

THE MILITANT

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Double victory: sales drive and
Pathfinder Fund surpass goals!

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Thousands of New York health-care workers rally for contract

BY RUTH ROBINETT

NEW YORK—Chanting “we want raises,” thousands of home care union members pumped the air with signs reading “Fair Contract for Home Care Workers” as their meeting opened November 13 at New York City’s Javits Center. Local 1199 of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) called the meeting in the face of the refusal by a number of employers to sign a contract.

The 60,000 home care workers organized by the SEIU provide personal services, such as bathing and other nonmedical tasks like cooking and cleaning, to the chronically ill and those just released from the hospital. The workers, who are overwhelmingly women and mostly Black or Latina, are the lowest-paid sector in the health-care industry, with wages ranging from \$6.50 to \$7.50 an hour.

“Management needs to know you have an action plan if they don’t sign,” said George Gresham, secretary-treasurer of the local. “Stand up and say ‘yes’ if you want to go on a one-day strike.” Union members rose to their feet with shouts of “Yes! Strike!”

Union officials said that if the agencies do not sign a contract union members will be notified of the strike date. Gresham announced that a mass picket line will be held at the negotiation site in midtown Manhattan November 20.

“This was beautiful,” said Annie Massenberg, a home care worker for 21 years, of the meeting and the vote by accla-

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INS begins checkpoints on Michigan highways

BY DON MACKLE

DETROIT—For the first time, U.S. Border Patrol agents in Michigan have begun setting up random checkpoints on state roads, stopping cars under the guise of looking for “undocumented” workers. The moves have brought to the U.S.-Canadian border methods familiar to workers along the Rio Grande and the rest of the border with Mexico, as well as other parts of the country.

Teams of federal agents began setting up the two-hour checkpoints on November 12, targeting secondary roads in Port Huron and Trenton, two small communities to the north and south of Detroit. Stopping all traffic, they demanded proof of citizenship from travelers they deemed “suspicious.” Their “primary objective” was not “contraband” but “illegal aliens,” said Loretta Lopez-Mossman, acting chief Border Patrol agent in Detroit.

The week before, *Latino*, a weekly Spanish language newspaper, had published a front-page article warning that the Immigration and Naturalization Service cops, known as *la migra*, would be stopping

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U.S., British planes bomb southern Iraq, kill seven

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

As United Nations Security Council “inspection” teams arrive in Iraq, Washington is attacking the country with forces already in place, as it steps up its buildup of troops and equipment for the coming invasion.

Chief inspection official Hans Blix arrived in Baghdad November 18 armed with the recent UN resolution containing a rapid-fire set of ultimatums and deadlines for Baghdad to submit to open-ended inspections of an estimated 700 sites.

The deployment of the inspectors coincided with a series of air attacks by U.S. and British planes.

On November 15 they bombed an air defense communications center in southern Iraq in Najaf province 85 miles southeast of Baghdad. The Iraqi government reported that seven people were killed and four wounded in the assault.

Further raids were launched November 18 in both the northern and southern “no-fly” zones established a decade ago by the U.S. and British military. Repeating their standard explanation, U.S. officers said

they had responded to ground fire. They also claimed that Iraqi planes had “penetrated” the zones.

A White House spokesman claimed that such Iraqi self-defense measures were a justification to launch a war. “The United States believes that firing upon our aircraft in the no-fly zone, or British aircraft, is a violation—it is a material breach” of the UN resolution, said Scott McClellan November 18. The resolution outlaws “hostile acts,” broadly defined, on the part of the Iraqi gov-

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Cuban revolutionary speaks in Florida



Left, audience at Florida International University campus in Miami at meeting for Cuban revolutionary Víctor Dreke, sharing the platform with Ana Morales. Right, Dreke speaks at the University of South Florida in Tampa the day before.

A Miami first: meeting for a leader of the Cuban Revolution

BY MARY ANN SCHMIDT
AND ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

MIAMI—Some 250 people filled a ballroom at the Florida International University campus in North Miami November 13 to hear Victor Dreke, a leader of the Cuban Revolution, speak on “Cuba and Africa: From 1959 to Today.”

Also speaking was Ana Morales, a leader of Cuba’s medical missions in Africa, who joined Dreke in a month-long speaking tour of seven cities.

For the largely student audience, this was a unique opportunity to hear a commander of the Cuban Revolution speaking firsthand about the revolution and its record of solidarity with national liberation struggles in Africa. It was the first time a Cuban leader of Dreke’s stature had spoken in Miami.

A small minority of right-wing opponents of the Cuban Revolution came to try to shout down the speakers and prevent a discussion. Because of the breadth of forces sponsoring and attending the meeting, and the preparatory work by students and faculty who were determined to hold such an event, the disrupters failed, and the program proceeded.

“This was a victory for academic freedom, for free speech,” said Carole Boyce Davies, director of FIU’s African-New World Studies department, one of the sponsors.

Dreke spoke as a cadre with nearly five decades of revolutionary activity. As a teenager living in central Cuba in the early 1950s, he became involved in the popular struggle against the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship. Joining the July 26 Movement led by Fidel Castro in the mid-1950s, and then the front organized by the Revolutionary

Directorate in the Escambray mountains of Central Cuba, he reached the rank of captain by the time of the revolution’s triumph in 1959. Following that victory, he commanded the forces in the Escambray mountains that successfully combated U.S.-backed counterrevolutionary guerrilla bands, which murdered hundreds of farmers and workers during the U.S.-organized dirty war there.

In 1965, Dreke served as second in command under revolutionary leader Ernesto Che Guevara in an internationalist combat mission of 128 Cuban volunteers in the Congo. He returned to Africa in 1966–68 as the head of Cuba’s military mission to Guinea-Bissau, where Cuban troops trained and fought alongside soldiers led by Amílcar Cabral in the war for independence from Portuguese colonial rule. In the past decade he has helped lead Cuba’s work assisting African development projects.

The November 13 meeting was sponsored by the ad hoc Afro-Cuban Interest Committee. Among the groups and individuals at FIU that lent their support were professors Jean Rahier of the Anthropology Department, Peter Craumer of International Relations, Ron Cox of Political Science, and Ken Lipner of Economics; the department of African-New World Studies (ANWS); and the International Relations and African-New World Studies students associations.

Also backing the meeting were the African Club at the University of Miami; Famn Aysiyani Miami (Haitian Women of Miami); Miami Coalition Against the U.S. Embargo of Cuba; and Alianza Martiana, a Cuban-

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A Tampa first: the truth about ‘Cuba, Africa’

BY RACHELE FRUIT
AND JACQUIE HENDERSON

TAMPA, Florida—“The Cuban Revolution has had an internationalist outlook from the beginning,” Víctor Dreke said before an audience of 125 people at the University of South Florida (USF) November 12.

The Cuban revolutionary leader spoke about the hundreds of thousands of Cuban volunteers who over the years have joined with anticolonial and anti-imperialist fight-

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U.S., UK planes bomb southern Iraq, kill 7

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ernment and military.

"I do find it unacceptable that Iraq fires," Rumsfeld told a news conference in Santiago, Chile, the same day. "It is for the president of the United States and the U.N. Security Council to make judgments about their view of Iraq's behavior over a period of time."

The Pentagon continues to build up its troop strength, already standing at tens of thousands of soldiers, and to accumulate ships, planes, artillery, and military vehicles in the Arab-Persian Gulf and Arabian Peninsula.

The U.S. Navy has stepped up its deployment schedule to have in place by January at least five aircraft carrier groups in the area—one possible deadline for a bombing war and invasion.

Two carriers, the USS *Abraham Lincoln* and USS *George Washington* are already in the region, with another three, USS *Constellation*, USS *Nimitz*, and USS *Harry S. Truman*, expected to arrive in December and January. The USS *Carl Vincent* has begun its training exercises well ahead of schedule and could be ready for deployment to the Gulf in January as well. Each carrier is armed with dozens of warplanes and is accompanied by a group of attack submarines and warships.

'Locked and loaded'

"We're locked and loaded and in the ready gun position," Capt. Michael Groothusen of the *Truman* told the New York *Daily News* as the ship sat parked at the U.S. naval base in Norfolk, Virginia. He described the vessel as "98,000 tons of diplomacy."

"Plans have also been activated to call up retired merchant marine sailors to fill gaps

in what appears to be a huge logistical transport operation to the Middle East by the U.S. military that would involve around 50 chartered freighters," reports a November 14 article in the *Asia Times*. Washington has already stockpiled tanks and heavy equipment for more than 30,000 troops in several gulf states and ships nearby. Additional cargo ships are in transit to the area, with others being loaded at several West Coast ports.

Washington has declared a new "military zone" in Kuwait covering almost one-quarter of the country. The zone provides the U.S. military with a closed-off area for exercises in preparation for thrusts across the border. U.S. troops are spread out at tent encampments along the Iraqi border and in Camp Doha, which houses some 10,000 troops and acts as the army's command base.

"Currently two armored brigades are known to be in the emirate," reports the *Asia Times*. Since June "the tanks, armored vehicles, artillery and other heavy equipment for one to two more armored brigades have arrived." This would provide equipment for another 10,000 GIs, who could be ready for battle within 72 hours of arrival. Plans are under way to have in place by December additional military hardware for use by another U.S. division in excess of 18,000 troops.

Kuwait's Ministry of Defense confirmed November 6 that a refueling depot for helicopters and fighter jets was being built within the zone, along with a runway for aircraft carrying military freight. The emirate has given the U.S. military the go-ahead to use airfields, ports, and warehouses throughout the country.

The Pentagon is readying other bases throughout the Middle East in Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, and Qatar. It will also make use of the British outpost of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean.

Foundation laid in Afghanistan

"The enormous infrastructure needed to supply and sustain today's armed forces against Iraq is being constructed on the foundations of the system created for the war in Afghanistan," noted military analyst William Arkin in a *Los Angeles Times* article. This includes U.S. bases in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, in Central Asia.

Washington Post columnist Charles Krauthammer urged the White House to

openly proclaim its buildup on the grounds that the November 8 UN resolution "creates a window of legitimacy" for the war option.

"Until now," Krauthammer wrote in his November 15 column, "we have been quietly expanding our air base in Qatar, moving troops into Kuwait, sending our bombers to Diego Garcia. No more need to tip-toe. We can pour everything in openly, indeed ostentatiously. It is, after all, the muscle behind the United Nations."

One invasion plan publicized by U.S. officials would involve deploying roughly 250,000 troops within 30 days of a presidential order. For its part, London plans to mobilize a force of some 30,000 in the area. This will include a 15,000-strong fighting

force whose main base will be established in Kuwait.

The plan calls for U.S. forces to seize territory and operate out of forward bases in northern, western, and southern Iraq. In the northern Kurdish territories, Special Forces troops would set up staging and refueling bases. U.S. troops would seize the oil fields around Kirkuk in northern Iraq—a move that would deny these resources to the Kurdish people in the region.

U.S. army engineering units that might be sent to Iraq are receiving portable fold-out bridges, according to the *Los Angeles Times*. Such equipment would be needed for a ground invasion across the Euphrates River, which traverses Iraq.

Home health-care workers in N.Y. rally for contract



Militant/Ruth Robinett

Thousands of health-care workers, members of 1199/Service Employees International Union, rally November 13 in New York. Employers refuse to sign a contract.



Five aircraft carrier battle groups will be in the Gulf by January.

THE MILITANT

Haitian immigrants protest discrimination

Haitian-born workers in Miami have protested the U.S. government's detention and racist treatment of immigrants from that country. The 'Militant' backs the fight against INS terror and explains the economic roots of all forms of discrimination perpetuated by the capitalist rulers.



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Miners union fights bosses' cover-up of Quecreek disaster

BY TONY LANE

PITTSBURGH—An initial report by Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) on the flooding of the Quecreek mine was greeted with strong criticism by leaders of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) and miners involved in fighting against a cover-up by the bosses and government regulators of the company's responsibility for the disaster.

Nine miners were trapped underground for 78 hours when tens of millions of gallons of water flooded into the Quecreek mine after mining operations broke through into an abandoned adjacent water-filled mine in July. The miners were found alive after a round-the-clock operation by fellow workers. The nonunion mine was operated by Black Wolf Coal for PBS Coals, the state's largest strip mine operator.

The DEP, which is responsible for mine safety in the state, put the blame on bad maps. The state's environmental secretary, David Hess, pointed the finger at a mine superintendent and a state mine inspector, both now dead, claiming they did not file updated maps. Hess said that there was no culpability on the part of Black Wolf Coal.

UMWA president Cecil Roberts called the report "woefully inadequate" and said it raises more questions than it answers about conditions in the mine and state permitting procedures. "The DEP and the federal Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) must turn over every rock to try and ensure this kind of accident never happens again," stated Roberts.

The union's health and safety administrator, Joe Main, pointed out that "there were signs the miners were getting close to something abnormal. The problem they were encountering with the mine roof was extremely significant. I can't believe this wasn't a warning sign." Main explained that the union wants to make sure that investigations into the accident at nonunion Quecreek are complete. "Union or nonunion doesn't matter. The public, the miners, their families, our members, have a right and a need to know just what happened and why," he said. Shortly after the disaster, the UMWA issued a call for a public inquiry.

Howard Messer, an attorney for seven of the nine miners underground, dismissed the report as "self-serving" and "embarrassingly incomplete." He stated that investigators asked insignificant questions and cut out some telling response from his clients. The report quotes one miner as saying that before the flooding the miners encountered "just normal conditions," but "they edited out a very strong statement from one of them," Messer said.

In a November 8 article, the Pittsburgh *Tribune-Review* reported that "transcripts of the original interviews identify the miners and indicate some comments were edited extensively at key passages and often nixed were entire paragraphs of testimony that might have suggested something far different than the report's conclusion that the miners noticed nothing out of the ordinary before the accident."

'Water was gushing through the walls'

One miner, for example, is quoted in the report as saying there were "pretty decent conditions." Not included in the report, however, were comments by Blaine Mayhugh, one of the trapped miners, who described "water gushing through the roof bolts and walls and a shale ceiling that seemed on the verge of collapse."

The newspaper reports that the full tran-

script echoes comments Mayhugh and other miners made before a U.S. Senate subcommittee hearing held by Sen. Arlen Specter in Johnstown last month.

In response to criticism, Hess defended the report. "We reported the results of our official investigation and the interviews we did," he said. "No one we talked to right after the accident indicated anything unusual in the mine.... It's up to the miners to make any corrections now, for the miners to offer any information they have."

Hess added that the upcoming federal MSHA report is likely to reach the same conclusions. "They should have the same information. They have the same factual background," Hess said. The federal and state interviews of miners were carried out together.

These interviews, however, were criticized at the Senate subcommittee hearings. There it was revealed that an attorney from the coal company was present when investigators took statements from miners, while the miners' attorney was barred. In order for the miners' lawyer to get a copy of the statements, he was required to sign a confidentiality agreement.

David Lauriski, MSHA assistant secretary of labor, insisted that MSHA "is conducting the Quecreek investigation in a fair and impartial manner and in accordance with long-standing agency procedures."

Along with glossing over conditions in the mine, the report puts the blame on former mine officials while actually revealing some of the gaps in the permitting process. Among the facts revealed are:

- The map of the abandoned Saxman mine, which the DEP now says is undated, shows mine workings as they were prior to 1961. The mine continued working until 1963. Attorney Messer says he has not seen the map used by the company.
- No maps reviewed by mine company officials met state requirements as "true, complete and correct" maps.
- The permit was approved without reviewing coal production for abandoned adjacent mines, which would have raised questions about the accuracy of the mine maps.
- No additional map search was con-

Miami protesters: free arrested Haitians, stop unequal treatment



Militant/Eric Simpson

Some 800 people rallied in front of the Immigration and Naturalization Service building in Miami November 4 to protest the U.S. government's unequal treatment of Haitian refugees and demand their release. The crowd, mostly Haitians, chanted in Creole, "No, no we're not leaving, and if we do, we'll be back, because America is for all." The demonstration was organized a week after the jailing of more than 200 Haitians who arrived on U.S. shores October 29. Nineteen Haitians and two Dominicans who were on the boat were sent back to Port-au-Prince, Haiti, November 5, while 35 Cubans who arrived in the United States the next day will receive asylum based on U.S. immigration laws. "People are still angry," said Claudine Sada, who participated in the demonstration. "It's not going to just go away. We're asking for equal treatment, a fair chance."

ducted when the permit for the mine was expanded from 272 to 3,666 acres in 1999. Reports then revealed unmapped mine voids and water in test wells near the mine area. But despite objections, the mine was granted a permit.

A retired miner in the area had warned of a large mined-out cavity in the old mine.

Other questions are raised about the accident rate and the number of safety violations by the owner of the Quecreek mines, PBS Coals, which is a division of Mincorp.

Mincorp claimed that Black Wolf Coal was a contract miner with no connection to Mincorp. Black Wolf is a "paper corporation," commented Messer, pointing out that it didn't even own the mining equipment.

The effort of seven of the Quecreek miners represented by Messer to dig out the truth behind the disaster has brought them under attack. The Johnstown *Tribune-Democrat*

ran a piece titled "Tarnishing our miracle." Referring to testimony by the seven miners at the Senate hearings, the article stated that it was hard "to reconcile the TV image of the compassionate and scared mine owners with the evil picture painted at the hearings."

A Philadelphia *Inquirer* feature on November 10, titled "Freed miners fall from grace at home," quotes from other Black Wolf employees who, the article claims, "now worry that their old mates will take down the company that feeds them and their families." One employee is quoted as saying, "It's a miracle gone sour is what it is." Another said that the rescued miners "should just be happy that they're alive, that we saved them. They should get on with life."

Tony Lane is a member of United Mine Workers of America Local 1248 in southwestern Pennsylvania.

Puebla-Panama Plan promotes deeper penetration of capital in Central America

BY RÓGER CALERO

Signed in June of last year by the governments of Mexico and seven Central American countries, the Puebla-Panama Plan is a proposal to build a series of highways, dams, and other infrastructure projects designed to attract foreign businesses to the region and further open up its natural resources and labor to U.S. and other capital.

The plan covers some 63 million people and almost 390,000 square miles of the narrow Central American isthmus from southern Mexico to Panama. The territory includes oil, mineral, and forest wealth as well as sites with potential for profitable tourism ventures.

