all wealth, the political economists assert. It is this—along with nature, which supplies it with the material that it converts into wealth. But it is even infinitely more than this. It is the prime basic condition for all human existence, and

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

this to such an extent that, in a sense, we have to say that labor created man himself.

Many hundreds of thousands of years ago, during an epoch, not yet definitely determinable, of that period of the earth's history which geologists call the Tertiary period, most likely toward the end of it, a specially highly developed race of anthropoid apes lived somewhere in the tropical zone—probably on a great continent that has now sunk to the bottom of the Indian Ocean. Darwin has given us an approximate description of these ancestors of ours. They were completely covered with hair, they had beards and pointed ears, and they lived in bands in the trees.

Presumably as an immediate consequence of their mode of life, which in climbing assigns different functions to the hands than to the feet, these apes when walking on level ground began to disaccustom themselves to the aid of their hands and to adopt a more and more erect gait. This was the decisive step in the transition from ape to man.

All extant anthropoid apes can stand erect and move about on their two feet alone, but only in case of urgent need and in a very clumsy way. Their natural gait is in a half-erect posture and includes the use of the hands. The majority rest the knuckles of the fist on the ground and, with legs drawn up, swing the body through their long arms, much as a cripple moves with the aid of crutches. In general, we can today still observe among apes all the transition stages from walking on all fours to walking on two legs. But for none of them has the latter method become more than a makeshift.

For erect gait among our hairy ancestors to have become first the rule and in time a necessity presupposes that in the meantime diverse other functions increasingly devolved upon the hands. Even among the apes there already prevails a certain division in the employment of the hands and feet. As already mentioned, in climbing the hands are used differently from the feet. The former serve primarily for the collection and grasping of food, as already occurs in the use of the forepaws among lower mammals. Many monkeys use their hands to build nests for themselves in the trees or even, like the chimpanzee, to construct roofs between the branches for protection against the weather. With their hands they seize hold of clubs to defend themselves against enemies, or bombard the latter with fruit and stones. In captivity, they carry out with their hands a number of simple operations copied from human beings.

But it is just here that one sees how great is the distance between the undeveloped hand of even the most anthropoid of apes and the human hand that has been highly perfected by the labor of hundreds of thousands of years. The number and general arrangement of the bones and muscles are the same in both; but the hand of the lowest savage can perform hundreds of operations that no monkey's hand can imitate. No simian hand has ever fashioned even the crudest of stone knives.

At first, therefore, the operations for which our ancestors gradually learned to adapt their hands during the many thousands of years of transition from ape to man could

have been only very simple. The lowest savages, even those in whom a regression to a more animal-like condition with a simultaneous physical degeneration can be assumed to have occurred, are nevertheless far superior to these transitional beings. Before the first flint was fashioned into a knife by human hands, a period of time may have elapsed in comparison with which the historical period known to us appears insignificant. But the decisive step was taken: *the hand had become free* and could henceforth attain ever greater dexterity and skill, and the greater flexibility thus acquired was inherited and increased from generation to generation.

Thus the hand is not only the organ of

labor, it is also the product of labor. Only by labor, by adaptation to ever new operations, by inheritance of the thus acquired special development of muscles, ligaments and, over longer periods of time, bones as well, and by the ever-renewed employment of this inherited finesse in new, more and more complicated operations, has the human hand attained the high degree of perfection that has enabled it to conjure into being the paintings of a Raphael, the statues of a Thorwaldsen, the music of a Paganini.

But the hand did not exist by itself. It was only one member of an entire, highly complex organism. And what benefited the hand benefited also the whole body it served.

## Berbers in Algeria win language rights

BY JACK WILLEY

The Berber people have scored a victory in Algeria in winning government recognition of their language, Tamazight.

Algerian president Abdelaziz Bouteflika announced in a speech to the nation on March 12 that he had "decided in total freedom and with total conviction to include Tamazight in the constitution as a national language." Berbers are an oppressed minority who make up 20 percent to 30 percent of the population.

Bouteflika's announcement came just days after Berber leaders called for a boycott of parliamentary elections in May because the government had not addressed their demands for language rights.

In the spring and summer of last year, hundreds of thousands of Berbers in the Kabylia region and other Algerians through-

out the country held mass demonstrations around the issue. Until Bouteflika's announcement, Arabic was the only official national language. During last year's actions, some of the protests also presented demands for jobs in a country with high unemployment, housing, more democratic rights, and the withdrawal of the hated paramilitary gendarmes. The gendarmes attacked several of the street protests, killing some 60 Berbers and wounding another 2,000.

The French ruling class has sought to pressure the Bouteflika regime by having a hand in the actions. Pro-imperialist Berber groups based in France worked to turn the outrage against the cop killings into actions to bring down the government.

