

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Seattle city council candidate  
wins disclosure exemption

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 67/NO. 35 OCTOBER 13, 2003

## Locked-out coal miners in Utah fight for union

Demand reinstatement of fired workers, safe conditions

BY BILL ESTRADA  
AND MARCO ANTONIO RIVERA

PRICE, Utah—"What time is it?" a coal miner yelled out in Spanish. "It's union time!" 50 of his co-workers and relatives shouted back.

The miners were participating in a September 25 march and rally in Salt Lake City that was part of the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride, a cross-country immigrant rights caravan backed by the union movement. They were representing the 75 coal miners, mostly Mexican-born, who are fighting a lockout by C. W. Mining Corp, which owns the Co-op mine in Huntington, Utah.

Along with hundreds of other demonstrators who had come from Oregon, Montana, Washington State, and California, the coal miners marched from the state capitol building to the federal building for a rally, and later attended a dinner and celebration at the Mexican Civic Center. The main demand of the actions is that the government facilitate legalizing the status of all immigrants in the United States.

During the march and rally, other unionists and supporters joined the miners shouting, "Arriba la unión! Arriba los mineros! Abajo los patronos! Luchamos para vencer;

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Militant/Marco Antonio Rivera

Workers from Co-op mine after September 26 meeting to organize their union fight

### Utah miners address UMW convention

BY BILL ESTRADA

LAS VEGAS, Nevada—A delegation of six coal miners and a representative of the women's auxiliary who are part of the fight to organize a union at the Co-op mine in Huntington, Utah, were honored

guests September 30 at the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) special convention held in this city. The entire delegation was welcomed by a standing ovation from the more than 400 union

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## Venezuela: fired oil bosses evicted from government-funded housing

Pro-imperialist opposition exploits move in its drive against Chávez

BY CARLOS CORNEJO  
AND ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

PUERTO ORDAZ, Venezuela—On the morning of September 25, some 300 National Guard troops entered a residential complex in Punto Fijo, Falcón state, to evict Haydée Irausquín. Irausquín is the former superintendent of planning and finances at the Paraguaná refinery of Petróleos de Venezuela (PdVSA), the state-owned oil company. She had repeatedly defied court orders to vacate her company-owned residence after the government, earlier this year, fired her along with other oil company managers and employees for their role in the Venezuelan bosses' "strike" late last year to destabilize the government of President Hugo Chávez.

The National Guard used force, including tear gas, to carry out the eviction in the Los Semerucos complex. Irausquín's supporters put up resistance, setting up

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Militant/Argiris Malapanis

Delegates at the First National Conference Toward Building the Workers Party, held September 27 in Puerto Ordaz in eastern Venezuela. Participants discussed working-class resistance to the U.S.-backed drive by capitalist opposition forces to destabilize and overthrow the government of Hugo Chávez.

### Fund appeal for digital camera: first contributions start rolling in

Reaps fruits in Venezuela reporting trip photos

BY PAUL PEDERSON

On September 10 the *Militant's* camera bag—containing our new Canon EOS 10 D digital camera and three lenses—was stolen at an event in New York covered by a *Militant* reporter. The total loss amounted to \$4,000.

To offset the cost of replacing this equipment, the *Militant* launched an appeal two weeks ago for contributions from its readers. In response to political developments, however, funds were borrowed in order to buy a replacement digital camera and lens

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### 'Militant' launches eight-week drive to sell 950 subscriptions

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

"I have to read that article on the miners in Utah," said a young man, pointing to the *Militant's* firsthand coverage of the struggle by workers there to organize into the United Mine Workers union.

His response was typical among the seven people who purchased subscriptions to the *Militant* or to the Spanish-language magazine *Perspectiva Mundial* at a September 28 demonstration in Los Angeles to protest the U.S.-led occupation of Iraq and Israeli assaults on the Palestinian people.

The day's effort was a good start in Los Angeles for the interna-

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## U.S. gov't jails three men stationed at Guantánamo prison camp

BY PAUL PEDERSON

The Pentagon has arrested three men—two soldiers and a civilian employee—stationed at Camp Delta, Washington's prison camp at the Guantánamo Bay Navy base on occupied Cuban soil.

U.S. officials have accused the two soldiers of "unauthorized contact" with the hundreds of men imprisoned there. Washington is seeking to link them to the Syrian government.