Promoted by Mexican president Vicente Fox, the Puebla-Panama Plan proposal was also signed by the heads of state of Belize, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama. It has also received the endorsement of U.S. president George Bush. The total funds involved, estimated to range from \$13 billion to \$25 billion, are to come directly from government coffers or from loans by institutions such as the Inter-American Development Bank, whose headquarters is in Washington; the World Bank; and the European Union.

Among the construction projects are two major highways. One will run from the Texas-Mexico border to the Yucatán Peninsula, with branches into Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras. The other will follow the Pacific coast stretching to Panama.

Some 25 hydroelectric dams are due for construction, including 18 in Mexico. The

plan will also link the energy grids of Mexico and Central America, a project slated to cost more than \$400 million, one-tenth of which will be put up by the Spanish company ENDESA. A fiber-optic network telecommunications network is also under development.

Other potential investors in the Puebla-Panama Plan include Applied Energy Services of Virginia, Harking Energy Corporation, the Santa Fe Corporation, the Illinois Railroad, Union Pacific-Southern, and CSX.

In two of the most expensive and ambitious of the plan's blueprints, the ports of Coatzacoalcos in the Gulf of Mexico, and Salina Cruz in the Pacific, located on either side of the southern Mexican isthmus of Tehuantepec, will be linked by water canals. In the meantime, "dry canals" or "land bridges"—commercial-standard highways between the two coasts—are being developed as supplements and alternatives to the Panama Canal. Similar projects are proposed for Nicaragua and Honduras.

Southern states of Mexico

The southern states of Mexico that are listed under the plan include Guerrero, Puebla, Veracruz, Oaxaca, Chiapas, Tabasco, Campeche, Yucatan, and Quintana Roo. In many respects, these areas, among the poorest in Mexico, have more in common with much of Central America than with the more industrialized center and north of the country.

Driven by competition from other export platforms, particularly in China and else-

where in Asia, in recent years a number of capitalists have moved their operations from the "maquiladora" region along the U.S.-Mexican border further south into Mexico. They hope to take advantage of the lower cost of labor power in these impoverished regions, following the success of many workers in the north in winning modest improvements in wages.

In addition to promoting trade and investment in the broader region, the Fox government would like to open the country's energy industry to foreign and local investment. At present private companies are responsible for only 25 percent of energy production in the southern Mexican states.

In August Fox introduced legislation to open the way for the privatization of the electrical industry. The proposal met strong resistance from the 130,000 workers employed in the industry, who are organized in the Mexican Electrical Workers union. Workers' leaders accused the president of trampling on the country's constitution.

"Where in the government are we going to get the money to make these investments?" said president Fox last August to a group of textile bosses, as he sought to justify the legislation. The president claims that some \$500 billion will be needed in the next 10 years for the energy sector.

Working people in Mexico mobilized in the late 1930s to force the nationalization of the country's oil industry and other important economic sectors, and popular attitudes to the national patrimony still bears the imprint of those advances.

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Víctor Dreke: Cuba's mission to Guinea-Bissau

Printed below is an excerpt from the Pathfinder book *From the Escambray to the Congo: In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution*, by Víctor Dreke. A commander of the Cuban Revolution, Dreke has been touring several U.S. cities, speaking on the topic "Cuba and Africa—1959 to Today." He is speaking together with Ana Morales, a doctor who has helped lead Cuban medical missions in several African countries.

In this book Dreke describes the role played by Cuban volunteer combatants in an internationalist mission to the Congo in 1965. At the request of the national liberation forces waging a struggle against the pro-imperialist regime in that country, Cuba sent a column of 128 soldiers to the eastern Congo to assist in training and support their struggle. They were there from April to November 1965. Dreke was second in command of the Cuban troops, under Ernesto Che Guevara.

After the Organization of African Unity withdrew its official support to the fight against the proimperialist regime, and given the deep divisions and other weaknesses in the leadership of the forces in the Congo, the Cuban volunteers, at the request of the Congolese, withdrew in November 1965.

This mission, to which Dreke refers in the excerpt below, laid the basis for Cuba's internationalist work in Africa over subsequent decades, as it sent volunteer combatants to join with liberation movements throughout sub-Saharan Africa, including Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia, and Guinea-Bissau.

Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press, and Luis Madrid, a Pathfinder editor, conducted the first session of the interview with Dreke in Havana in 1999. Pathfinder editor Michael Taber and *Militant* editor Martín Koppel joined Waters in a second interview in 2001.

This book is available in English and Spanish. Copyright © 2002 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.



BY VÍCTOR DREKE

I think that today, thirty-four years later, we see the positive result of that action. The action of those compañeros who fell in the Congo was not in vain. As Raúl Castro said in 1985, the Congo operation was multiplied in other actions in Africa.¹ The experience we gained made it possible for us to do what we did to aid the liberation struggles in Guinea-Bissau, Angola, and other places.

Waters: You said earlier that "Today nobody could surprise us about Africa." You yourself, three and a half decades later, continue to be deeply involved in the political work of the Cuban Revolution in relation to Africa. How have you maintained those ties?

Dreke: Ever since the internationalist mission to the Congo I've had strong ties to Africa.

I didn't consider the mission a defeat, although we hadn't achieved what we'd been asked to do, what we wanted to do, or what was necessary. And we thought we could accomplish other things.

Upon our return from Africa, we were greeted by the commander in chief and the minister of the armed forces. They listened to our opinions with great interest and attention. Both of them encouraged us to con-



Courtesy Víctor Dreke

Cuban combatants from military mission in Guinea-Bissau, 1967. Left to right: Juan Gómez, Víctor Dreke, Reynaldo Batista, Cintra Capote. "The Cuban Revolution taught us to identify deeply with our ties to Africa and to appreciate them," said Dreke.

tinue the fight. And they met with the members of the column.

At first our idea was to keep the column intact so we'd be able to carry out other missions. Later we changed our view on that, and each compañero was reintegrated into the Western, Central, or Eastern Army, wherever they had previously come from, or else they went to school.

I continued in the Revolutionary Armed Forces, and I also maintained my links with Africa. When we left the Congo, a number of Africans returned to Cuba with us, and one of them came to live in my home. He was like a member of my family. His name was Sumba and here we called him Fidelito. He was killed after returning to the Congo to fight.

Mission to Guinea-Bissau

Soon after that, in 1966, I left for my first mission to Guinea-Bissau. I headed up our military mission there and in the Republic of Guinea. Keep in mind that Guinea-Bissau was still under Portuguese colonial rule, while the Republic of Guinea had won its independence from France in 1958.

Amílcar Cabral was the central leader of the liberation movement in Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde, and because of his knowledge of Africa, he made a big impression on me. He had held a high opinion of the PAIGC (African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde). At that time Che considered it a serious and organized revolutionary movement.

I arrived in Guinea-Bissau with the experience I had gained in the Congo and a little more knowledge about Africa.

From a strategic point of view, Amílcar and I didn't always share the same opinion on how to wage the struggle. But you have to remember that it's the leaders within each country who must decide the form to carry out the struggle.

I'll give an example.

One day the liberation movement in Guinea-Bissau decided to recruit a group of

young people. They went into a small town and took six young men and brought them to the camp. I didn't understand this. How can you compel people to join? I said this to Amílcar. "You can't force people to fight," I told him. "You must win them over politically."

Amílcar listened to me very respectfully. Keep in mind he had lots of experience and I was a young person—not yet thirty—and new to that country. "Everything you're saying is true," he said to me. "But here that can't be done. Because tomorrow the Portuguese will come, and they'll forcibly take them away and conscript them to fight against us. We have to incorporate them into our ranks before the Portuguese do."

Another question was that of the neighboring Republic of Guinea, with its capital in Conakry. The command of the PAIGC was in Guinea-Conakry. Why? Because there were only two ways to enter Guinea-Bissau: through Senegal—which gave no assistance at all—or Guinea-Conakry, whose government was then headed by Sékou Touré. Without that rear guard, the armed struggle in Guinea-Bissau would have been wiped out, since food supplies, armaments, and ammunition, which came from Cuba, China, the Soviet Union, and other socialist countries had to go through that country.

This was different from the struggle in our country, where our weapons were captured from the dictatorship's army. The Portuguese remained in their garrisons and rarely came out to fight. So you couldn't set ambushes to attack them and seize their weapons. They moved troops, supplies, everything, by plane and helicopter. The liberation movement needed a secure rear guard in order to survive.

That's why in November 1970, the Portuguese imperialists decided on an operation directly attacking Guinea-Conakry, trying to overthrow Sékou Touré while simultaneously trying to wipe out the liberation movement in Guinea-Bissau. That invasion was defeated by militias trained by Cuban instructors.

The Cuban leadership supported the strategy of strengthening the government of Sékou Touré. He asked for our help. We had to prevent the imperialists from toppling his government. We also knew that the French imperialists still didn't forgive Sékou Touré or the liberation movement for winning independence a few years earlier.

So Cuba responded to the request by Sékou Touré for Cuban instructors to help create a militia. We also responded to a proposal by Amílcar Cabral to help train artillery personnel and doctors to meet the needs of the people of Guinea-Bissau, sending a small military unit. We taught them the use of artillery and trained them to give medical care to the liberation fighters.

We lived together with these compañeros in the same camps. This brought us even closer to the African struggle, and it enabled us to appreciate and to better understand the African people. And at the same time, they made an effort to understand us.

By the time of Guinea-Bissau's victory

in 1974, I was no longer there. But later I began to work in Cape Verde, as well as in other countries such as the Congo-Brazzaville. These governments requested Cuba to train people in medicine and other specialties, and we also trained their armed forces. I took part in all that.

Internationalist missions to Africa

In 1969-70 I was head and deputy head of the Political Directorate of the Revolutionary Armed Forces. One of our responsibilities was to work with Africans, as well as working to prepare Cubans for internationalist missions in Africa.

As vice president of the Cuba-Africa Friendship Association, I've had relations with Africans from all countries on the continent, not just those I've been to as a combatant or a worker. Because, as I said, many Africans come to Cuba to study. At first we set up a school, where the teachers were all Cuban compañeros who had been in Africa. I was the director of that school. Later on, many of the teachers came from these countries.

I also got to know many Angolan compañeros, even though I didn't participate in that struggle.

In 1990 I returned to civilian life, but I've maintained my ties to Africa. I've headed up work in Africa for ANTEX and then UNECA, Cuban enterprises involved in



Courtesy Víctor Dreke

Amílcar Cabral, left, leader of the national liberation movement in Portuguese-ruled Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde, with Dreke, head of Cuba's military mission in Guinea-Bissau, 1967.

trade and construction. I've been sent on missions to numerous African countries, negotiating projects that would help these countries—this time from the point of view of construction and health care.

In this capacity I've had the opportunity to live in some of these countries, such as Ghana, the Republic of Guinea, and the Congo. In each I spent one or more years helping to build housing.

Today I work for UNECA with responsibilities for Central Africa. My job is to work with those countries on construction projects, reconstruction of countries that have been destroyed by wars. We build housing, roads, and other things.

Waters: At the World Youth Festival in Algeria this past summer, young people who went from the United States, France, Britain, and other imperialist countries noted that African young people there were eagerly seeking information on their history. They wanted books by revolutionary leaders like Thomas Sankara of Burkina Faso, as well as Che and Fidel. Unlike earlier generations, it's not just a question of fighting for independence from the colonial master. The vanguard of the new generation is seeking to prepare the necessary conditions of struggle against imperialist domination in all the forms it takes today.

Dreke: I agree. Within Africa there's a different response from what it was back then. The times are also different. There's a political struggle. It's not simply an armed struggle for national liberation, like the just struggle the people of Africa had to wage in the 1960s.

The people of Africa are not political novices. I know this because many Africans

Continued on Page 13

FROM *Pathfinder*

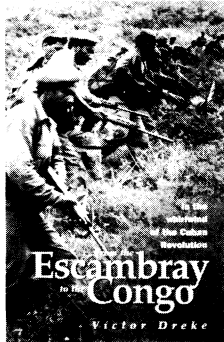
From the Escambray to the Congo IN THE WHIRLWIND OF THE CUBAN REVOLUTION

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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¹ This speech is printed in Jorge Risquet Valdés, *El segundo frente del Che en el Congo: Historia del Batallón Patricio Lumumba* (Havana: Casa Editora Abril, 2000), pp. 10–15.

Double victory: sales drive, Pathfinder fund surpass goals

BY PAUL PEDERSON

Partisans of the socialist press and publications won double victories this week, shooting well past their goals in two international campaigns. One was to sell 1,100 subscriptions to the *Militant*, 500 subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial*, and 725 copies of selected Pathfinder titles. The other was to raise \$105,000 for the Pathfinder Fund.

The fall subscription campaign ended with a magnificent finish—going well over the *Militant* goal. With momentum building steadily throughout the drive, in the final week the campaign shot over the top, finishing at 1,246 *Militant* subscriptions—113 percent of the goal.

A total of 441 subscriptions were sold to *Perspectiva Mundial*—88 percent of the goal. Supporters also sold 803 copies of several books—*Capitalism's World Disorder* and three issues of *New Internationalist* magazine: "The Opening Guns of World War III," "Imperialism's March Toward Fascism and War," and "U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War."

By the last day of the Pathfinder Fund, more than \$107,000 had been collected and sent in. Almost \$6,500 more was collected and is being sent in, for a grand total of more than \$113,000!

The fund is essential for Pathfinder Press

to carry out its ambitious publishing programs. The next title to come off the presses will be *Malcolm X Talks to Young People* in both English and Spanish.

In the subscription drive, campaigners in several cities that were behind turned things around in the last week. Substantial progress was also made on the subscription goals in the unions. Meat packers in the United States snapped up 21 subscriptions to the *Militant* in the final week, making the goal of 50 that had been set by socialist meat packers. Sales to garment workers and coal miners fell short of the respective goals, however.

Sales to meat packers

"Sales to workers in two meatpacking plants where supporters of the *Militant* work led the final week of the drive in Minnesota to victory," reported Becky Ellis. Eleven workers from meatpacking plants in the state signed up for subscriptions to the *Militant* and 22 subscribed to *Perspectiva Mundial* during the 10-week drive.

In the last week Kari Sachs, who recently ran as the Socialist Workers candidate for governor of Minnesota, sold three *Militant* subscriptions to co-workers at the packing plant in South Minneapolis where she works. One of her co-workers came to a *Militant* Labor Forum at the Pathfinder bookstore in St. Paul on the recent contract victory and ongoing struggle by packinghouse workers at Dakota Premium Foods. At the forum he signed up for a subscription and bought a copy of *New international* no. 7 with the article "The Opening Guns of World War III."

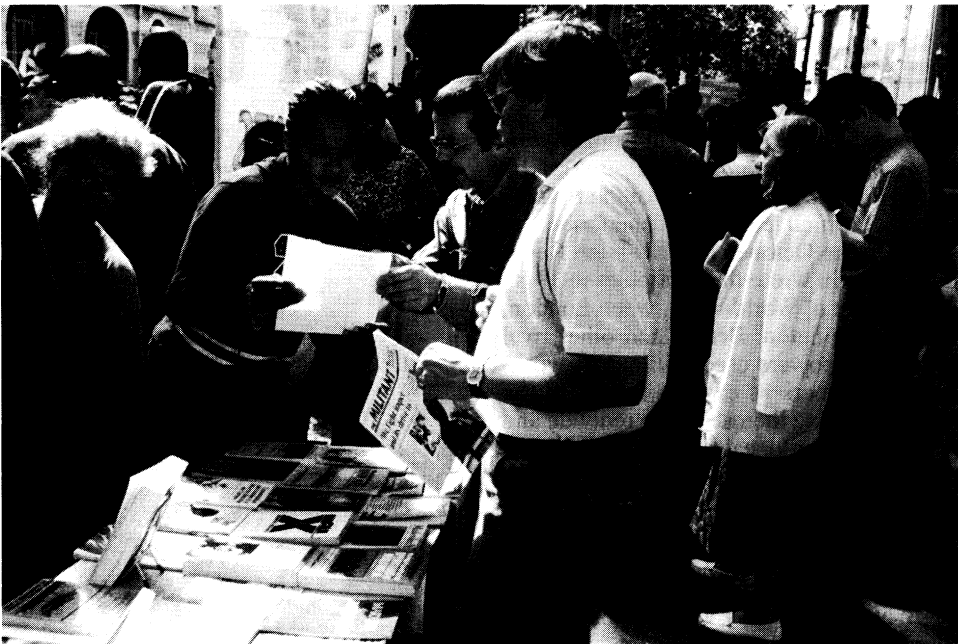
Several subscriptions were sold at weekly sales at the gates of two meatpacking plants where socialists in the Twin Cities work. In the last week two campaigners went to a packinghouse in Long Prairie, Minnesota, and sold at the shift change. The team had dinner with a worker in the boning department at that plant and she bought a subscription to the *Militant*. They also campaigned door-to-door in a nearby neighborhood where they met another worker from the plant who signed up for a *PM* sub.

In Omaha, Nebraska, meat packers signed up for 7 *Militant* and 19 *Perspectiva Mundial* subscriptions. Many of the new subscribers are workers at the Swift plant who recently won their first union contract. Several partisans of the socialist press from Nebraska went to Dennison, Iowa, where working people had been outraged about the discovery of the bodies of 11 immigrant workers inside a rail car. They were trapped trying to cross the border from Mexico. The campaigners also sold the socialist publications at a big meatpacking plant there and met other packinghouse workers while going door-to-door.

Comeback stories

"On Saturday morning we had 15 *Militant* subs left to sell," reports Dan Fein, sales director in New York's Garment District. "It was chilly and rainy all weekend, so we got on the phone. We called people we met during the election campaign and lined up appointments to visit them. We got three subscriptions through these visits."

The campaigners stopped by the home of one individual who works



Militant/Nat London

Militant supporters staff table at demonstration by undocumented workers in Paris

as a cutter in a unionized garment plant in Brooklyn. He said that he has been working in garment plants in New York since 1968. His introduction to the socialist press was through meeting another socialist employed at the plant where he works. He purchased a subscription and a copy of *New Internationalist* no. 7. Through door-to-door sales, campaigners in the Garment District sold seven subs that Sunday.