Algeria was ruled as a colony by France

Continued on Page 14



## LETTERS

### Bush hypocrisy

I was dumbstruck by the sheer audacity of a statement by George W. Bush, the Texas governor-turned-president who some labeled the Texecutioner because he presided over a record number of executions while governor of the state.

In a proclamation on "National Sanctity of Human Life Day" on January 20 he quotes Thomas Jefferson who said that "the care of human life and happiness and not their destruction is the first and only legitimate object of good government." Bush said he rejected the "notion that some lives are less worthy of protection than others whether because of age, illness, social circumstances, or economic conditions...." What caught my eye is his statement that these rights should apply to every American, including the elderly and unprotected, the weak, and the infirm and even the unwanted.

George W. Bush is hypocrisy at its finest and I as a human being demand that he admit this and take steps to ensure the sanctity of all human life and not just those he deems worthy.

Paul Colella  
Polunsky Unit  
Death Row  
Livingston, Texas

### 'Enjoy the newsletter'

I am writing to let you know that my address has changed. I very much enjoy read-

ing this newsletter. I also pass it on to any and all who are interested in it when I am done. I hope that it is being read by several people each week.

A prisoner  
Cañon City, Colorado

### 'Another Vietnam'

I enjoyed Patrick O'Neill's review of "Another Vietnam." For those who are not able to travel to New York to see the exhibition, the collection is also available in book form. "Another Vietnam" is available from National Geographic Press and retails for \$50.

Michael Pennock  
St. Paul, Minnesota

### Unions need to unite

I am a retired Teamster and 76 years old. When are the unions going to unite and work with nonunion people? Then we can get any law we want passed. The top 1 percent have as much income as the lower 35 percent.

Richard Critchfield  
Walls, Mississippi

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people.

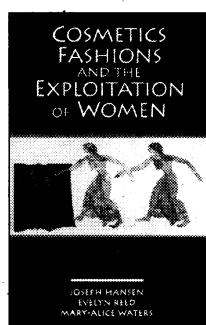
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## March BOOKS OF THE MONTH

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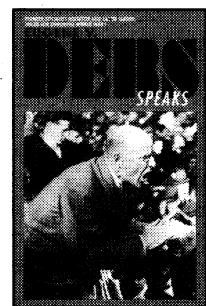
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## Self-determination for Western Sahara

BY ANNALUCIA VERMUNT

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand—In a February 19 report to the United Nations Security Council on "the situation concerning Western Sahara," Secretary-General Kofi

Annan threatened to use the UN to deny the Sahrawi people full independence of their country from Morocco.

The people of Western Sahara have fought against foreign domination of their land for

decades. The country was a direct colony of Spain from 1884 to 1975. In 1975, as the independence struggle led by the Polisario Front picked up steam, the Spanish government handed Western Sahara over to the semicolonial regimes of Mauritania and Morocco.

Today Morocco, with the support of French and U.S. imperialism, continues to occupy two-thirds of Western Sahara, including the entire coastline. Close to 200,000 Sahrawis, the majority of the population, were driven off their land and live in refugee camps in Algeria, near the border, and in the liberated zone in the eastern part of the country.

The Polisario Front waged a guerrilla war to win liberation until 1991 when it entered a UN-brokered cease-fire with the Moroccan monarchy. The cease-fire was based on an agreement that Sahrawis would be allowed to hold a referendum to determine whether their nation would be independent or annexed to Morocco.

### UN discusses take-it-or-leave-it options

In his February 19 report, Annan, in reference to the agreement 11 years ago, described "a rather bleak situation with regard to the peace process in Western Sahara." The pro-imperialist UN chief equally blamed both sides in the conflict for the current impasse, stating that the "high level of animosity" between the Moroccan king and Polisario Front, accompanied by a "winner-take-all mentality," effectively ended the

possibility of holding the referendum.

The UN chief's report presented four options for the Security Council to consider enforcing on the liberation forces and the Moroccan regime.

The first is to continue trying to implement the referendum plan, which would require settling more than 48,000 pending voter registration appeals by Moroccans now living in Western Sahara. To date, the Moroccan regime has made frivolous appeals, giving the UN a pretext to indefinitely delay a vote.

The second option would be to revise a plan presented last year by the special UN envoy to Western Sahara, James Baker, to offer a form of "autonomy" for the people of Western Sahara while remaining under Moroccan occupation. The Security Council would present the plan to both sides "on a nonnegotiable basis." The Polisario Front has unequivocally rejected this denial of self-determination. Baker was the treasury secretary under the Reagan administrations and secretary of state under George Bush.

Another avenue the report raises is for Baker to explore with the two sides the partition of Western Sahara. If no agreement is reached, the Security Council could present a take-it-or-leave-it proposal.