Senior Airman Ahmad Al-Halabi, 24, of Detroit, was arrested July 23 and sent to a prison at the Vandenberg Air Force base in California. He faces 32 criminal charges, the most serious of which—espionage and "aiding the enemy"—carry a possible death sentence.

Al-Halabi, a naturalized U.S. citizen born in Syria, had enlisted in the Air Force in 2000. He worked for nine months at the U.S. military prison in Guantánamo as an Arabic-language translator. He is accused by the Air Force of sending e-mail with information about some of the men imprisoned there "to unauthorized person or persons whom he...knew to be the enemy." The charges do

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## Socialist Workers candidate for governor of California says: 'Nationalize the energy industry!'

BY MARK GILSDORF  
AND SUSAN LAMONT

SAN FRANCISCO—"What do you mean by your demand to nationalize the energy industry?" was a question posed to Joel Britton, Socialist Workers candidate for California governor, at a September 24 meeting at California State University, Monterey Bay.

The socialist candidate's speaking engagement on the campus was part of a day of campaigning by a team of Young Socialists for Britton that included Ryan Scott, the Socialist Workers candidate for San Francisco District Attorney. A dozen youth came to hear Britton that afternoon,

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# Seattle city council candidate gains exemption from disclosure

BY CHRIS HOEPPNER

SEATTLE—U.S. District Judge Robert Lasnik has granted an exemption from disclosure of the names, addresses, and employers of campaign contributors to the Freedom Socialist Party candidate for Seattle city council, Linda Averill.

The August 28 ruling is a preliminary injunction overturning an earlier decision by the Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission (SEEC) requiring disclosure. The exemption ran through the primary election, which was held September 16. To date the City of Seattle has not appealed the decision. “Today’s ruling is a step forward for voters who would like to see a broader spectrum of political viewpoints expressed in City Council races,” said Averill in an August 29 statement. “By forcing me into federal court to uphold the constitutional right to privacy of my contributors, the SEEC hamstrung my campaign.”

Averill’s statement noted that “a 1982 federal Supreme court ruling in favor of the Socialist Workers Party provided the basis for much of the discussion in Judge Lasnik’s courtroom.”

In his ruling, Lasnik quoted from a 1974 decision by the Supreme Court granting the SWP exemption from disclosure. The 1974 decision read, “The constitution protects against the compelled disclosure of political associations and beliefs. Such disclosures can seriously infringe on privacy of association and belief guaranteed by the First Amendment. Inviolability of privacy in group association may in many circumstances be indispensable to preservation of freedom of association, particularly where a group espouses dissident beliefs.”

As evidence that the court should protect “privacy of association and belief,” Lasnik referred to a number of threatening e-mails and phone calls received by the Freedom Socialist Party and its members. The threats included, “Two in the chest, one in the head, pull the trigger and the commie is dead,” and “I can’t wait to kill you.” Judge Lasnick commented, “It is impossible to view [such] recent statements...as anything other than threatening.”

Lasnik added, “Defendants argue that Seattle in 2003 is a friendly, open-minded place, and that plaintiffs’ evidence of hostility toward socialism is stale and/or from outside our community. While one would hope society could tolerate dissident views with equanimity, defendants ignore the fact that all of the statements recounted above were made in the last four years (with three of them made in the past eight months) and all were received by Freedom Socialist Party supporters here in Seattle.” Lasnik noted that if contributors’ names were disclosed, they would also be accessible to hostile individuals and groups beyond Seattle and Washington State. If the SEEC requirement stood, he said, the city authorities “intend to publish the names and, if

the amount contributed exceeds \$100, employers of plaintiffs’ supporters on the world wide web.”

### Major daily opposes ruling

The *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, one of the city’s two major dailies, editorialized against Lasnik’s ruling in its September 2 issue. “The voter’s right to know who is funding political candidates’ campaigns must outweigh any right to secrecy their contributors might claim,” it stated. “That is the principle we trust will prevail.” The paper said that Averill’s “fear of harassment and retaliation” was “melodramatic.”

David Ferguson, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for Seattle city council, celebrated the decision. The case “is an important victory for workers’ rights.” Ferguson added that supporters of political rights need to keep up the fight against the SEEC’s denial of disclosure exemption to candidates running on the FSP, SWP, or other tickets independent of the main capitalist parties.