The next day at a table at Borough of Manhattan Community College (BMCC), five people signed up for subscriptions to the *Militant*. Fein reported that the last subscription was clinched when one person decided to sign up and then took the team over to an ATM to be able pay for it. Through the course of the Socialist Workers election campaign, weekly tabling and soapboxing teams at BMCC have become a familiar sight—dubbed "the socialist rally" by a student who frequently stops by.

Despite the weather, supporters of the *Militant* in the Garment District surpassed their quota in the final two days, selling 83 out of a goal of 80 *Militant* subscriptions.

In Tampa, Florida, supporters of the *Militant* had seven subscriptions left to make their goal before the final weekend. Their efforts got a boost when 12 students from the University of South Florida—where Cuban revolutionary leader Victor Dreke spoke on November 12—attended a *Militant* Labor Forum entitled "Cuba and the Coming American Revolution." Six of the students at the forum had participated in the security teams at the meetings for Dreke in both Tampa and Atlanta.

Two people signed up for *Militant* subscriptions and several books and pamphlets were sold at the forum. The remaining five subscriptions were sold through calling co-workers and others and visiting them over the weekend. While they were closing in on the goals, supporters were also soliciting contributions to the international Pathfinder Fund.

A fund-raising program in Washington on November 9 attracted youth and workers to help go over the top in the campaign there. "Not only did we get a good collection, but got another \$145 in pledges," Nancy Boyasko reports. "A worker at the unionized Smithfield meatpacking plant attended

and pledged \$5, and this will be the second contribution from workers there." Speakers at the program included Michel Watts, a member of the Young Socialists, who described how he first got hold of a Pathfinder book, *Lenin's Final Fight*, while studying Marxist philosophy in Cuba.

"He especially liked the minicatalogs in the final pages of ads in the book," said Boyasko, and he convinced his neighborhood Borders bookstore to place special orders with Pathfinder for him.



Militant/Maceo Dixon

Pathfinder literature table at meeting at Spelman College in Atlanta where Cuban revolutionary Victor Dreke spoke.

\$105,000 Pathfinder Fund Sept. 1–Nov. 17: Final Week

	Goal	Paid	%
Twin Cities MN	5,000	5,772	115%
Washington DC	3,000	3,315	111%
Western CO	2,600	2,866	110%
Cleveland OH	1,700	1,870	110%
NY Garment District	6,000	6,535	109%
Des Moines IA	1,200	1,305	109%
Seattle WA	7,500	8,090	108%
Houston TX	4,500	4,803	107%
Detroit MI	3,000	3,154	105%
NY Upper Manhattan	5,000	5,250	105%
Newark NJ	4,300	4,514	105%
Chicago IL	5,500	5,744	104%
Omaha NE	900	925	103%
Atlanta GA	4,250	4,305	101%
Northeast PA	1,200	1,215	101%
Tucson AZ	150	150	100%
Los Angeles CA	9,500	9,309	98%
San Francisco CA	8,500	8,186	96%
Philadelphia PA	5,000	4,808	96%
Tampa FL	2,000	1,922	96%
Miami FL	2,100	1,965	94%
Pittsburgh PA	4,200	3,645	87%
Charlotte NC	3,500	2,985	85%
Birmingham AL	3,100	2,161	70%
Boston MA	3,500	2,335	67%
Other		1,071	
U.S. total	97,200	98,199	101%
New Zealand	1,500	1,727	115%
Australia	1,500	1,600	107%
France	400	420	105%
Canada	4,500	4,645	103%
United Kingdom	1,200	1,200	100%
Sweden	1,400	100	7%
Iceland	150	0	0%
International total	105,000	107,891	103%

AMIEU-Australasian Meat Industry Employee's Union; MWU-Meat Workers Union; NDU-National Distribution Union; UFCW-United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA-United Mine Workers of America; UNITE-Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees. MUA-Maritime Union of Australia

Militant/Perspectiva Mundial Subscription Drive Sept. 7–Nov. 17: Final Week

Country	Militant			PM			Book	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold
Australia	28	31	111%				15	16
Canada								
Vancouver	30	32	107%	5	6	15	15	15
Toronto	30	33	110%	5	4	25	4	4
Montreal	15	13	87%	10	5	20	22	22
Canada total	75	78	104%	20	15	60	41	41
Iceland*	15	17	113%	1	1	25	19	19
New Zealand								
Christchurch	12	16	133%	1	0	7	7	7
Auckland	20	20	100%	1	0	7	8	8
N.Z. total	32	36	113%	2	0	14	15	15
Sweden								
Stockholm	12	15	125%	3	4	5	8	8
Gothenburg	15	15	100%	3	2	10	13	13
Sweden Total	27	30	111%	6	6	15	21	21
United Kingdom								
London	45	45	100%	15	14	60	58	58
Dundee	10	10	100%	0	0	15	16	16
UK total	55	55	100%	15	14	75	74	74
United States								
San Francisco	30	43	143%	20	24	30	30	30
Washington	30	39	130%	12	15	25	25	25
Los Angeles	45	54	120%	30	24	30	21	21
NE Pennsylvania	30	35	117%	7	2	15	17	17
Philadelphia	25	29	116%	10	4	15	11	11
Charlotte	20	23	115%	8	11	20	23	23
Des Moines*	30	34	113%	15	16	18	21	21
Seattle	40	45	113%	12	5	30	23	23
Houston	35	39	111%	15	10	30	31	31
Cleveland	28	31	111%	10	11	15	20	20
Western Colorado	30	33	110%	10	8	12	14	14
Chicago	45	49	109%	30	31	30	30	30
Twin Cities	55	59	107%	45	46	35	37	37
Omaha*	15	16	107%	23	33	20	22	22
Boston	33	35	106%	20	17	45	46	46
Birmingham	22	23	105%	10	10	12	12	12
Tampa	25	26	104%	8	4	12	13	13
NY Garment Dist.	80	83	104%	45	24	70	47	47
Miami	30	31	103%	10	8	25	19	19
Atlanta	35	36	103%	15	12	25	19	19
Pittsburgh	40	41	103%	4	4	15	13	13
Detroit	43	44	102%	12	13	25	21	21
Upper Manhattan	75	76	101%	45	38	50	51	51
Newark	65	65	100%	40	25	40	44	44
Tucson	5	4	80%	1	3	5	4	4
Brownsville	8	6	75%	2	2	6	3	3
U.S. total	919	999	109%	459	400	655	617	617
Int'l totals	1151	1246	113%	509	441	859	803	803
Goal/Should be	1100	1100	100%	500	500	725	725	725

IN THE UNIONS

	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold
Australia								
AMIEU	4	3	75%		1	2	2	2
MUA	3	4	133%			3	0	0
Total	7	7	100%			5	1	1
Canada								
UFCW	9	3	33%	1	1	8	1	1
UNITE	6	1	17%	7	5	7	3	3
Total	15	4	27%	8	6	15	4	4
New Zealand								
MWU	3	1	33%			1	0	0
NDU	2	2	100%			1	0	0
Total	5	3	60%			2	0	0
United States								
UFCW	50	50	100%	65	78	60	38	38
UMWA	25	17	68%	4	2	13	4	4
UNITE	50	23	46%	40	33	60	28	28
Total	125	90	72%	109	113	133	70	70
U.S. total	50	23	46%	40	33	60	28	28
Total raised goal*	125	90	72%	109	113	133	70	70

Lenin: no such thing as 'superimperialism'

Printed below is an excerpt from *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, by V.I. Lenin, the central leader of the Bolshevik party, which led workers and farmers to power in the October 1917 Russian Revolution. Lenin wrote this pamphlet in 1916, in the midst of World War I, when London, Paris, Washington, Berlin, and other rival imperialist powers used millions of workers and farmers as cannon fodder in the struggle among themselves to redivide and plunder the world, each ruling class pursuing its own cutthroat interests.

Lenin wrote the pamphlet to give a scientific, class explanation of the nature of imperialism. It was part of politically educating the ranks of the Bolshevik party and other class-conscious workers in order to forge a revolutionary movement capable of overthrowing capitalist rule and leading working people to take political power. Under the pressures of the imperialist war, the majority of the parties of the Socialist International, which had previously taken an antiwar position, each sided with their "own" imperialist bourgeoisie in the name of "national defense" when the shooting started in 1914. Centrist forces used revolutionary language while justifying a chauvinist, class-collaborationist position.

In this pamphlet Lenin polemicalizes sharply against Karl Kautsky, a leader of the centrist forces in the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) who capitulated to the German bourgeoisie at the opening of the war. Kautsky peddled the theory of "super-imperialism," the view that competing imperialist powers were being supplanted by an "internationally united finance capital." This position has much in common with an argument by radical middle-class forces today that nation-states have virtually dissolved and that rival imperialist bourgeoisies have been replaced by something called "transnational capital."

In *Imperialism*, Lenin argues "that the period of imperialism is the eve of the socialist revolution; that social-chauvinism (socialism in words, chauvinism in deeds) is the utter betrayal of socialism, complete desertion to the side of the bourgeoisie; that this split in the working-class movement is bound up with the objective conditions of imperialism."

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BY V.I. LENIN

The notorious theory of "ultra-imperialism," invented by Kautsky, is just as reactionary [as the theories of a bourgeois economist cited earlier in the article]. Kautsky: "...Cannot the present imperialist policy be supplanted by a new, ultra-imperialist policy, which will introduce the joint exploitation of the world by internationally united finance



Soldiers march in Petrograd, Russia, in 1917. Bolshevik party organized workers, farmers, and soldiers to oppose Russian imperialism in the first interimperialist slaughter and to take power out of hands of landlords and capitalists. Lenin refuted view about some "internationally united finance capital" rising above nation-states.

capital in place of the mutual rivalries of national finance capitals? Such a new phase of capitalism is at any rate conceivable. Can it be achieved? Sufficient premises are still lacking to enable us to answer this question."

Kautsky called ultra-imperialism or super-imperialism what [bourgeois economist John] Hobson, thirteen years earlier, described as inter-imperialism. Except for coining a new and clever catchword, replacing one Latin prefix by another, the only progress Kautsky has made in the sphere of "scientific" thought is that he gave out as Marxism what Hobson, in effect, described as the cant of English parsons. After the Anglo-Boer War it was quite natural for this highly honourable caste to exert their main efforts to console the British middle class and the workers who had lost many of their relatives on the battlefields of South Africa and who were obliged to pay higher taxes in order to guarantee still higher profits for the British financiers. And what better consolation could there be than the theory that imperialism is not so bad; that it stands close to inter- (or ultra-) imperialism, which can ensure permanent peace?

No matter what the good intentions of the English parsons, or of sentimental Kautsky, may have been, the only objective, i.e., real, social significance of Kautsky's "theory" is this: it is a most reactionary method of consoling the masses with hopes of permanent peace being possible under capitalism, by distracting their attention from the sharp antagonisms and acute problems of the present times, and directing it towards illusory prospects of an imaginary "ultra-imperialism"

of the future. Deception of the masses—that is all there is in Kautsky's "Marxist" theory.

Indeed, it is enough to compare well-known and indisputable facts to become convinced of the utter falsity of the prospects which Kautsky tries to conjure up before the German workers (and the workers of all lands). Let us consider India, Indo-China and China. It is known that these three colonial and semi-colonial countries, with a population of six to seven hundred million, are subjected to the exploitation of the finance capital of several imperialist powers: Great Britain, France, Japan, the U.S.A., etc. Let us assume that these imperialist countries form alliances against one another in order to protect or enlarge their possessions, their interests and their spheres of influence in these Asiatic states; these alliances will be "inter-imperialist," or "ultra-imperialist" alliances.

Let us assume that *all* the imperialist countries conclude an alliance for the "peaceful" division of these parts of Asia; this alliance would be an alliance of "internationally united finance capital." There are actual examples of alliances of this kind in the history of the twentieth century—the attitude of the powers to China, for instance.¹ We ask, is it "conceivable," assuming that the capitalist system remains intact—and this is precisely the assumption that Kautsky does make—that such alliances would be more than temporary, that they would eliminate friction, conflicts and struggle in every possible form?...

Imperialist war and peace

Therefore, in the realities of the capitalist system, and not in the banal philistine fantasies of English parsons, or of the German "Marxist," Kautsky, "inter-imperialist" or "ultra-imperialist" alliances, no matter what form they may assume, whether of one imperialist coalition against another, or of a general alliance embracing all the imperialist powers, are *inevitably* nothing more than a "truce" in periods between wars. Peaceful alliances prepare the ground for wars, and in their turn grow out of wars; the one conditions the other, producing alternating forms of peaceful and non-peaceful struggle on *one and the same* basis of imperialist connections and relations within world economics and world politics.

But in order to pacify the workers and reconcile them with the social-chauvinists who have deserted to the side of the bourgeoisie, over-wise Kautsky *separates* one link of a single chain from another, separates the present peaceful (and ultra-imperialist, nay, ultra-ultra-imperialist) alliance of *all* the powers for the "pacification" of China (remember the suppression of the Boxer Rebellion²) from the non-peaceful conflict of tomorrow, which will prepare the ground for another "peaceful" general alliance for the partition, say, of Turkey, on the day after tomorrow, *etc., etc.* Instead of showing the living connection between periods of imperialist peace and periods of imperialist war, Kautsky presents the workers with a lifeless abstraction in order to reconcile them, to their lifeless leaders....

Kautsky's obscuring of the deepest contradictions of imperialism, which inevitably boils down to painting imperialism in bright

colours, leaves its traces in this writer's criticism of the political features of imperialism. Imperialism is the epoch of finance capital and of monopolies, which introduce everywhere the striving for domination, not for freedom. Whatever the political system, the result of these tendencies is everywhere reaction and an extreme intensification of antagonisms in this field. Particularly intensified become the yoke of national oppression and the striving for annexations, i.e., the violation of national independence (for annexation is nothing but the violation of the right of nations to self-determination). [German centrist Rudolf] Hilferding rightly notes the connection between imperialism and the intensification of national oppression. "In the newly opened-up countries," he writes, "the capital imported into them intensifies antagonisms and excites against the intruders the constantly growing resistance of the peoples who are awakening to national consciousness; this resistance can easily develop into dangerous measures against foreign capital. The old social relations become completely revolutionised, the age-long agrarian isolation of 'nations without history' is destroyed and they are drawn into the capitalist whirlpool. Capitalism itself gradually provides the subjugated with the means and resources for their emancipation and they set out to achieve the goal which once seemed highest to the European nations: the creation of a united national state as a means to economic and cultural freedom. This movement for national independence threatens European capital in its most valuable and most promising fields of exploitation, and European capital can maintain its domination only by continually increasing its military forces."

Increased national oppression

To this must be added that it is not only in newly opened-up countries, but also in the old, that imperialism is leading to annexation, to increased national oppression, and, consequently, also to increasing resistance. While objecting to the intensification of political reaction by imperialism, Kautsky leaves in the shade a question that has become particularly urgent, viz., the impossibility of unity with the opportunists in the epoch of imperialism. While objecting to annexations, he presents his objections in a form that is most acceptable and least offensive to the opportunists. He addresses himself to a German audience, yet he obscures the most topical and important point, for instance, the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine by Germany.

In order to appraise this "mental aberration" of Kautsky's I shall take the following example. Let us suppose that a Japanese condemns the annexation of the Philippines by the Americans. The question is: will many believe that he does so because he has a horror of annexations as such, and not because he himself has a desire to annex the Philippines? And shall we not be constrained to admit that the "fight" the Japanese is waging against annexations can be regarded as being sincere and politically honest only if he fights against the annexation of Korea by Japan, and urges freedom for Korea to secede from Japan?

Kautsky's theoretical analysis of imperialism, as well as his economic and political critique of imperialism, are permeated *through and through* with a spirit, absolutely irreconcilable with Marxism, of obscuring and glossing over the fundamental contradictions of imperialism and with a striving to preserve at all costs the crumbling unity with opportunism in the European working-class movement.

¹ Lenin has in mind the so-called Final Protocol of September 7, 1901, signed by the imperialist powers (Britain, Austria-Hungary, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, the Netherlands, Spain, the U.S.A.) and China as a result of the crushing of the Boxer Rebellion of 1899–1901. Foreign capital obtained new opportunities for exploiting and plundering China.

² The *Boxer* (more precisely I Ho T'uan) *Rebellion*—a popular anti-imperialist uprising in China in 1899–1901 organised by the I Ho Ch'uan (Righteous Harmony Fists) society, which later became known as the I Ho T'uan (Righteous Harmony Bands). It was ruthlessly crushed by an expeditionary corps of the imperialist powers under the command of the German General Waldersee, with the German, Japanese, British, American and Russian imperialists taking part. China was forced to sign the Final Protocol which turned her into a semi-colony of foreign imperialism.

Confrontation in Venezuela sharpens over control of capital's police force



As confrontations sharpen in Venezuela between supporters of President Hugo Chávez and pro-imperialist forces seeking a coup, the national government took over the police force in Caracas, the capital, to end a dispute between pro-government officers and those backing Mayor Alfredo Peña, an opponent of the government. Troops were deployed at 10 police stations in response to street actions in support of rebellious cops. Opposition forces have threatened another bosses' "strike" demanding Chávez's resignation. In April these forces carried out a U.S.-backed coup that ousted Chávez, but two days later the president was returned to power on the crest of massive protests by working people against the coup plotters.

New York meeting discusses fight against imperialism today

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

NEW YORK—"We're heading toward a different world than the great majority of the people in this room have ever lived through," said Jack Barnes, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, before some 370 people at a public meeting here. The world now coming into being, he said, will be marked by a deepening of the economic depression that has already begun, and by an increasing drive toward imperialist wars.

It is also a world in which resistance by workers and farmers to these conditions will accumulate. Communist workers prepare politically for the coming explosive conditions and class battles, Barnes said, by the political work they do today "within the resistance that's growing right now among toilers in city and country."

Barnes was the featured speaker at the November 2 meeting, held under the banner, "The Struggle against Imperialism Today." The event, held on the Columbia University campus, drew people from across the country, as well as some from Canada and elsewhere. Among those attending were a number of students and young workers who had only recently met the communist movement through their political activity.