The fourth option outlined by Annan is to pull out the 260-member UN team known as the Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara.

In a statement on behalf of the Polisario Front, Fadel Ismail, head of the liberation organization's Mission for the United Kingdom and Ireland, rejected any modification of the Baker plan that would legitimize Morocco's occupation. He said that although partition of their land with the aggressor is unacceptable, the proposal "nevertheless has the merit of recognizing the right of the Sahrawi people to independence."

"It must be reminded," Ismail said, "that the full and entire sovereignty over Western Sahara belongs to the Sahrawi people alone; Morocco is only the occupying power which must consequently withdraw sooner or later from the Sahrawi territories which it is occupying illegally."

The statement scored the "intransigent and arrogant attitude of Morocco," which as a member state of the United Nations, "is allowed to get away with failing to implement the decision of the Security Council and those of the General Assembly on the Western Sahara issue, particularly those relating to the 1991 peace plan."

Ismail reiterated the Polisario's demand that the "Sahrawi people should decide their own fate through a free, fair, and transparent referendum," noting that any settlement must be based on the "Sahrawi people's right to self-determination, independence, and justice."

In an interview in Spain, Polisario secretary-general Mohamed Abdelaziz said the Sahrawi people "need to be consulted about their future. The referendum is our first priority as far as options go. The government of the SADR [Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic] has a positive attitude towards this latest report [from the UN secretary-general], not only because the referendum is the best option for finding a peaceful solution to the conflict, but also because, for the first time in 11 years, it [the report] has acknowledged the difficulty in reaching any agreement at all because of the Moroccan stance."

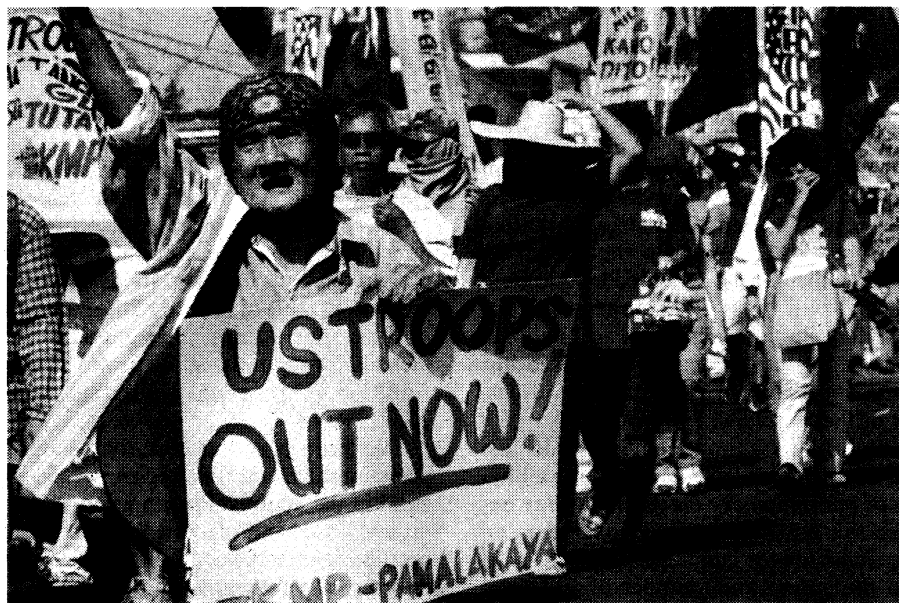
The Moroccan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for its part, issued a statement "unequivocally and strongly expressing its total rejection of any partition idea or any discussion on the matter."

### Struggle in occupied zone continues

As the UN Security Council discussed what it will do in regard to the Sahrawi liberation struggle, the Moroccan King Mohammed VI continued to assert his domination over Western Sahara with a March 5 visit to the occupied towns of Dakhla and El Aaiun. A week earlier, Algeria's presi-

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### Filipino farmers oppose U.S. troops



Filipino farmers protest presence of 600 U.S. troops in the Philippines. The soldiers are backing a Philippine army offensive in the south. The government in Manila is also discussing opening up Subic Bay—site of former U.S. naval base, closed in 1992 in the face of massive protests—and other facilities to U.S. forces.

## Australian gov't caught with 'truth overboard'

BY RON POULSEN

SYDNEY, Australia—Revelations in the big-business media about pre-election lies and deception by the government of Prime Minister John Howard over people seeking asylum in the country have damaged the credibility of senior government officials as well as the armed forces' top brass. The scandal has become known as the "truth overboard" affair.

A separate but intertwined crisis for the rulers has also shaken the country's head of state. Peter Hollingworth, the governor-general recently appointed by Howard, has created a public storm with his anti-woman comments and defense of his cover-ups of child sexual abuse by clergymen while he was Anglican archbishop of Brisbane.