Speaking besides Barnes were Mary-Alice Waters, editor of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist*; Jason Alessio, a union coal miner and Socialist Workers candidate for U.S. Congress in Colorado; Martin Koppel, editor of the *Militant* and Socialist Workers candidate for governor of New York; Ma'mud Shirvani, Pathfinder's Farsi-language editor; Arrin Hawkins, Socialist Workers candidate for lieutenant governor of New York and a worker in Pathfinder's printshop; and Olympia Newton, Socialist Workers candidate for California secretary of state. Alessio, Hawkins, and Newton are also members of the Young Socialists. (A broader news article on the November 2 meeting, titled "New York meeting discusses fight against imperialism, response by communists," appeared in last week's issue.)

Barnes opened his remarks by noting that Walter Mondale, vice-president during the Carter administration, "has had an unexpected honor—to stand again for one of the twin parties of U.S. imperialism." Mondale, 74, was chosen as the Democratic Party's senatorial candidate in Minnesota following the death of incumbent Paul Wellstone in an airplane crash October 25.

Mondale, a longtime liberal Democrat, had been pulled out of semi-retirement to co-chair a bipartisan "Commission on Global Aging." Last year this "commission of notables came out for increasing the retirement age and privatizing a big hunk of Social Security," said Barnes.

While Mondale was one of a handful who dissented with the speed and immediacy of these conclusions, he did not disagree with the commission's starting point: that increased longevity is a problem.

"The bourgeoisie's framework on this

question alone should make one a revolutionist—and fear for the future of humanity under capitalist rule," Barnes said. "More workers living longer," he explained, "helps make possible the fruitful working together of more generations for longer periods of time." But the capitalists see this advance as a giant drain on their profits and fortunes.

Attempts to undermine the character of Social Security as a universal entitlement are part of the U.S. rulers' war on the rights and living standards of working people at home and imperialist aggression abroad, Barnes noted.

'Level playing field'

On October 30 the British *Guardian* had reported remarks by Lord Browne, chief executive of British Petroleum, in which he had warned Washington "not to carve up Iraq for its own oil companies in the aftermath of any future war," and called for "a level playing field for the selection of oil companies to go in there."

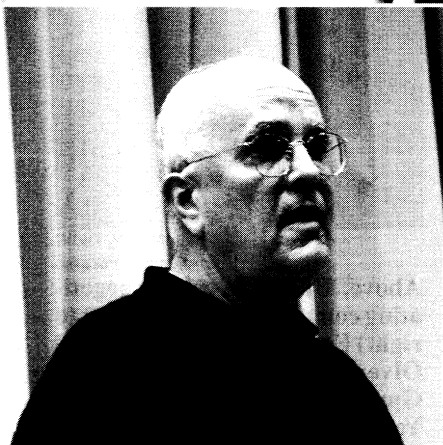
"It's a sign of the times and of the speed of events" that Browne would casually make an open, nationalist demand to Washington to get its share of oil for blood, Barnes said. Browne's argument amounted to saying: "We are furnishing cannon fodder to an imperialist assault and to an occupation of a country that will prepare us to make up for the overthrow of the Peacock Throne" of the shah of Iran.

The class Browne speaks for, the socialist leader said, will never forgive the Iranian people for their 1979 revolution, which toppled the shah, long a pillar of imperialist interests in the Mideast. And they also have their eyes on Saudi Arabia and the rest of the Arabian peninsula—a region where London once maintained protectorates that hardly made for a "level playing field."

Highlighting a point made earlier by Shirvani, Barnes said that Browne's remarks bear out the description of the imperialists as the "civilized" hyenas, by V.I. Lenin, leader of the October 1917 Russian Revolution. The cold-blooded attitude voiced by the BP chairman "expresses the logic of capital—a logic that cannot be prevented. It can only be ended by overthrowing the domination of capital."

Washington's aggressive military posture was laid out in the "National Security Strategy of the United States of America," a White House document released in September. One sentence quoted in early press reports but omitted from the final published version bluntly spelled out the U.S. imperialists' stance. It read, "the President has no intention of allowing any foreign power to catch up with the huge [military] lead the United States has opened since the fall of the Soviet Union more than a decade ago."

The document refers to a "distinctly American imperialism," reminiscent of the "Fourteen Points" proclaimed by President Woodrow Wilson during World War I to offer a justification for its course of plun-



Militant/top: Eric Simpson; left : Dave Wulp
Part of audience of 370 attending November 2 meeting in New York on "The Struggle against Imperialism Today." The meeting heard several leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists. Jack Barnes, left, national secretary of the Socialist Workers Party, was the featured speaker. He spoke about the political work communist workers do within the working-class resistance today, as they prepare for the coming class battles in the United States and worldwide.

der worldwide. At that time the U.S. ruling class had started down the road to become the dominant imperialist power; by then it was too late in history, however, for it to become a major colonial empire.

Today it remains impossible for any imperialist power to build a colonial empire with direct, stable rule, either in Iraq or anywhere else, Barnes said.

The 2002 White House strategy document asserts that the Cold War "ended with a decisive victory for the forces of freedom—and a single sustainable model for national success: freedom, democracy, and free enterprise."

Imperialism did not win the Cold War

Those sentences are written as if the imperialist order faces no contesting forces, said Barnes. In reality, the rulers know they still have to fight for the victory the words describe. If the Cold War had actually ended with a victory for world capitalism, the socialist leader said, "their task today would be much, much easier. Working people would have to go through a very long period of retreat."

But the end of the Cold War, he said, did not resolve its goal: the overturn of the states, including the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, where workers and farmers had overthrown capitalist rule, no matter how bureaucratized they had become under Stalinist misleadership.

Far from being a sustainable model for national success, said Barnes, the imperialist order generates turmoil, wars, and national and class rebellions. The evolution of capitalism in this epoch is not toward free trade but increased trade conflicts between rival powers. Nor is it toward "developing" nations becoming developed, but rather toward greater imperialist exploitation and unequal relations between nations—a trend seen dramatically in the gap between sub-Saharan Africa and the United States.

Oil is not the only commodity targeted by the imperialist powers, Barnes said. They are fighting for control of the production and trade of all kinds of minerals and agricultural products in the world, from cocoa to gold and diamonds.

"Under the rampant inflation that we will live under sooner than many think," he said, "the control of the gold supply will become extremely important." This will have a direct impact on the struggle inside South Africa, the world's largest gold producer, for Black ownership of the mining industry, a debate that is brewing today.

Anticipating stronger resistance by working people in the coming years, the U.S. rulers are stepping up moves aimed at curtailing workers' rights. That is the reason for the establishment of the U.S. Northern Command, a military structure with domestic jurisdiction established by the Clinton administration and activated under the Bush presidency. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's decision to deploy military spy planes over Washington, D.C., during the

"sniper hunt" in that city would not have been conceivable in an earlier period, Barnes said.

Dollar's domination has peaked

A two-decade period of rising domination of the U.S. dollar in world trade and investment exhausted itself a little less than two years ago, said Barnes. Now capitalist finance is marked by deflation, which means the contraction of hiring, credit, and production.

Price deflation, he noted, has been epitomized by the "zero down, zero payment, zero interest" deals offered by major U.S. automakers, which helped to boost sales to record levels for a period. This bubble had burst by October, when sales by the "Big Three" fell between 30 and 35 percent compared with 12 months before.

An accelerating pace of layoffs and bankruptcies forces the capitalists to begin to use their currencies to try to regenerate economic activity and growth, he said. Noting the widespread forecasts of a cut in interest rates at a Federal Reserve meeting scheduled for November 6, Barnes remarked that the rates are down to the Japanese levels of only three years ago.

We will see the beginning of the "inflate or die" approach, said Barnes, through which the capitalists will try to spend their way out of a deflationary spiral—a policy that can trigger runaway inflation at a more advanced stage of the crisis.

Today, said Barnes, Ford Motors and United Airlines, two flagship companies of U.S. imperialism, are effectively bankrupt. Pension plans operated by many major firms are heavily underfunded. "I don't know if there is anyone here who has a pension from Ford, from Delta, or from United," he said. "But if there is, I would urge them to become a fighter for improved Social Security."

Denial of depression conditions

Barnes noted that, as the opening stages of a long-term economic depression unfold in the United States, the reaction among the majority of the middle class and working people is denial of this reality. It is like a frog in water that is slowly being heated and that doesn't recognize the rising temperature as it's being cooked.

Among those who do sense the crisis, middle-class layers and even some working people who fear for the security of their savings begin to turn to the age-old havens of gold and silver. These precious metals have intrinsic value as commodities, Barnes said. By comparison, paper currency, containing only a few pennies' worth of fiber, is little more than a debt backed by the "full faith and credit" of the government, Barnes said.

A number of governments have begun to seek such havens from the U.S. dollar. The Malaysian government, for example, has taken the lead in promoting the gold-based "Islamic dinar" as a medium of exchange among a number of majority-Muslim countries. The Chinese government has been buying up gold and at the beginning of this year

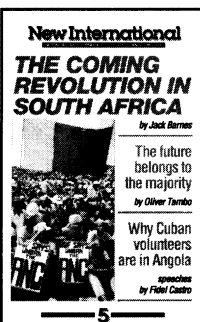
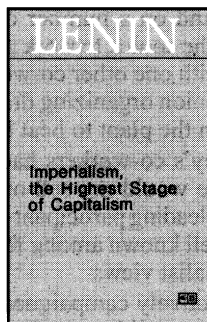
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From Pathfinder

by V.I. Lenin

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Minnesota meat packers discuss union victory

BY TOM FISKE

ST. PAUL, Minnesota—"The company had given everyone a lot of trouble. Finally we have a union and a contract, and that makes us happy. It'll be hard for the company to accept the fact that the union is there and that it has to be taken into account. Now the company is crying and wants revenge on the workers. But they are going to realize they have no choice but to deal with us."

This is how Obdulia Flores, a worker on the kill floor of the Dakota Premium Foods plant here, summed up the union victory there.

On October 15 production workers at this beef slaughterhouse voted 149-21 for a contract between Local 789 of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) and Dakota Premium. The workers had finally won union recognition.

The bosses at Dakota had vowed never to negotiate with the union or sign a contract. They had carried out a decade-long offensive to prevent a union in the plant by using intimidation, firings, legal maneuvers, deceit, and bribery. In the end they were beaten by the unity and persistence of the workers.

Two hundred production workers are employed at Dakota Premium Foods in South St. Paul, Minnesota. It is a subsidiary of Rosen's Diversified, one of the 10 largest beef packing companies in the United States. The majority of workers are originally from Mexico and Central America. Since June 1, 2000, a hard-fought battle has been waged between the company and the workers in the plant.

That day, some 100 workers carried out a more than seven-hour sit-down strike. The purpose was to fight the increased line speed imposed by the company and to stop the company from forcing workers to work while injured. Caught off guard by the swiftness and united action of the workers, the company granted important concessions on these and other issues. The strength the workers exercised in acting together gave them renewed self-confidence.

On Nov. 6, six leading participants in the union struggle at Dakota Premium Foods got together to tell the *Militant* the story of their victory.

Obdulia Flores, Yesenia Rosales, and José Flores have worked in the kill department. Miguel Olvera, José Mateo and Samuel Farley work in the fabrication department, comprised of boning and packaging. Five



Above: UFCW Local 789, right: Militant Jacob Perasso. Above, UFCW Local 789 negotiating committee members (left to right) Enrique Flores Sr., Miguel Olvera, Miguel Gutiérrez, Jim Garnett, Samuel Farley, and Yesenia Rosales discuss the contract victory against Dakota Premium. Right, meat packers at Dakota rally in June 2000 to press fight for union, one week after their successful sit-down strike against company speedup.



of the six workers took part in the June 2000 sit-down strike. Rosales, who was hired last November, soon found herself involved in the fight in order to defend her rights on the job.

What led to sit-down strike

What were conditions in the plant before the sit-down strike?

"Conditions inside the plant got very bad," said Miguel Olvera, who was hired in 1995. "The company would try to force workers who were injured on the job to leave the plant. There was no professional training for workers on how to use the knives. The company tried to get workers to blame each other for problems."

In September 1992, the UFCW local at

the Dakota plant was decertified after failing to win a contract following a union representation election in July 1991. During the period before the decertification vote, the company had waged a propaganda offensive against the union, arguing that it was too weak to win a contract. The main leader of the pro-union workers inside the plant was offered a job as supervisor and accepted.

In the fall of 1999 and spring of 2000, the company increased the line speed significantly. "Workers in the boning department were being pushed to their limits," said Samuel Farley. "Workers could not keep up the pace and meat was piled up everywhere." A number of workers were being forced to work while injured.

During the sit-down strike, some work-

ers went to the Local 789 hall, got union organizing literature, and returned to the plant to begin a new effort to organize a union. The June 1 sit-down kicked off a seven-week battle to organize the plant and win a union representation election. The vote was set for July 21.

The company tried to break the organizing drive. "After the sit-down, the first attack was against Enrique Flores Jr., my son," said Obdulia Flores. "The company held back his paycheck, harassed him, and cut back his hours until he quit."

Mateo added, "During the strike, I went and spoke to the leaders of UFCW Local 789. Enrique Flores Jr. was the translator. When the head of personnel, Evelyn Acosta, found out the role he had played, she immediately went after him."

Olvera said, "If you were helping to organize the union, the company looked for any pretext to attack or suspend you."

Farley noted, "After the sit-down a lot of workers took a vacation in Mexico. They assumed they could come back to their jobs, as they had done previously. This time they could not come back to their jobs. Many workers were pushed out of the plant."

How did the workers counter these tactics? "The important thing is workers organized themselves inside the plant," Olvera said. "The company organized a couple of meetings at a hotel and offered free food and drink. They thought they could buy some of us off."

Obdulia Flores added that "every time they did this, it was only because we had just had a big pro-union meeting at the union hall."

Campaign to win union election

Campaigning to win the vote, pro-union workers discussed with co-workers why they needed to organize. Several meetings were held at the union hall, some of them extensive discussions where a number of workers spoke, along with union president Bill Pearson.

Workers produced and distributed an in-plant newsletter of the union organizing campaign, *The Workers' Voice*. It explained the issues in the fight and took on and rebutted numerous company lies. The union also organized a systematic effort to talk to each worker individually. Led by Pearson, the UFCW Local 789 officers backed the union representation drive.

The developing union of the workers in the plant defended each worker who came under attack. José Flores recounted his experience. "The company tried to fire me around the time of the union vote. They accused me of urinating on some meat. It was a lie. The company was attacking me because I was for the union and I told others to be for the union. They suspended me for a month. During that time, I and other workers went to the personnel office. The head of personnel took down everyone's name, implying they would all be fired. *The Workers' Voice* carried my story. Thanks to the support of my co-workers, I was reinstated."

On July 21, 2000, these efforts bore fruit. Workers voted 112-71 for the union—a solid mandate.

Seeking to stall the workers' union drive and make them feel their efforts were all for nothing, the company repeatedly—and unsuccessfully—appealed the election results, going before the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) at three different levels. Over the following months, the company—driven by its competition with other slaughterhouses—kept trying to increase the line speed and pressing workers, who resisted.

Workers' continue resistance

"One day I asked the supervisor to give me permission to go to the bathroom five different times," Yesenia Rosales said. "He refused. As a result I soiled myself. Another time I had to use the bathroom and a supervisor allowed me to go. Evelyn Acosta found out and told me I could not have gotten permission. The supervisor then denied he had given me permission. As a result I was disciplined. But I won't quit this job. I want to continue this fight."

Rosales explained that she has been wearing a union sticker on her hardhat. It said, "Sí se puede" (yes, it is possible). Now it says, "Sí se pudo" (yes, it was possible).

"I and two other women working in the

Continued on Page 10

Unionist rejects bribe from Dakota Premium

BY TOM FISKE

ST. PAUL, Minnesota—The week after the October 15 contract vote, the bosses at Rosen's Diversified attempted to buy off one of the unionists at the Dakota Premium Foods plant.

"When I came to work that Thursday I could not punch in. My card had disappeared from the rack near the time clock," Samuel Farley said in an interview. "In addition, some co-workers asked me if I was going to be a supervisor. I told them 'No!', but I had no idea what they were talking about."

Farley, who works in the boning department, has been one of the workers leading the union fight at the plant since the June 2000 sit-down strike. He is currently one of five elected shop stewards in the plant.

"I was told to go upstairs and wait in an area around the manager's office. I did. About two hours passed. I didn't know what was going on. Other people seemed to know something was up," Farley said.

"Finally, I indicated I wanted to go to work at my usual job on the boning line. Instead, I was motioned to go into the of-

fice of plant manager Steve Cortinas. I went in. There were four company officials present, only one of whom I recognized. I was told, 'We are offering you a position with the company. Pay would be somewhere between \$80,000 and \$125,000 per year.' I immediately told them I wasn't interested. I had thought for a split second whether to ask them to put the offer in writing.

"I left the room and went to work on the boning line. They had to make up a new time card for me. They had been so confident I would accept their bribe that they had thrown away my time card."

Farley reported that "when I went to my job, many co-workers in my area were standing around talking about my situation. They already knew I had been offered a supervisory position. The supervisors had already leaked this information to select workers and told them I would accept the bribe."

"The company supervisors and managers think workers are animals who will sell each other out for a few privileges. They have constantly underestimated us. Ten years ago they had been successful in buying off a leader of

the union fight by making him a supervisor. But our fight is different now.

"Most workers were very happy I had turned down the bribe. Everybody could see the naked intentions of the company."

Constant company harassment

Before this seeming overnight rise in the bosses' appreciation for Farley's talents, they had been waging a constant campaign to try to push him out of the plant.

In the fall of 2000, Farley reported, the company disqualified him from his usual job on the boning line, claiming he was too slow. They began moving him to a different position in the plant every day or so. He kept trying to qualify for jobs where he had started, in the boning room. The bosses made up lies to claim he could not do the work, and on a number of days they sent him to the cooler, to work in an isolated situation with one other co-worker. Supporters of the union organizing drive waged a campaign in the plant to beat back this attack.

Farley's co-workers had good reason to think he would not sell out. In addition to being a leading participant in the union fight, he is well known among fellow workers for his socialist views.

He actively campaigned as the Socialist Workers candidate for lieutenant governor of Minnesota in the fall election campaign. A number of co-workers had signed petitions to help in the successful effort to get him on the ballot.

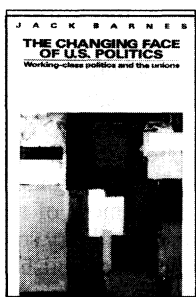
"The bosses think all workers have a price tag on them," said Farley. "They thought that throwing around salary figures of tens of thousands of dollars would spin my head. But to me and many other workers here, our union and our co-workers are priceless."

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Afghan protesters condemn murderous cop attack on students

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Police killed at least four students from Kabul University in Afghanistan's capital city November 11 when they opened fire on a demonstration. The students were demanding improvements in their impoverished living conditions. Dozens more were injured by police fire over the course of two days of protest actions.

The events took place on the eve of the one-year anniversary of the retreat of the Taliban government from Kabul following a month-long bombardment of the city by U.S. forces. Since then some 9,000 U.S. troops have continued to occupy Afghanistan, along with a 5,000-strong United Nations force centered in the capital.

The protests were sparked when authorities told more than 400 students that they would not be fed because of a food shortage, after they had waited three hours in line for food following the end of the day-long fast being observed during the month of Ramadan. More than 1,000 youth marched toward the presidential palace to voice their discontent over this latest incident and to protest the fact that they have not had running water in their dormitory for the past seven days. In fact, for several weeks residents of Kabul have had electrical power cut back to four hours per day and have had to confront diminishing water supplies as shallow wells dry up and pumping stations fail.

The police opened fire at the demonstrating students. According to Khan, an economics student, "The police said stop and we stopped. Without saying anything they shot."

The following morning students gathered on the campus for a second march. They chanted, "Death to the killers of our colleagues. We want justice," outside the dilapidated dormitories where more than 3,000 students live. Nangalai, a medical student, said, "We have no water. We have no bread. We have no electricity. Everything is expensive." Agriculture student Zalmay Omarkhel, 25, added, "Now they are killing us too. We don't know if we live in a democracy or a dictatorship."

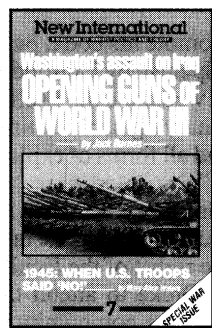
Hundreds of riot police surrounded the protesters, firing weapons into the air, blasting them with water cannons, and pummeling any they could catch. Witnesses reported that a number of students were bleeding as they were hauled away.

Some 2,000 students assembled the following day outside the gates of the university, refusing to attend classes until authorities met their demands for improved living conditions and brought to justice those responsible for the deaths. "Losing a week or two in lessons is nothing, we can always get them back," stated Gul Rahman, a second-year student. "Losing these people is a big deal, they can never be returned to us."

for further reading

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Jack Barnes

The U.S. government's murderous assault on Iraq heralded increasingly sharp conflicts among imperialist powers, the rise of rightist and fascist forces, growing

A BBC reporter described the actions as "the largest student demonstration in more than two decades."

President Hamid Karzai ordered an investigation into both the protests and the killings. "A university is not a place of politics," he asserted. Karzai backed comments made by his interior minister that the protest was the work of agitators stirring up the students. "I know there is something from the outside involved in this incident," he stated.

Responding to this charge, a social science student named Umaid said, "Everyone who protests is said to be Taliban or al Qaeda. It doesn't matter if you are starving and you protest. 'You are Taliban,' they say."

'Civilian affairs soldiers'

Meanwhile, Washington is taking steps to reinforce its military presence through sponsoring a number of construction projects across the country. According to the *New York Times*, "The Pentagon has decided to send 170 more civilian affairs soldiers to Afghanistan, doubling the current number." Washington is also considering using the Army Corps of Engineers to "manage" road and bridge projects in northern Afghanistan.

Cuba uses UN platform to denounce U.S. embargo

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

On November 12 the Cuban government used the platform of the United Nations to condemn Washington's economic war against the island nation. For the 11th year in a row, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution titled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba."

The 173-3 vote was the largest margin ever for the resolution, which was introduced by Ricardo Alarcón, president of Cuba's National Assembly. Only the governments of the United States, Israel, and the Marshall Islands voted against it. Ethiopia, Malawi, Nicaragua, and Uzbekistan abstained.

When the resolution was first introduced, in 1992, it was adopted by a vote of 59 for, 3 against, and 71 abstentions. Each subsequent year, more governments have voted in favor of it.

Among those voting for the resolution were Washington's imperialist rivals in Europe and Japan, which, while hostile to the Cuban Revolution, are strongly opposed to the U.S. government's attempts to dictate their trade relations with other countries.

Imposed by Washington under the Kennedy administration in 1962, the trade embargo has been maintained through nine administrations, Democratic and Republican alike. In addition, the U.S. government has reinforced it with a ban on travel to the island by most U.S. residents.

The Cuban government estimates the embargo has cost the country more than \$70 billion. The figure does not include the toll exacted by countless attacks and acts of sabotage by right-wing forces organized and backed by Washington, estimated at \$54 billion.

The embargo has been tightened over the past decade by the 1992 Torricelli Act and the 1996 Helms-Burton Act. The first measure bars foreign subsidiaries of U.S. companies from trading with Cuba. The latter allows U.S. businessmen whose property was expropriated by Cuba's workers and farmers after the January 1959 revolution to sue companies abroad that invest in those properties.

The Cuban report to the United Nations noted that a U.S. federal court has convicted Canadian citizen James Sabzali, along with two U.S. citizens, on charges of violating U.S. trade restrictions against Cuba. Sabzali could face up to 205 years in jail.

The Cuban statement declared that Washington has not succeeded in its effort to "break the Cuban resolve to exercise self-determination and its willingness to preserve



U.S. soldiers take Afghan man with sack over his head—now standard practice—to a detention center. He was seized during recent U. S. assault in southeastern Afghanistan.

These moves toward an "expanded presence of American diplomatic-military teams" will mean that Karzai will now be able to send "soldiers to major population centers like Mazar-i-Sharif, Herat, Kandahar and Bamian," in a move to expand the Afghan government's control beyond Kabul.

Some Afghan residents arrested and imprisoned by U.S. troops have spoken about their experiences. In Konar province in eastern Afghanistan, for example, a 19-year-old policeman named Jihadullah reported being taken captive this past summer by U.S. soldiers and flown to the U.S. air base at Bagram blindfolded. There he was imprisoned

for two months.

"Jihadullah said he was confined in one of numerous barbed-wire enclosures inside a large garage that held about 25 detainees," reported the *Washington Post*. "He said the lights were on 24 hours a day and prisoners were forbidden to move about or converse on penalty of being handcuffed and hooded."

Jihadullah stated, "If we spoke to each other, they put black bags on our heads. Every time they took me for questioning they asked me if there were Taliban in Konar. Some of the others cried or shouted, but I just bore it. After a long time, they said they were sorry and flew me back home."

its independence, social justice and equality." In spite of the very real economic cost the U.S. embargo has imposed on the island, Cuba has been able to carry out important social and political initiatives over the past two years, it noted. These include the nationally televised "University for All" classes through which millions of Cubans of all ages are able to expand their education and obtain class credits; programs to make computers available in all schools, even in remote rural areas; and the training of more elementary school teachers to reduce class sizes to 20 students or less.

The report noted that Washington has stepped up its pressure on U.S. residents traveling to the island. In 2001 the U.S. Treasury Department sent out six times as many letters to accused "violators" as in the previous year, issuing an average of \$7,500 in civil penalties.

In his address during the resolution debate, Alarcón pointed to further U.S. hostile actions toward Cuba, including the conviction and sentencing on frame-up conspiracy charges of five Cuban revolutionar-

ies who had been providing Cuba with information on U.S.-based counterrevolutionary groups that have a record of violent attacks against the island. The five—René González, Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, and Fernando González—received sentences of between 15 years and a double life-term in U.S. prisons last year. Alarcón noted that they are seeking a new trial based on violations of due process in their trial.

Just days before the UN vote, the Bush administration ordered the expulsion of two Cuban diplomats from Washington and two others from Cuba's UN mission in New York. Administration officials said the move was in retaliation for "espionage activities," referring to the recent conviction and sentencing of former U.S. Defense Department employee Ana Belén Montes. The Cuban foreign ministry said in a statement that "the government of the United States, responsible for the world's largest and most sophisticated intelligence apparatus, does not have any moral authority or justification" for launching this provocation against Cuba.

White House probes trying Moussaoui in military court at Guantánamo base

BY JACK WILLEY

Bush administration officials have announced that they are considering trying Zacarias Moussaoui before a military tribunal in the U.S. prison camp on the Guantánamo naval base. Such a move would mean abandoning the criminal prosecution of Moussaoui, the only person charged in a U.S. court with involvement in the September 11 attacks on the Pentagon and World Trade Center.

The 34-year-old French citizen of Moroccan descent presently faces six counts of "conspiracy," four of which carry the death penalty. The case against him as presented to date is based solely on circumstantial evidence and his statements and political beliefs.

Dubbed the "20th hijacker" in the media, Moussaoui was in prison in Minnesota at the time of the attacks. He has continued to maintain his innocence.

Justice Department officials said that a military tribunal offers them the advantage of allowing Moussaoui "fewer procedural rights to seek testimony from witnesses," reported the November 10 *New York Times*. The Pentagon and intelligence agencies have refused to allow the imprisoned man

access to witnesses and evidence that could aid in his defense.

Moussaoui's lawyers describe this as a denial of his Sixth Amendment right to seek out testimony in support of his not guilty plea. They have asked to interview Ramzi bin al-Shaibah, named as a "co-conspirator" in Moussaoui's indictment, and Abu Zubaydah, also accused by Washington of being a member of al-Qaeda. Both men are being held and interrogated outside the United States.

One government official said, "The Pentagon and the CIA argue, quite justifiably, that they want to keep these terrorists in isolation and under interrogation," even if that places the criminal prosecution in civilian court of Moussaoui in jeopardy.

In the past U.S. secretary of defense Donald Rumsfeld has said that even if a prisoner were to be found not guilty in a military tribunal, it would not "change the fact that he is an enemy combatant." The phrase "enemy combatant" is also used to categorize Yasser Esam Hamdi and José Padilla, two U.S. citizens presently being held indefinitely without access to lawyers and outside of any other established legal rights.

Immigration cops begin checkpoints on Michigan highways

Continued from front page on the freeways.

Officials said that no checkpoints would be set up in Detroit because of problems of traffic congestion. Mexican-born workers, however, who live in the neighborhood known as Mexicantown, have reported a recent increase in the number of Border Patrol vehicles on the streets. A parishioner of Saint Gabriel's Church in southwest Detroit told the *Militant* that after a recent Sunday service the priest reported that immigration officials were stationed outside, and advised everyone to stay put.

"I expect we will be bombarded with complaints," said Maysoon Khatib, a case-worker with the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee in Dearborn. "These kinds of checks will just make it harder for Arab Americans who have been a target since the Sept. 11 attacks," she told the *Oakland Press*.

Michigan is home to the third largest

Arab-American population in the country, estimated at around 350,000 people. They are mostly concentrated in the southeast of the state around Detroit. According to the 2000 census the Detroit area is also home to about 75,000 Hispanic residents, including a large working-class community of Mexican-born immigrants in the city's southwest.

Since September 11, 2001, the number of agents in Michigan has grown from 32 to 70, with another 13 scheduled to be assigned. The agency recently deployed three new patrol boats and a helicopter. Officials have announced plans to install 10 cameras along sections of the U.S.-Canadian border, claiming that smuggling is a problem.

A Border Patrol spokesperson revealed in early November that New Hampshire, New York, Vermont, and Washington state already have similar checkpoints programs.

Under federal law, Border Patrol agents have the right to set up checkpoints within



National Guard troops inspect a truck at a checkpoint in Detroit. U.S. Border Patrol agents have been setting up random checkpoints and stopping vehicles in Michigan.

100 miles of the U.S. border. Within a 25-mile span they can stop "suspicious" vehicles, as well as search and conduct surveillance of private property. For many years the 8,000-strong patrol on the U.S.-Mexican border has exercised these powers.

The Border Patrol operation sparked widespread discussion among Latino workers in Detroit. "We need to get everyone together—the Mexicans, Dominicans,

Puerto Ricans, everybody—and have a march right down Vernor," remarked a worker from the Dominican Republic. Vernor is the main road running through Mexicantown.

He and three co-workers have joined others in making plans for protest action. They have also translated a news article to help them spread the facts on the events among other Spanish-speaking workers.

Minnesota meat packers discuss contract victory

Continued from page 8

kill have orange T-shirts that have a message for the company," she said. "We wear them when we feel the company is trying to go after us. The T-shirt says, in English, 'What's your problem?' Evelyn Acosta now says workers cannot wear orange T-shirts—they must be white."

"It's because of how we defend ourselves that the company became afraid of us," Rosales stressed.

Since the sit-down, a number of unionists have worked together in taking responsibility for leading the fight. After the union representation victory, a leadership committee of workers inside the plant was formalized, the Communications Committee. They organized their meetings so as to enable workers newly active in the struggle or newly hired to attend and place an imprint on the fight. "The name of our committee says it all—workers have to communicate with each other and act together," said Obdulia Flores.

Olvera stated, "I think the most important thing is that you have to fight and fight and fight until you achieve victory. The company wanted to break our will to fight. It's by sticking to our course that we achieved something."

Farley added, "Since the sit-down strike, we had a sense that we could have an impact on the company. The sit-down itself showed this most clearly. The history of our fight shows that every time we defend ourselves, the company has to take us into account."

Workers reach out to other struggles

A number of workers who have been part of the leadership of the fight have reached out to other struggles and been impacted by them, Farley noted. "In the summer of 2000 a number of us went to a picket line of the Pepsi workers who were on strike. Some of us participated in a picket line of hotel workers striking in the Twin Cities. On May 5 of last year, a contingent of Dakota workers marched in the Cinco de Mayo parade in St. Paul to appeal for solidarity from Latino workers. We passed out many copies of a special edition of *Workers' Voice* that told about our fight. It also publicized a meeting at a local church to rally for the right of immigrants to have a drivers license.

"These activities helped us get a better understanding that we are part of something bigger, that there are many struggles by working people, and that we can get support and strength from them."

Important aid in their fight came in the spring of 2001, when workers in the boning

department of a unionized sister plant, Long Prairie Packing, carried out a 90-minute sit-down strike to protest the line speed. That plant, three and a half hours away in Long Prairie, Minnesota, is also a beef slaughterhouse owned by Rosen's Diversified. The bosses there had been on an offensive to discipline and fire leading union workers. A contingent of Dakota workers traveled to Long Prairie to show solidarity with their fight.

Shortly afterward, the bosses at Dakota Premium Foods began demanding that some workers come into the personnel office and resubmit their social security cards to the company. A few workers were forced to quit. The company was hoping to intimidate many more.

Some months after the pro-union workers organized the *Workers' Voice* and the Communications Committee, the company countered by trying to organize a company newsletter, *Bull Notes*, and a company "Communications Committee." This had little effect.

In May of this year the company, having failed to stamp out workers' resistance, finally decided to negotiate with the union.

The confrontation between the employer and the union continued in the negotiations. Company negotiators insisted on some major cutbacks in medical benefits and wanted to hold the line on wage increases. Members of the union negotiating committee—reinforced by the determination of the ranks—refused to agree to these concessions and insisted on some of the main needs of the workers.

The contract contained some important gains, especially given that it was a first contract. It established a seniority system and pay increases of 20–35 cents per hour for each year of the nearly five-year contract. It included a \$1,000 signing bonus for most workers.

The union pushed back an attack on medical benefits: the contract includes no cutbacks in medical benefits at least until July 2003. The strength of the union was also seen in how workers responded on October 15, the day of the vote. Jenny Benton, one of the five newly elected shop stewards, explained, "The big majority of workers came to the meeting at the union hall. Those from boning and packaging went in a caravan.

The balloting table was near the entrance of the hall. Workers could simply have voted and gone home. But everybody stayed to attend a meeting to discuss the contract proposal. Many had questions and spoke up in the discussion. The meeting lasted an hour and a half before workers voted."

The five workers who have been elected as shop stewards in the plant are Miguel Gutierrez, Jenny Benton, and Samuel Farley in the boning and packaging department, and Enrique Flores and Deborah Miranda on the kill floor.

What lies ahead after these gains? Miguel Olvera stated, "The company has been on a drive to increase the line speed in the last few weeks, since October 15. I believe we are at the point where we will have to demonstrate to the company that the workers are opposed to their speedup. The supervisors and managers push us to the limit. Some of my co-workers just can't keep up and the meat piles up. The supervisors stand back and laugh."

Obdulia Flores added, "Together we've learned not to fear the bosses. We've won a union, and the company now has to deal with us."

'Miami Herald' covers meeting for Cuban leader

The following article, published in the November 14 issue of the *Miami Herald*, reports on a public meeting held the previous evening at Florida International University in Miami, where the featured speakers were Víctor Dreke, a commander of the Cuban Revolution, and Ana Morales, who has helped lead Cuban volunteer missions in Africa. It was titled, "Emotions high at Cuban's appearance" (see front-page news article).

BY MICHAEL VASQUEZ AND TERE FIGUERAS

Academia resembled an airport Wednesday night, as Florida International University hosted a tense forum with a well-known Cuban revolutionary fighter despised by many in Miami's exile community.

Those who attended the forum, which focused on the relationship between Cuba and Africa in the years since Fidel Castro took power, were able to hear Víctor Dreke Cruz lambaste the U.S. embargo and tout his nation's contribution to the welfare of native Africans and Afro-Cubans.

But to hear all that you had to first walk past metal detectors and a group of police officers guarding the event, which was held at the Wolfe University Center Ballroom of the school's Biscayne Bay Campus in North Miami.

A handful of Cuban exiles inside the ballroom couldn't hold in their emotions as Dreke—a man they blamed for numerous executions on behalf of the Castro regime—was introduced to the crowd.

"Asesino!" several shouted. Later in the

program, the chants of "Assassin" would surface again, and several people were forced to leave.

Alicia Del Busto was one of the exiles who shouted the word repeatedly at Dreke. Del Busto, who said she spent 12 years as a political prisoner in Cuba, called it "incredible" that someone so vile should be allowed to speak in the United States.

"He's a killer, he's a murderer, he's a liar," Del Busto, 66, said.

Outside the ballroom, about 20 protesters held "Assassin" signs, as well as one that read "Freedom for Cuba. Helping Castro is a crime."

But several hundred people at the forum were curious to hear what Dreke had to say, and the majority of the crowd offered a standing ovation when his name was first announced. Dreke, now vice president of the Cuba-Africa Friendship Association, was a close associate of Ernesto "Ché" Guevara. Last year Dreke wrote the book, *From the Escambray to Congo: In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution*.