In a February 16 editorial, the *Sydney Morning Herald* noted that not only had Howard's credibility been "seriously damaged," but the military and government bureaucracy had been effectively gagged and politicized and "dragged into the maelstrom of a political campaign," threatening their "integrity" for Australia's imperialist rulers.

In a March 3 speech, former Labor prime minister Paul Keating attacked the Howard government, warning that "Australia's institutions have been eroded in dangerous ways" by being "politicised." Keating listed the high court, the public service, the armed forces, and the governor-general as key pillars of the capitalist state that have been destabilized.

Like Washington, the Australian government faces the exhaustion of its ability to use the September 11 events to drum up a patriotic war fever. The rulers' ability to use a propaganda scare over the need to "stem the flood of boat people" has also receded.

Hundreds of people seeking asylum, thrown into detention camps surrounded by razor wire, along with thousands of supporters, have organized protests to condemn Canberra's brutal treatment of immigrants. These actions are beginning to counter the demagoguery of government officials and their ability to justify their treatment of this layer of working people. As a result, the rulers have begun to divide on the issue.

Last August, Howard's cabinet decided to send armed commandos to storm the *Tampa*, a Norwegian freighter. The captain and crew had rescued 438 asylum-seekers adrift in a sinking vessel and had tried to

take them to Christmas Island, an Australian territory in the Indian Ocean. As part of Canberra's belligerent stance, a naval flotilla was rushed towards neighboring Indonesia to forcibly turn back any further boatloads of asylum-seekers, or to transport them to camps in Pacific Island countries dominated by Australian imperialism.

The first in a damaging series of revelations in the big-business press came on February 12, when Canberra's electronic spying on communications between the Maritime Union of Australia and the captain of the *Tampa* during the crisis was exposed and protested. At the time of this spying, the press was excluded from any contact with the *Tampa* crew or the asylum-seekers.

### 'Children overboard' lie exposed

This was overtaken by a major news story that had begun to leak out just before the federal elections last year. The most sensational claim of Howard's election campaign—that asylum-seekers had thrown their children overboard—was proved to be false. Moreover, this was knowingly covered up at the highest levels. Instead of being able to claim a mandate for new assaults on working people as the rulers would like, the scandal has undermined the new government's credibility.

Last October, just after the election campaign had begun, the HMAS *Adelaide* intercepted a vessel in the Indian Ocean that had been abandoned by its crew with 200 asylum-seekers aboard. The Australian warship fired shots across the bow. Some time later a man on board held up his child in a plea for help. Some men jumped overboard as a naval party boarded. The unseaworthy boat was ordered to head north, away from Australia.

Immigration Minister Philip Ruddock twisted an unclear naval communication about the incident into the headline-grabbing assertion that the asylum-seekers had thrown their children overboard. Howard went on to insist this was to "blackmail" his government. He pounded on the theme that such parents were undesirable people to be let into the country.

Then defense minister Peter Reith claimed the false story was "an absolute fact." He released photographs showing a female sailor from the *Adelaide* in the water with a woman and child. The government issued orders gag-

ging all enlisted military personnel from speaking publicly on the case, an order which remains in effect. This was the most explosive of Canberra's litany of false accusations against asylum-seekers.

Howard and his ministers coupled their assertions with demagoguery about the need to build a "Fortress Australia" and other anti-immigrant notions that had been the trademark of ultrarightist Pauline Hanson and her One Nation party. They sought to dehumanize the immigrants, mostly working people from Central Asia and the Middle East seeking refuge and a better life in Australia. Labor Party leaders went along with this reactionary campaign until they were defeated at the polls.

The orchestrated climate of political polarization over the issue coincided with the buildup to the imperialist assault on Afghanistan, and helped Howard to win a third term in November. The new Labor opposition leader Simon Crean later labeled this a "dirty victory" after the government had "lied, spied and denied."

### False story exposed

It wasn't until February that the truth about the photos shown by the defense minister began to emerge. They were in fact cropped from a picture of people abandoning their sinking boat. The deliberately misdated photos depicted a crew member rescuing two people the day after the "child overboard" claims. Both Reith's department and the prime minister's office were quickly informed by senior naval officers that their statements were incorrect.

On February 27, the chief of the Australian military forces, Adm. Christopher Barrie, abruptly withdrew his month-long backing of Howard's stonewalling after pressure from senior officers and the press campaign. In a March 2 editorial, the *Sun-Herald*, which broke the woman sailor's explanation of the pictures, called for the admiral to "walk the plank."

As *Sydney Morning Herald* journalist Mike Secombe wrote, "It took four hours for the Government to distribute false information advantageous to its central election issue, border security, and four months to admit the truth."

As government ministers' story has un-

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