To laughter, Dreke emphasized in his speech that he had been granted a visa to come to the United States. "It does appear though," Dreke said, noting the protesters, "that some people want to take that away."

Criticism of the university's decision to invite Dreke resonated in Miami before the forum started. On Tuesday, Ninoska Pérez Castellón, spokeswoman for the Cuban Liberty Council, made Dreke's visit the main focus of her afternoon radio show on WQBA-AM (1140)—fielding calls from listeners who bitterly accused the 64-year-old

Dreke of committing a host of crimes as a revolutionary youth.

"I wanted to ask Víctor Dreke about the stories the victims told me, like the beatings at the camps, of young people tied to barbed wire as punishment," said Pérez, who canceled her plans to attend Dreke's talk when a relative took ill.

Dreke, whose visa allows him to stay in the United States until the end of the month, is spending the tour sharing his experiences during a crucial—and controversial—time in history: as a rebel fighting against dictator Fulgencio Batista in the Escambray mountains in the 1950s and following Guevara into Cuba's failed military foray in the African Congo.

He is also here to promote his book, published in English and Spanish by Pathfinder Press. The company's website calls itself a publisher of "revolutionary fighters" against "capitalism, racism, and all forms of exploitation and oppression."

FIU's Cuban-born president, Modesto A. Maidique, issued a statement saying the university must respect the rights of the faculty members who invited Dreke to attend the forum. "I call upon all in the community to understand and respect the liberties that this country offers to us," Maidique said.

FIU student Leslie Bazin, who attended the forum, said she was glad to hear a different viewpoint on Cuba. The allegations that Dreke is a murderer didn't change her opinion.

"A lot of people can be held responsible for deaths everywhere, including our country," she said.

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A Miami first: leader of Cuba revolution speaks

Continued from front page

American group opposed to the U.S. embargo against the island.

Several of the University of Miami students found out about the meeting from four students on campus who had gone to Valdosta, Georgia, two weeks earlier to meet Dreke and Morales, who were visiting farmers and other residents of that rural area.

James Sweet, professor of history and director of the fall lecture series of ANWS, chaired the program. Sweet introduced the discussion portion of the program by pointing to the significance for Africa of the Cuban combatants' role in defeating the South African apartheid invaders in Angola in 1988.

Several spokespeople for different groups welcomed the speakers from the platform. Among them were Adrian Carter, president of the student government at FIU North; and Brad Brown, president of the NAACP in Miami-Dade County. Brown said that the local and national NAACP was actively involved in trying to secure contracts for U.S. Black farmers to be able to sell their produce and livestock to Cuba so that all agricultural trade with the island would not be dominated by wealthy farmers and their trade consortiums.

ANWS director Carole Boyce Davies explained that her department invited Dreke and Morales to speak because of Cuba's role in the fight against colonialism in Africa, "its ability to challenge U.S. domination," and "the interest among students in the Afro-Cuban experience." The audience at the meeting reflected the large percentage of students on the campus who are of African, African-American, or Caribbean heritage.

Marleine Bastien of the Haitian Women of Miami condemned Washington's policy of mass deportations of Haitian immigrants, both today and during the U.S.-backed Duvalier dictatorship. She urged members of the audience to join a November 21 protest demanding the release of hundreds of Haitian refugees being detained at the Krome Detention Center.

As Bastien spoke, a handful of would-be disrupters interrupted her with shouts of "murderer!" directed at Victor Dreke. Two then tried to rush the stage. Kameelah Benjamin, an ANWS graduate student who was one of a dozen students acting as security monitors for the event, blocked the path of one of the rightists. After yelling for several minutes in defiance of the chairperson's insistent requests—backed by many in the audience—to sit down and respect the speakers, the disrupters were removed from the meeting hall by plainclothes police officers.

The failure of this attempt to break up the event, which was followed by two more unsuccessful efforts, made it clear that the overwhelming majority wanted to hear what the speakers had to say. Most of the rest of the meeting took place without interruption.

In opening his presentation Dreke thanked the audience for having "made a firm decision to be here with us tonight. We are here legally in the United States, though it appears that some would like to take that away," he said, sparking laughter and easing the tensions in the room.

The revolutionary leader condemned Washington's economic war on Cuba and called for normalization of relations between the two countries. He reported the November 12 vote at the United Nations General Assembly, which by a 173-3 margin supported a resolution calling on the U.S. government to lift its economic embargo on Cuba.

Dreke focused on the bonds between the people of Cuba and Africa and the role played by Cuban volunteers in African lib-

eration struggles. After describing the revolutionary struggles on the island against Spanish colonial rule and then U.S. imperialist domination, he stated, "Only with the victory of the revolution on Jan. 1, 1959, did Cuba become truly free, independent, and sovereign."

Since then, Dreke noted, hundreds of thousands of Cuban volunteers have joined anticolonial and anti-imperialist struggles in Africa—from Algeria, to the Congo, to Guinea-Bissau and Angola.

Ana Morales described the gains of the Cuban Revolution in providing free, high-quality health care for all. Medical solidarity missions in Africa and the Caribbean "have built six medical schools to train doctors in these countries," she said. Cuba is not "rich in national resources," she added, "but we are rich in men and women who want to do something to change the world."

Why Cubans fought in Angola

In the discussion period, a Black Cuban-American who told the *Militant* that he works for Radio Martí, a U.S. government radio station that beams counterrevolutionary propaganda to the island, acknowledged that Cuba had helped to defeat the South African apartheid forces that invaded Angola in the 1970s and '80s. "But what were the benefits to Cubans and Afro-Cubans in particular?" he asked. "Wasn't Cuba's involvement a result of the Cold War and its relation to the USSR?"

"Cuba's solidarity in Angola and the rest of Africa was not a result of our relations with the Soviet Union," Dreke replied. "The benefit to our people was the making of millions of new friends and paying part of our debt to Africa and all of humanity."

Dreke also responded to a question on Che Guevara's self-critical assessment of Cuba's 1965 combat mission to the Congo, where Cuban volunteers joined Congolese national liberation fighters combating a U.S.-backed regime. When the Cuban fighters arrived they were to a large degree ignorant about the realities of Africa, he noted, "The only thing we knew of Africa then was from the Tarzan films that presented Cheeta the chimpanzee as more intelligent than the African people. How could it be otherwise? Those films were made by capitalism, by imperialism."

The 128 Cuban volunteers who went to the Congo under Che's command left in late 1965 without a victory, said Dreke. "But the results of our participation in the Congo were not a defeat because it was there that the men who fought in other countries of Africa were initially trained and educated."

In Angola, where Cuban internationalists joined with Angolan forces to defeat successive South African invasions, the volunteers totaled 350,000 men and women over a 13-year period. "It was a victory for the oppressed peoples of the world," said Dreke.

Dreke took up the accusation by a small number in the audience that he was responsible for crimes during the fight against the U.S.-organized counterrevolutionary bands in the Escambray mountains in the early



Victor Dreke (at mike) speaks at Florida International University in North Miami on "Cuba and Africa: 1959 to Today." Also on platform, from left: Miami-Dade NAACP president Brad Brown; speaker Ana Morales; translator Aaron Ruby; Mel Reeves, co-chair of discussion period; professor James Sweet, chair of the program. Also speaking were Carole Boyce-Davies, director of African-New World Studies department; student government president Adrian Carter; and Marleine Bastien of Haitian Women of Miami.

1960s. He described with some detail the armed bands that committed murders and rapes of literacy workers, peasants, and terrorized the region. Funded and organized by Washington, they unsuccessfully attempted to lay the groundwork for an invasion by U.S. troops. Operation Mongoose, a program of assassinations, sabotage, and other counterrevolutionary terror developed by the John F. Kennedy administration was at the heart of this, Dreke said.



University of South Florida students from Tampa helped as security monitors at Miami event for Victor Dreke.

In the years following the triumph of the revolution, Dreke said, some "3,500 people were either killed or murdered and 2,000 were wounded by these terrorist bands. We had to apply revolutionary laws and justice in response to these crimes."

Another questioner asked whether Cuban doctors who go on missions abroad can stay on in those countries if they choose to do so. Participation in these internationalist missions is "completely voluntary," said Morales. And anyone who wishes to leave Cuba is free to do so, as long as they have a visa to go to another country, she added.

Both speakers also took up questions about how racist discrimination had been uprooted in Cuba, and there were many more hands up for questions when organizers had to end the program owing to the lateness of the hour.

A blow to opponents of revolution

The success of the meeting was a defeat for rightist forces in the city that had tried to whip up a campaign to block it.

On November 10 Radio Mambi, a right-wing Spanish-language station, began broadcasting a call by the ultrarightist group Vigilia Mambisa for a demonstration outside the FIU North campus the day of the meeting. Despite two days' publicity the picket drew only about 25 people. Following their picket line, the campus police barred these protesters from the ballroom, saying the room was already filled to capacity. A few dozen students who wanted to hear the meeting were also turned away by the cops, citing occupancy limits.

On November 12, Ninoska Pérez, a spokeswoman for another right-wing group, the Cuban Liberty Council (CLC), made Dreke's visit the focus of her afternoon radio show, encouraging calls from listeners accusing him of committing crimes.

The morning of the event, *El Nuevo Herald*, the main Spanish-language daily here, reported that the CLC had demanded that FIU president Modesto Maidique cancel the meeting. It also noted that Congressional repre-

sentatives Ileana Ros Lehtinen and Lincoln Díaz-Balart had "been in contact with the State Department criticizing the authorization of a visa for Victor Dreke to visit Miami."

Hostile calls bombarded ANWS and other university departments. Alex Broomfield, a student at FIU who attended the meeting, said he had answered one such call that morning while at work in the campus nursing department. He said the caller told him "this guy [Dreke] killed her cousin."

Nonetheless, the student attended the meeting because "Cuba is the only country that has ever sent its people to go to Africa and help, fight and die, giving only their blood."

In face of this pressure, the sponsoring faculty members and students held firm, insisting that they had a right to invite speakers of their choice.

Hours before the meeting was to begin, FIU president Maidique announced that the university must respect the rights of the faculty that had invited Dreke to speak. The statement, which was broadcast immediately on television and radio, undercut calls for cancellation and set the scene for the campus police to cooperate with organizers of the meeting to ensure the safety of the speakers and prevent a physical confrontation by ejecting the disrupters who refused to abide by the rules of the meeting.

The student monitors and other volunteers who provided the bulk of security at the meeting played a key role in ensuring the meeting proceeded and the speakers were not endangered.

The November 13 event received wide coverage in English- and Spanish-language newspapers and television over the next two days. The *Miami Herald* ran a news story on the event, although *El Nuevo Herald* did not. Callers to right-wing radio talk show hosts expressed despair and anger at the success of Dreke's visit. "This is a national disaster," said one.

On the morning of November 16, TV Channel 51 aired an hour-long show with CLC and Vigilia Mambisa leaders denouncing the event. "There should have been 10,000 Cubans there—there were very few of us," said Vigilia Mambisa's Laura Villanova. "Where is the exile community?"

The show ended with a debate between Max Lesnick of Alianza Martiana and rightist Francisco García. "This is not the first time, nor will it be the last time that American universities invite professors, students, and other Cubans to participate in an event like this," said Lesnick. "The exile community does not have the right to interrupt and sabotage such events."

A number of students who attended the November 12 meeting said they welcomed the opportunity to hear the facts about Cuba from the point of view of supporters of the revolution living on the island.

Kameelah Benjamin said, "It's important that this happened on a college campus and with the community defending free speech in Miami."

"Other than the disruptions," said Kervens Jacob, a Haitian student at the University of Miami, "the meeting was great."

CUBA and the Coming American Revolution

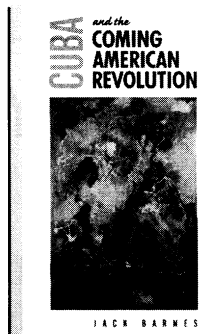
by Jack Barnes

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.

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Víctor Dreke speaks at university in Tampa

Continued from front page

ers in Africa; about how the Cuban people have uprooted racist discrimination since the victory of the 1959 revolution; and about other social and political advances that working people on the island have made over the last four decades.

Dreke visited Florida November 11-13 as part of a seven-city speaking tour on "Cuba and Africa: 1959 to Today." After Tampa, he spoke in North Miami at Florida International University. His visit was a pole of attraction for students and others who wanted to hear a commander of the Cuban Revolution and internationalist combatant. In both cities, the failure of a right-wing minority to prevent or disrupt these meetings was a measure of the political changes that have taken place here.

Ana Morales, a professor at the Latin American School of Medicine in Havana who has headed up Cuban medical missions in Africa, shared the platform with Dreke at the Tampa meeting and other events. She was the featured speaker at a seminar earlier that day on Cuba's medical missions in Africa hosted by the USF anthropology department.

The visit by Dreke and Morales was organized by the USF Africa-Cuba Speakers Committee with the support of the university's Africana Studies Department; the Institute on Black Life; the Center for Africa and the Diaspora; and the Latin American and Caribbean Studies Department.

Active participation by students

The Africana Studies Club and the African Students Association were among the campus organizations that supported the events. A number of students played an active role in organizing the USF meeting, including as security monitors. Several students are part of a group on campus that has been involved in protesting the deportations of Haitian immigrant workers.

At the University of South Florida, the Dean of International Affairs, Joanne McCarthy, opened the meeting, which was chaired by Dr. Trevor Purcell, chair of the Africana Studies Department.

Patrick Sandji, president of the African Students Association, greeted the two speakers and noted the contribution Cuba has made to the fight against AIDS in Africa. Africana Studies Club member Benouchka Charite spoke about the discriminatory treatment handed out to Haitian refugees by the U.S. government. Two students had been arrested during a November 2 protest against the imprisonment of 200 Haitians at Krome Detention Center in Miami, she said.

USF students formed the majority of the participants in the meeting. Others came from St. Petersburg, Daytona Beach, and other parts of central Florida.

"It is a rare occasion for us to hear from a scholar and a revolutionary combatant ac-



Some 125 people, mostly students, attended November 12 meeting for Víctor Dreke and Ana Morales at the University of South Florida in Tampa. Highlighting Cuba's revolutionary heritage, Dreke noted that Cuban independence leader José Martí had visited nearby Ybor City, a base for anticolonial fighters.

tive for over 50 years, who fought alongside Che Guevara," said Dr. Earl Conteh-Morgan, professor of International Affairs, in introducing Dreke.

Dreke had been "a student activist and freedom fighter who represented the Cuban Revolution in Africa," he noted. "Fighting alongside Amílcar Cabral against the Portuguese colonialists," he said, Dreke "contributed to the winning of freedom for Guinea-Bissau" in the mid-1970s after a decade-long war.

Conteh-Morgan encouraged members of the audience to read Dreke's book, *From the Escambray to the Congo: In the Whirlwind of the Cuban Revolution*, published by Pathfinder. In its pages Dreke describes his involvement in the revolution, from the struggle against the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship in the 1950s, to his role as a commander of the volunteer battalions that defeated the U.S.-organized counterrevolutionary bands in the Escambray mountains of central Cuba in the early 1960s, to Cuba's internationalist missions in Africa.

Dreke described the links between Cuba and Africa going back to the struggle against the Spanish colonial power. "Many slaves fell in the first war of independence" launched in 1868, he said.

He also highlighted the important role in the 19th century independence struggle played by tobacco workers and other Cuban immigrants in Florida and other parts of the United States.

"Yesterday we visited Tampa's Ybor City where Cubans emigrated after the defeat of the [1868-78] war of independence," he said. The exiled Cubans provided a base of support for preparations to renew the anti-colonial war. "José Martí came here in November 1891 and stayed with Black revolutionaries living here," Dreke added, expressing his outrage at finding that the park in Ybor City commemorating Martí's visit is now padlocked.

Martí founded the Cuban Revolutionary Party to oppose Spanish rule and U.S. imperialist designs on Cuba. He led the launching of Cuba's second war of independence in 1895 and was killed in combat that year. Within three years the independence fighters had defeated the Spanish armies, only to face an invasion by Washington.

"One chain, that of the Spanish colonizers, was replaced by another, a chain of U.S. imperialism," said Dreke. With the 1901 Platt Amendment, "Washington asserted its right to invade the country to defend its interests and set up a U.S. naval base on our soil at Guantánamo, a base that still encroaches on our territory today."

Dominated by U.S. imperialism

"Many working people in Cuba, including many Blacks, did not believe a true revolution was possible, that exploitation of man by man could be eliminated," said Dreke. "My father was one of those. I regret that he did not live to see the 1959 victory where we finally won our independence and be-

gan to implement the program of Moncada."

On July 26, 1953, a group of young combatants under the command of Fidel Castro launched an insurrectionary attack on the Moncada army garrison in Santiago de Cuba. Although Batista's forces massacred more than 50 of the captured revolutionaries, and imprisoned Castro and 27 others, the assault announced the beginning of the revolutionary war that culminated in victory on Jan. 1, 1959.

In his testimony before Batista's court, Castro laid out the revolutionary-democratic program of the movement, including demands for land reform, literacy, and national independence. The program was rapidly published under the title, *History Will Absolve Me*.

Dreke said, "I am explaining our history so that you will understand why we are so determined to defend the independence we won in 1959 and why we are so conscious of respecting the sovereignty of all peoples."

After his remarks Dreke called for "an open, calm discussion." A dozen or so opponents of the Cuban Revolution immediately tried to monopolize the question period, yelling out accusations at the speakers and trying to prevent others from participating in the discussion.

With the support of the student organizers and members of the audience, the chairperson insisted that everybody attending the meeting remain seated and wait to be recognized in turn. Unable to prevent the meeting, most of the would-be disrupters eventually left.

One man who interrupted Dreke near the beginning of his presentation claimed that racism had appeared in Cuba only after the revolution. During the discussion, a 64-year-old Black man said that he had lived in Holguín, the same city in Oriente Province in prerevolutionary Cuba as the heckler. Because of segregation and the confinement of Blacks to more impoverished areas, the two families had lived on opposite sides of the town.

"That is the real history of Cuba before

the revolution," he declared as he thanked Dreke and Morales for bringing the truth about the revolution to Tampa. "Don't lie about your past and that of Cuba," he advised the hecklers.

Prompted by questions from the audience, Dreke returned in the discussion to the gains of the Cuban Revolution, Africa, and the fight against racism. The 1959 revolution coincided with an upsurge in the struggle for independence in Africa, he said, and with the growth of the movement against Jim Crow segregation and racial discrimination in the United States. "It was a time of revolutionary fervor," he said.

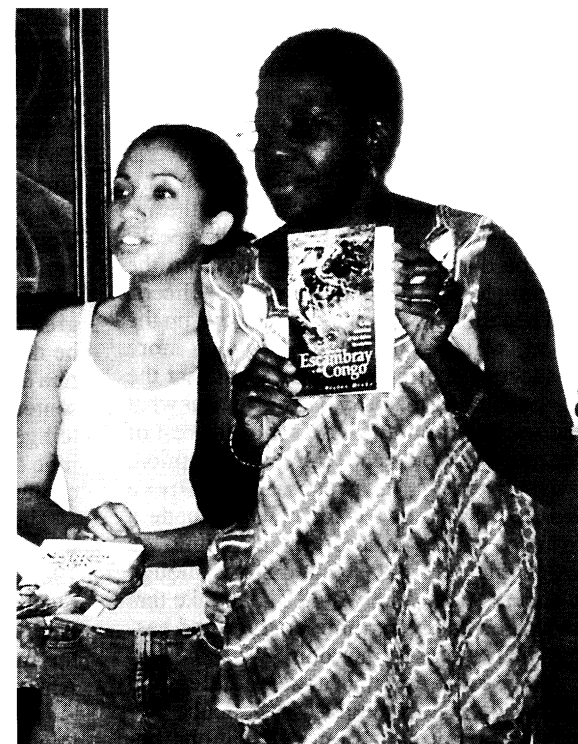
Imperialist carve-up

Whether it was the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Ethiopia, or Angola, Cuban volunteers went to Africa at the invitation of liberation fighters, Dreke stressed. "We acted solely out of human solidarity," he said, contrasting this with the reality of the colonialist and imperialist powers, which "came to grab the diamonds, rubber, oil, slaves and other property as they saw it." At the 1884-85 Conference of Berlin, for example, the

European powers sat down to carve up Africa, saying, in effect: "'Here, you take this country. You take that one.' They divided the Congo in two, between Belgium and France."

At the end of the meeting, national tour director Sam Manuel from Washington, D.C., urged participants to contribute to help finance the tour. He invited those present to join the caravan going to Miami the following day to help ensure a successful meeting there. Sixteen participants from the USF Tampa meeting accompanied Dreke and Morales to Miami.

Diego Negrão-Guerra, a 19-year-old



Militant/ Linda Jenness

Ana Morales (right) leads discussion on history of Cuban Revolution during social activity organized by students at University of South Florida in Tampa.

American from Cuba, commented, "It's important that people had a chance to hear something positive about Cuba. I learned a lot about Cuba and a lot about myself, about the history of my people and about myself as a person."

MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

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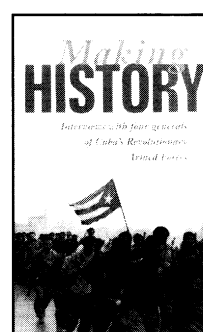
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Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 14.

Nurses in California strike for pensions, reduced workload

BY BILL KALMAN

SAN PABLO, California—Some 450 registered nurses went on strike October 28 at two East Bay facilities of the Doctors Medical Center. The strikers, who are members of the California Nurses Association (CNA), are demanding the employers hire more nurses, and provide better pension and retiree health benefits.

They have been working without a contract since August 31.

The center is part of the Santa Barbara-based Tenet Healthcare Corp., the second-largest hospital chain in the United States. Tenet is a for-profit "hospital-management" company, which runs 113 general hospitals, including 40 in California.

"This hospital made \$11 million last year," said striker Corrine Comer. "Tenet is leading the privatization of health care by giving RNs more work and more patients."

Tenet has begun using scab nurses; workers report many have been brought in from out of state to replace the strikers. A large percentage of the striking nurses are Filipina. Runette Peralta, Milgrace Cancio, Luz de Jesus, and Gloria Rivera walked the line carrying signs that read, "People before profits" and "I won't stay for low pay."

"We're fighting for what we deserve,"

said striker Luz de Jesus. "Eighteen other Bay Area hospitals have better retirement and pension benefits than what this company is offering."

In part because of the volatility of the stock market, the CNA has demanded a "defined contribution" retirement plan in recent negotiations with hospitals, which they won in recent contracts with health care providers such as Sutter Health, and others.

"An RN who is a good friend of ours retired from here after 40 years," de Jesus explained. "She is paying \$1,000 a month for medical benefits for her family. We cannot afford to retire!"

Company's miserly pension benefits

Many of the strikers contrasted the company's miserly pension benefits with its "aggressive pricing policies"—performing more complicated medical procedures in order to get bigger payments from Medicare plans. According to the CNA, Medicare's "outlier" payments to Tenet—payments for particularly costly medical procedures—are nearly three times the national average.

The national average for all hospitals for outlier payments is 3.5 percent of all Medicare payments; these payments comprise 10 percent of Tenet's Medicare payments. And



Militant/Bernie Senter

Strikers on picket line in San Pablo, California, are demanding bosses hire more nurses and provide better benefits. "We're fighting for what we deserve," one picket said.

in California, Tenet's rate is 14 percent.

At Tenet's center in Redding, California, two top heart specialists have been accused by state regulators of performing expensive and medically unnecessary heart surgery. The Redding Medical Center had 42.3 percent of Medicare reimbursements come from outlier procedures—nearly eight times the statewide average.

The federal government is now auditing all of Tenet's Medicare claims. Last summer the Justice Department forced Tenet Healthcare to pay a \$17 million fine for

overcharging federal health care programs for laboratory tests.

The nurses on strike explain the impact of the company goal of "keeping costs down." They pointed to a recent article in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* reporting that patients are more likely to die following surgery when they outnumber nurses four to one. A higher patient-to-nurse ratio also leads to more nurse burnout, the article stated. "Substantial decreases in mortality rates could result from increasing registered nurse staffing, especially for patients who develop complications," the authors asserted.

The CNA is organizing a big turnout for three public hearings sponsored by the California Department of Health Services in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Fresno in December.

In a related development, 1,400 members of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) staged a one-day strike November 13 against Stanford and Lucile Packard Children's Hospital. The unionists include lab technicians, housekeepers, food service workers, and nurses assistants who have been working without a contract since November 4.

Bill Kalman is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 120 in San Lorenzo, California.

Dreke: Cuba's mission to Guinea-Bissau

Continued from Page 4

have come to study in Cuba. I've often had the opportunity to exchange ideas with them and listen to their opinions. And the views they express are very clear.

What are some of my conclusions?

For one thing, of the parties in Africa that I'm familiar with, there are none I would venture to call Marxist or Leninist. They're deeply nationalist; that's what they are. There are still places where nationalism has not yet taken root, where tribal or ethnic divisions continue to prevail. That's where imperialism seeks to intervene, sowing divisions among the people of Africa. And whenever a leader emerges who to a greater or lesser degree fights for independence or sovereignty and has a following, it seems they often die in an "accident" or through an assassination attempt. Sometimes they even just "disappear."

Then you see all these conflicts. There are countries that have been at war for years. One of the most important steps forward recently is that Africans are coming to a clearer understanding that internecine wars lead only to internal destruction. I'm not talking about wars for independence, sovereignty, and liberation. That's something entirely different.

Battle against AIDS

One very big battle they are waging, as you know, is the battle against AIDS and other terrible diseases that afflict these

peoples. Our doctors are making a great effort in this war. In Equatorial Guinea, South Africa, and other countries, there are Cuban doctors working. Some compañeros were in Africa earlier as combatants in wars of liberation; now they're serving there as doctors.

That's why I think it's true that there is a great movement in Africa of people seeking to read, to study, to learn their true history.

Waters: What has been the impact here in Cuba of the fact that hundreds of thousands of Cubans—a high percentage of the population—have participated in internationalist missions in Africa over the last thirty years?

Dreke: The thousands of Cuban compañeros who have been fighting, or working in health care, in education, in sports, or in other areas in Africa, have brought back knowledge to Cuba. Cuba and Africa have influenced each other deeply. Our doctors have brought back experience in treating diseases they had read about but never seen; these experiences have helped save lives there, in other countries, and then even here in Cuba. Our doctors have worked in the most difficult places, they've taken care of the people, and they've won their affection. But in addition to those kinds of things, the Cuban people have also developed real affection and respect for their African brothers and sisters.

It's important to tell the truth. There was a stage, at the very beginning, when some people in Cuba didn't feel this way about Africa. What was said about Africans was not always good. Back then, any black African was called "Congo." It didn't matter if they were from Tanzania or wherever.

But most of the hundreds of thousands of our compañeros who have returned feel like they've left part of their family there. Whenever someone comes back from a visit to an African country, compañeros here ask: "How's so-and-so doing?" "How's his aunt, who took care of me when I was sick?" A brotherhood has developed between Cubans and Africans.

Within Africa, too, there's a lot of sympathy and respect for Cuba and for Fidel, and for the Cuban compañeros who served in internationalist missions on that continent.

Through our experiences in Africa, we saw firsthand the extreme poverty in which a great part of humanity lives. We've learned more about imperialist exploitation. It's not only that you've read something about the

exploitation of man by man in a book by Karl Marx or Lenin. You've seen it, you've lived it concretely.

We say we have African blood in our veins, and you see this in Cuba every day, with our dance, our music, everything. It doesn't matter whether your skin color is lighter or darker. There's an African presence in all of us.

Fidel Castro and the revolution have taught us to identify ourselves deeply with our ties to Africa and to appreciate them. The presence of so many of our compañeros in Africa has played a big role making it possible for us to internalize this appreciation.

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THE MILITANT
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December 2, 1977

Backed by growing labor support across the country—including a solidarity rally called by the Minnesota AFL-CIO for December 17—striking iron ore workers on the Mesabi Iron Range are holding firm against company attempts to force them back to work.

For nearly 100 days after the strike began August 1, the companies arrogantly refused to negotiate key issues and branded the walkout "illegal."

That hard line began to crack in early November when the strikers launched an aggressive campaign to win broad labor support. They held a mass rally in Virginia, Minnesota, sent an appeal to all 5,400 USWA locals, and dispatched representatives to the big Chicago-area steel mills to address local meetings and solicit support.

For the first time, the companies made an offer on the union demand for incentive-pay plans. Iron ore locals want bonus plans to raise their wages to the level in basic steel.

The offer was unanimously rejected as inadequate by an eighty-member negotiating committee representing all the locals.

Local union meetings across the iron range backed up their negotiators by rejecting the deal, often by unanimous votes. There was a lot of discussion, one union source said, "not about why we rejected it, but why would the international [union] ask us to take such a ridiculous proposal."

As negotiations continue, the strikers are pressing ahead to build the December 17 rally as a massive show of strength.

THE MILITANT
PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE
NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (U.S.) CENTS

December 1, 1952

One of the outstanding features of the frameup trial that opened Nov. 20 in Prague, Czechoslovakia, the biggest of its kind to date in Eastern Europe, is the stress on the Jewish origin of the defendants in the dock.

As a matter of fact, this was also true of the very first attacks, after Lenin's death, against Leon Trotsky and the anti-Stalinist opposition he then led inside the Soviet Union.

Heading the list of 14 defendants, of whom 11 are of Jewish origin, is Rudolf Slansky, former General Secretary of the Czech Communist Party, life-long agent of the Kremlin. The charge of "Zionist conspirators" is ranked in the indictment as second only to the customary charge of "Trotskyism."

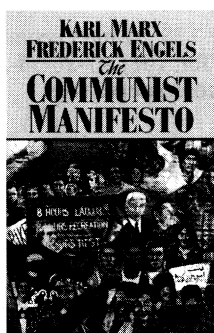
The use of anti-Semitism in the Kremlin's foreign policy, principally in the Middle East, is clear enough. Here Stalin is playing the game of the most reactionary Arab elements and stands thereby to gain favor in their eyes.

But Stalin's use of the weapon employed by Hitler is in the first instance dictated by internal needs. The Kremlin is in dire need of scapegoats for the intolerable oppression which it has imposed upon the East European countries.

How far Stalin will go on this road not only in Czechoslovakia but in other East European countries still remains, of course, to be seen. But it is already clear that the Czech frameup exceeds in its scope and consequences the previous set of "anti-Titoist" trials and purges in the East European countries.

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¹This speech is printed in Jorge Risquet Valdés, *El segundo frente del Che en el Congo: Historia del Batallón Patricio Lumumba* (Havana: Casa Editora Abril, 2000), pp. 10-15.

Malcolm X speaks on enslavement of Africans

Printed below is an excerpt from *Malcolm X on Afro-American History*, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for November. In this speech, given on Jan. 24, 1965, Malcolm X recounts the hidden history of the labor of people of African origin and their achievements. Four weeks later he was assassinated in New York City.

Malcolm X, one of the 20th century's outstanding revolutionary leaders, was an intransigent opponent of the U.S. govern-

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

ment and its imperialist actions. He fought the racist oppression of Blacks and the profit-driven plunder of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. During the last year of his life Malcolm founded a political group, the Organization for Afro-American Unity (OAAU). The speech was planned to be the first of three he would give at Harlem's Audobon Ballroom, as part of laying the political groundwork for the new program the OAAU leaders were preparing. Copyright © 1990 by Betty Shabazz and Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.

BY MALCOLM X

There were three people involved in the crime that was committed against us—the slave trader, the slave master, and a third one that they don't tell you and me about,

the slave maker. You've read about the slave trader and you've read about the slave master; in fact, you know the slave master—you're still in his hands. But you never read in history the part played by the slave maker.

You can't make a wise man a slave, you can't make a warrior a slave. When you and I came here, or rather when we were brought here, we were brought here from a society that was highly civilized, our culture was at the highest level, and we were warriors—we knew no fear. How could they make us slaves? They had to do the same thing to us that we do to a horse. When you take a horse out of the wilds, you don't just jump on him and ride him, or put a bit in his mouth and use him to plow with. No, you've got to break him in first. Once you break him in, then you can ride him. Now the man who rides him is not the man who breaks him in. It takes a different type of man to break him in than it takes to ride him. The average man that's been riding him can't break him in. It takes a cruel man to break him in, a mean man, a heartless man, a man with no feelings.

And this is why they took the role of the slave maker out of history. It was so criminal that they don't even dare to write about it, to tell what was done to you and me to break us in and break us down to the level that we're on today. Because if you find the role that that slave maker played, I'm telling you, you'll find it hard to forget and forgive, you'll find it hard. I can't forgive the slave trader or the slave master; you know I can't forgive the slave maker. [Applause]

Attempts to break Africans

Our people weren't brought right here to this country. They were first dropped off in the West Indian islands, in the Caribbean. Most of the slaves that were brought from Africa were dropped off first in the Caribbean, West Indian islands. Why? This was the breaking-in grounds. They would break them in down there. When they broke them in, then they would bring the ones whose spirit had been broken on to America. They had all kinds of tactics for breaking them in. They bred fear into them, for one thing.

I read in one book how the slave maker used to take a pregnant woman, a Black woman, and make her watch as her man would be tortured and put to death. One of those slave makers had trees that he planted in positions where he would bend them and tie them, and then tie the hand of a Black



Robert Parent

Malcolm X speaking at founding meeting of Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU), June 28, 1964, at Audobon Ballroom in Harlem, New York. Malcolm's January 1965 speech at Audobon Ballroom was the first of three talks he had planned as part of laying political groundwork for the new program of the OAAU.

man to one, a hand to the other, and his legs to two more, and he'd cut the rope. And when he'd cut the rope, that tree would snap up and pull the arm of the Black man right out of his socket, pull him up into four different parts. I'll show you books where you can read it, they write about it. And they made the pregnant Black women stand there and watch as they did it, so that all this grief and fear that they felt would go right into that baby, that Black baby that was yet to be born. It would be born afraid, born with fear in it. And you've got it in you right now—right now, you've still got it. When you get in front of that blue-eyed thing, you start to itching, don't you? And you don't know why. It was bred into you. But when you find out how they did it, you can get it out of you and put it right back in them.

Slaves used to sing that song about "My Lord's going to move this wicked race and raise up a righteous nation that will obey." They knew what they were talking about—they were talking about the man. They used

to sing a song, "Good News, a Chariot Is Coming." If you notice, everything they sang in those spirituals was talking about going to get away from here. None of them wanted to stay here. You're the only ones, sitting around here now like a knot on a log, wanting to stay here. You're supposed to be educated and hip, you're supposed to know what's happening, you know—they're not supposed to know what's happening. But everything they sang, every song, had a hint in it that they weren't satisfied here, that they weren't being treated right, that somebody had to go.

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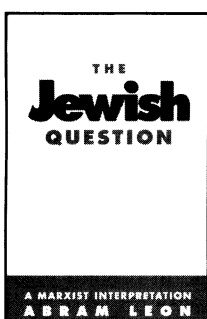
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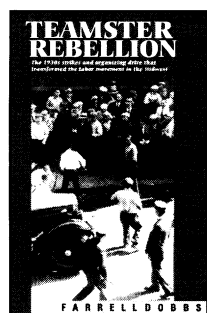
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Historic visit by Cuban leader

The just-completed speaking tour by Victor Dreke, a leader of the Cuban Revolution, in several U.S. cities was a historic event. Its success speaks volumes about the attractive power of the Cuban Revolution and about the changing face of U.S. politics.

Invited to speak on "Cuba and Africa: from 1959 to Today" by a broad range of faculty and student groups at several university campuses, Dreke spoke in Washington, D.C.; Atlanta and Valdosta, Georgia; Birmingham, Alabama; Boston; Miami and Tampa, Florida; and Providence, Rhode Island. Ana Morales, a doctor who has led Cuban medical missions in Africa, shared the platform with him. The audiences, of up to 250-300 people, were among the largest ever for a Cuban revolutionary leader speaking in this country.

It's not surprising that this tour has attracted such interest. Victor Dreke was a cadre of the revolutionary movement that led millions in Cuba to overthrow the U.S.-backed Batista dictatorship in 1959 and to bring workers and farmers to power. Under the leadership of Ernesto Che Guevara, he was an organizer of the revolutionary tribunals that brought hundreds of Batista's torturers and henchmen to justice. In the early 1960s Dreke was a commander of the Cuban forces that crushed the CIA-backed counterrevolutionary bands that were terrorizing working people in the Escambray mountains of central Cuba. He was second in command under Guevara of the unit of Cuban combatants that fought in the Congo alongside anti-imperialist forces there. He led Cuban volunteers in Guinea-Bissau during the independence struggle against Portuguese colonial rule. And he remains involved in leading Cuba's solidarity work in Africa today.

Many of those who came to hear the revolutionary leader were attracted to the example of Cuba's role in Africa—including how Cuban volunteer combatants, fighting together with Angolan and Namibian forces, smashed the invading South African apartheid army at

the battle of Cuito Cuanavale in 1988. Dreke pointed out the little-known fact that Cuba committed itself to this fight with full knowledge that the South African regime had tactical nuclear weapons.

Dreke's message had an especially powerful resonance among African Americans fighting racist discrimination in this country—from students demonstrating in Florida against the racist treatment of Haitian immigrants by the immigration cops, to veterans of civil rights battles in the South, to Black farmers fighting to stay on the land in Georgia and Alabama. Many Black youth, deeply aware of the devastating conditions of imperialist domination in Africa, were impressed by Cuba's selfless contribution to the fight against the deadly AIDS pandemic in Africa and how the disease has been successfully combated in Cuba.

The students and others who organized successful, broadly sponsored public meetings for Dreke reaffirmed the political space that exists to have these kinds of discussions—including in Florida, where a small minority of Cuban-American right-wingers are no longer able to prevent such free exchanges of views in the way they have done for years.

The interest in Dreke's message underscores the changes taking place among working people in the United States, including among workers who are Cuban-American. As working people here confront the increasing brutality of capitalism and the prospect of economic devastation and repeated imperialist wars, many are searching for answers and for a different road forward for humanity. Many who came to hear the revolutionary leader, particularly young people, were attracted to the powerful example of Cuba's socialist revolution, which shows it is possible to stand up to the imperialist rulers, overthrow their rule, and open the road to building a society based on human solidarity and not capitalist degradation. They were interested in the perspective that it is not only necessary but possible to do so right here in the United States.

Miners lead fight for safety

Miners in Pennsylvania who were trapped underground for three days in the flooded Quecreek mine this summer have won the respect and support of other working people by their refusal to allow the coal bosses and the government to sweep the disaster under the rug. By speaking up in public to describe the evidence of dangerous conditions in the area—warning signs that were brushed aside by the company—they have helped to expose the cover-up being put together. And they have done so in face of pressure to shut up and "get on with life."

Leaders of the United Mine Workers union have joined the miners' counsel in criticizing the "woefully inadequate" report on the incident released by the Department of Environmental Protection. The report aids and abets the company cover-up of its responsibility for the catastrophe.

The coal bosses, who reduce the problem to one of "bad maps," knew about the safety hazards. The area where the workers were mining had been closed down earlier because of flooding.

Accidents don't just happen. Corner-cutting on safety is typical of the bosses' approach even in times of capitalist growth. Today, slumping profit rates and cutthroat competition drive the employers to demand concessions that

put workers' lives in peril.

The coal bosses' disregard for the lives and limbs of working people is characteristic of other owners of capital. Union dockworkers on the West Coast have been locked in a contract battle that also includes the fight for safe working conditions and against dangerous speedup.

The same profit squeeze and intensifying competition drive the U.S. capitalist rulers and their imperialist rivals toward military aggression abroad. They push for greater control over the world's natural resources, from Middle East oil to African cocoa, using workers and farmers as cannon fodder.

Waving the banners of "national security" and "national unity" the bosses and their two parties call for workers to sacrifice their interests on behalf of the exploiters. But workers have nothing in common with the boss class, either on the job or in the field of foreign policy.

The fight against life-threatening or body-sapping work conditions begins with telling the truth. The efforts of the Quecreek miners who survived the flood to bring the facts to the light of day is the kind of approach that should be adopted by the entire labor movement, as part of its fight against the brutality of capitalism.

Oppose imperialist trade pacts

Printed below is an excerpt from *Cuba and the Coming American Revolution* by Jack Barnes. This piece presents a working-class response to the imperialist trade pacts such as the North American Free Trade Agreement and the Free Trade Area of the Americas. Copyright © 2001 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.

Labor must reach out for allies among working farmers, as well. We must join with farmers to demand a halt to all foreclosures. Instead of being driven more deeply into debt slavery, small farmers must have access to government-funded cheap credit. They must receive price-supports from Washington large enough to cover their full production costs and guarantee a decent and secure living for themselves and their families.

The working class and labor movement in the United States must demand that Washington and other imperialist government and financial institutions immediately cancel the foreign debt that has been imposed on the semicolonial countries. Total Third World debt today is over \$2 trillion, much higher than at the worst point of the debt crisis of the 1980s.

As international finance capital has squeezed more and more wealth from the toilers of Asia, Africa, and Latin America to bolster their sagging profit rates, one hundred countries—a quarter of the world's population—have experienced a decline in per capita income over the past fifteen years; in sub-Saharan Africa per capita consumption is 20 percent lower than it was in 1980! More than 45

percent of the population of the earth survives on less than \$2 a day, and 20 percent on less than \$1 a day.

Workers and farmers in the United States should demand that Washington lift all tariffs and other obstacles to trade and travel erected by the U.S. rulers. This includes the elimination of all "anti-dumping," "fair labor," "environmental protection," and other trade weapons wielded with often devastating consequences by the U.S. government under the banner of "free trade." This must be labor's demand, not support for the protectionist policies of financial capital and ever more onerous trade restrictions aimed at semicolonial countries and imperialist rivals, as proposed today by union officials and the middle-class leaderships of various environmentalist and so-called antisweatshop organizations.

The elimination of all tariff and nontariff barriers erected by the U.S. government has nothing in common with the rulers' demagoguery about guaranteeing a "level playing field for all"—exploiters and exploited alike. Instead, by demanding cancellation of the Third World debt and opposing all measures used by the propertied classes to magnify the unequal terms of trade intrinsic to the world capitalist market, working people in the United States can strengthen our unity with the toilers of these countries in the international battle against our common enemy, the imperialist ruling families who exploit us all to maintain their wealth and power. We can deepen the effort to transform our unions into revolutionary organizations of the working class that will inscribe these internationalist demands on our battle flag.

N.Y. meeting

Continued from page 7

opened its gold exchange to the public.

As working people go through the impact of the imperialist wars and the deepening world depression, resistance will grow, said Barnes. The hundreds of millions around the world who join that resistance—like the Palestinians who refuse to submit to the Israeli occupation and military-police assaults—make up what will be the proletarian army that, through class combat and political experiences, will develop the ability, leadership, and organization to overthrow the rule of the capitalists.

Integrated into resistance

It is impossible to predict and be fully ready for the social explosions and class rebellions that will be generated by capitalist exploitation and brutality, Barnes said. But communists must make full use of the time beforehand to strengthen their Marxist political homogeneity, discipline, and proletarian habits, and simultaneously build the communist movement through integrating it in the proletarian vanguard already being formed in the struggles of today.

The experience at the Dakota Premium meatpacking plant in the St. Paul, Minnesota, area shows the openings that exist right now, he said. Communist workers there have been part of a broader vanguard of workers that has helped lead a successful fight for union recognition and, just recently, a first union contract (see article on page 8). Through this course, two unionists who are communists, along with three other workers, have been elected shop stewards by their co-workers.

"I celebrate the contract as much as I celebrated the victory 15 months ago in the union recognition vote," Barnes said. Now workers will be able to judge the truth of the statement by Farrell Dobbs—an organizer in the Teamster battles of the Midwest in the 1930s and leader of the party that became the Socialist Workers Party—"that a contract is what the workers make of it," he said.

The union victories at Dakota Premium, said Barnes, are related to the political space that communists have to present their ideas and sell revolutionary books to fellow workers and farmers. These books are weapons that allow them to stand on the shoulders of those whose struggles make their victory possible. Having access to the political continuity crystallized in such books is "a question of life and death" for the building of a revolutionary working-class movement that can win, said Barnes.

"What we do to build and strengthen the communist movement here and now as a part of the working-class vanguard that is attracting revolutionary-minded youth is decisive," he said.

New, expanded edition

Malcolm X Talks to Young People

"All over the world, it is young people who are actually involving themselves in the struggle to eliminate oppression and exploitation. They are the ones who most quickly identify with the struggle and the necessity to eliminate the conditions that exist."

—Malcolm X, January 1965



This new, expanded edition includes four talks given to young people in Ghana, the United Kingdom, and the United States in 1964 and 1965; a 1965 interview with the *Young Socialist* magazine; and an enlarged display of photographs. It concludes with two memorial tributes by a young socialist leader to Malcolm X. The new English-language edition is being released with the Spanish-language edition, *Malcolm X habla a la juventud*. \$15.00 for each book.

Available from bookstores, including those listed on page 14; or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690; or visit www.pathfinderpress.com.

UK firefighters resist gov't threats

BY JONATHAN SILBERMAN

LONDON—In face of strikebreaking threats by the employers and the Labour Party government, more than 50,000 firefighters across the United Kingdom walked out for 48 hours November 13, as part of a rolling campaign of strikes in the weeks leading up to the Christmas holiday.

Three further strikes, each of an eight-day duration, are also planned to press the Fire Brigades Union's (FBU) claim for an hourly wage rate of £8.50, a 40 percent raise over what they currently receive for a 48-hour workweek (£1 = US\$1.55).

The British government has responded to the workers' fight by deploying 18,700 troops as strikebreakers—12,500 from the army, 3,000 from the navy and 3,200 from the air force. The more than 800 aging "Green Goddess" fire trucks available for use by the military have become a hated symbol of government intervention against the firefighters.

In Northern Ireland, 32 of these trucks have been painted yellow in an attempt to distinguish them from other motorized military equipment used by the occupying British army. This didn't deter youths in Derry, however, from throwing petrol bombs and stones at police and soldiers using these "yellow goddesses," reported the *Financial Times*.

The Labour Party government launched a major slander campaign against the firefighters and their union. Prime Minister Anthony Blair, who denounced the strike as "deeply irresponsible" and "putting lives in danger," condemned the striking firefighters as "wreckers." He claimed that he would never concede to their demands, insisting that "no government on earth" would do so.

"If we say yes to 40 percent for firefighters, how could we, or any government, say no to a 40 percent claim for teachers, or nurses?" stated Blair.

Spirited mass pickets

At the big Barking fire station in East London, the bulk of the 90 firefighters from all four shifts assembled in a spirited mass picket to mark the start of the strike action.

For weeks leading up to the walkout, Barking, like many other fire stations in the country, has been adorned with printed FBU banners and hand-painted signs urging support for the firefighters' pay claim. As the



Militant/Jim Spaul

Fire Brigade Union pickets during two-day strike of 50,000 firefighters across the United Kingdom. The November 13–14 walkout began a series of rolling strikes to press for pay raise.

hour for action approached, pickets, sporting T-shirts saying "I voted yes" for strike action, edged the two fire engines and a hose vehicle covered in Fire Brigade Union regalia out of the gates. A generator powered arc lights as night fell. When the walkout began, cascading fireworks were rocketed into the air while pickets cheered and blasted their noisy compressed air hooters.

Many passing cars, buses, and trucks on the busy A13 road out of London responded to picket signs asking them to hoot the horns as a show of support for the strikers.

A so-called independent review body set up by the government to examine the firefighters' pay rates and working conditions drew the ire of a number of pickets. Headed by George Bain, the committee has released its interim findings.

The report proposes an immediate 4 percent raise followed by a further 7 percent in 12 months' time, if workers accept major work-rule changes. These would include scheduling overtime on top of the current 48-hour workweek, and ending the current

single-tier entry wage level.

"The Bain report is an insult both as regards to the wage offer and the strings," stated Dave Pamah, 37, a strike leader at Acton fire station in west London in a telephone interview. "We had been led to believe that a substantial increase was in the offing but Bain's 11 percent over two years comes nowhere close. And the string will mean divisions between firefighters and cuts in jobs and service provisions. The feeling on the picket line is that unless the government breaks from Bain we'll be in for a long dispute."

The union has said that Bain's "modernization" proposals will take fire service provision "back to the 1950s."

"The Bain report hardened attitudes among firefighters," commented Garrett Brooks, an FBU member in north London. "We are to a man disgusted" said Jeff Statham, 53, an FBU member at the Dowgate fire station in the City of London. "This is a complete insult," added Alec Elwell, 30, also at Dowgate. "I don't want to be stuck in a poverty trap."

Government slanders

In a statement to the House of Commons, Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott blamed the FBU strike for "more deaths, more injuries and more distress." Prescott and other government officials have repeatedly warned the firefighters not to strike at a time of potential "terrorist" threats.

Speaking on BBC TV's "Question Time" program, the Home Office minister, Charles Falconer, praised the strikebreaking efforts by officials of the Retained Firefighters Union, which organizes some 4,000 part-timers. However, a number of the retained firefighters—workers in other industries who are paid a retainer to leave their jobs to fight fires on a part-time basis when called to do so—are members of the FBU, and more have joined during the current wage fight.

The government's antilabor campaign has been backed up by a media barrage of lies and slanders. "Fire Union Chiefs are Saddam's stooges" headlined the November 14 daily *Sun*, which described FBU general secretary Andy Gilchrist as the "Wrecker in chief." An editorial in the November 13 London *Times* charged the FBU with putting "lives at risk in order to defend cosy restrictive practices and an absurd 40 percent pay claim."

The capitalist media tried to blame the FBU for deaths caused by fires that occurred during the 48-hour strike. Despite their best efforts, however, the media could not link a single one of these deaths to the labor dispute.

It's Prime Minister Blair who "will have blood on his hands because he is putting the public at risk for a paltry pay increase for firefighters," stated FBU executive council member John McDonald at a 500-strong FBU rally in Edinburgh.

Gilchrist conducted a whistle stop tour of Scotland during the first strike day, addressing a spirited rally of 2,000 firefighters in Glasgow.

The tour highlighted the failure of the government's and employers' antistrike campaign to break the resolve of the firefighters. At the Tollcross fire station in Edinburgh, for example, workers on the picket line contrasted the government's opposition to a 40 percent increase for firefighters with its support for a 40 percent increase for Members of Parliament.

"The government's worried that nurses and other public sector workers will want the same as us," said one of the pickets who requested that his name not be used. "It shows that they're low paid too."

Unions support firefighters' fight

Thousands of union members and other workers have rallied in support of the firefighters. "People have visited the picket lines, bringing along food and drink for the pickets and making financial donations to our hardship fund," reported Dave Pamah.

The Rail Maritime and Transport Union (RMT) announced that it would support any members exercising their legal right to refuse to work because of safety problems arising out of lack of fire cover. Some 22 deep stations in the London Underground were closed during the FBU strike as a result of such actions taken by more than 130 drivers. The prime minister's office is urging the London Underground to take disciplinary action against employees who were absent during these days. In response, the RMT has decided to ballot for strike action to back up their demand that the employers guarantee they will not discipline workers for days missed during the strike.

The National Union of Fire Brigades in France has announced its full support for the FBU strike and confirmed that its members will not carry out work in the Channel Tunnel normally done by their UK counterparts during the strikes.

Meanwhile, airport staff, air traffic controllers, magistrates' court workers, teachers, lecturers, and Royal Mail staff are considering strike action over their own wage claims, and pay talks between unions representing 5,000 workers at the car company Peugeot broke down last week. Through August of this year, 882,000 days have been lost as a result of strike action compared with 525,000 for the whole of 2001.

New government threats

Worried over the impact of the firefighters' strike, the government has issued new threats against the FBU in advance of the eight-day strike set to begin November 22. Officials have announced that they are considering whether to invoke special emergency powers to ensure that "essential services" continue. Police and civilian drivers may be ordered to cross the FBU picket lines and seize the regular fire engines, a small number of which will be used, in addition to the "green goddesses," as a demonstrative part of the strikebreaking operation by the armed forces. Some troops are currently being trained on 15 such fire engines.

The government has also indicated that it is considering seeking an injunction to ban future strike action by the FBU.

The leadership of the Conservative Party has urged the Labour Party government to take a tougher stance as Blair considers whether to order troops to cross the picket lines. Some in the army top brass, however, have cautioned against using troops as strikebreakers at a time when the government is preparing tens of thousands of troops to be part of an invasion force against Iraq.

Arrests of airport workers in New Jersey target immigrants

BY ELYSE HATHAWAY

NEWARK, New Jersey—Federal officials arrested 11 Latino immigrants who work at Newark Liberty International Airport on claims that they falsified their employment records, including giving fake Social Security numbers. The workers, who were hired into low-paying jobs for cleaning companies or other contractors, were picked up November 14 at their homes or workplaces. Another 10 are expected to be arrested in the coming days bringing the total to 21.

The same day of the arrests a U.S. Magistrate judge released most of the workers on unsecured bonds noting that they have stable jobs and no criminal records.

Citing claims of searching for "ties to terrorist organizations," U.S. attorney for New Jersey Christopher Christie dubbed the detentions "an ounce of prevention," after admitting the "investigators" found nothing else to pin on the workers. He called on the federal Transportation Security Administration and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to mandate Social Security and immigration checks for workers with "security access."

The arrests come after federal cops from the FBI, Immigration and Naturalization

Service, U.S. Marshals, Transportation Department, and other agencies took part in snooping on the records of 18,000 workers at the Newark airport. Besides those arrested on accusations of falsifying their employment records, 15 others were arrested and turned over to local authorities when the "investigation" turned up outstanding civil or criminal warrants, including several "deadbeat dads."

Similar fishing operations have taken place in cities across the country with government authorities targeting "security risks and illegal aliens," the Newark *Star Ledger* reported. The previous week in Philadelphia federal authorities indicted 29 baggage handlers, maintenance workers, and ramp workers on charges of falsifying their employment applications. And in August federal officials arrested 81 airport workers in Los Angeles.

Last year U.S. president George Bush signed into law the Aviation and Transportation Act placing airport security under federal authority and requiring all workers who are baggage screeners to be U.S. citizens. The Transportation Security Administration, which took over airport security last February, was charged with implementing the citizenship regulations for baggage screeners by November of this year.