Since 1979 the Federal Election Commission has granted exemptions to SWP campaign committees, most recently in April. That decision covered the party’s



Linda Averill, Freedom Socialist Party candidate for Seattle city council.

presidential campaigns through the end of 2008. At the state level, the Public Disclosure Commission in Washington State granted an exemption for the SWP campaign in 1999, the last time the party requested an exemption. Two years before that the SEEC had ruled against the SWP, saying that it must disclose the names of contributors to its campaign for mayor of Seattle. After a public fight to reverse the SEEC decision, an agreement was reached in which the campaign was not required to disclose the names and addresses of campaign contributors.

# Machinists at Hexcel end contract strike

BY JOHN NAUBERT

KENT, Washington—By a vote of 172-34, members of International Association of Machinists (IAM) Local 1103 rejected Hexcel’s second contract proposal August 21 and went on strike.

“They don’t respect us,” said picket captain Ron Holmquist, who has worked at Hexcel for 25 years, much of it in the auto-clave department. “They threw the contract on the table and said, ‘vote for it.’”

At the time of the *Militant’s* publication,

the Machinists had returned to work. Details of the settlement were not available.

IAM Local 1103 members had been working without a contract since the last agreement expired May 31.

The local threw up picket lines at all the entrances to the plant, as well as a nearby motel where the company is recruiting scabs. Some members crossed the picket lines.

Hexcel Structures is an aerospace composites company, supplying parts to Boeing and other firms. The strike took place in the context of layoffs of more than 30,000 Boeing workers in the last few years, and of many other workers at Boeing suppliers.

Strikers reported the company’s proposed economic package included a \$750 bonus the first year, a 2 percent increase the second year, and a 2 percent bonus the third year. Health care was a major sticking point for the workers—the company is demanding takebacks in medical and dental benefits.

Other attacks on the union include a provision to recall laid-off workers at lower pay and to have recall rights lowered from five years to one. A few years ago the work force was 1,100.

“If we were to buy this contract, it would severely weaken the union,” said Holmquist.

# Vietnam ships 3,000 computers to Cuba

BY RÓGER CALERO

In September Cuba will receive the first 3,000 personal computers of a total of 10,000 scheduled to be delivered by Vietnam’s state-owned Hanoi Electronics Co. by the end of this year. Company representative Hoang Thi Hoan told the Cuban daily *Granma* in late August that “it is an honor to fill the order of the

sister Caribbean nation.” Hanel, as the manufacturer is usually known, is one of Vietnam’s largest electronics makers. The Vietnamese company and Cuban government signed a contract for the shipment in February. Hanel also agreed to help Cuban workers construct a production line to assemble television sets for domestic use as well as export. The agreement includes increased collaboration in electronics

and information technology with Cuban enterprises.

The shipment will help the Cuban government to implement recently announced programs. Last August Fernando Vecino of Cuba’s Ministry of Higher Education announced a three-year plan to train 1,200 computer science teachers, as part of the efforts to extend university-level computer education to all of the country’s provinces. These efforts are especially important, he explained, because the ministry is encouraging the greater use of computers in order to make all courses available on the internet, and to take advantage of virtual labs.

These efforts are part of a political offensive being waged in Cuba today to expand access to culture and education. The government has set out to provide a television, video recorder, and computer in every school, including those in the most remote areas; a national network of computer centers for local young people and video clubs; and a national TV program, known as the University for All, offering courses for people of all ages in subjects from English and French to world geography and art.

THE

MILITANT

## Support struggles for Maori rights

Over the last four decades, Maori in New Zealand have said ‘enough!’ to the capitalists’ denial of their national rights. The ‘Militant’ covers this fight and reports struggles by other oppressed nationalities, including the Aborigines in Australia and Blacks and Native Americans in the U.S. Don’t miss a single issue!



Militant/Felicity Coggan  
July 2002: Maori in Kaikohe protest against construction of prison on traditional lands.

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# Venezuelan gov't evicts fired oil bosses

Continued from front page

barricades with burning tires and throwing stones at the troops. Six people were injured and 21 were arrested in the melee. Another former PdVSA employee, Oneida Pérez, was also evicted that day but left without resistance.

The pro-imperialist opposition here, which was behind Irausquín's actions, tried to use the incident, publicized with sensationalist headlines in the big-business press, to paint itself as a defender of workers' rights and to demand that Irausquín and other former PdVSA bosses and employees be allowed to stay in the houses where they lived.

Rallies of several hundred people took place around the country over the following days to press this demand. They coincided with antigovernment protests against new regulations issued by the country's National Elections Council September 25 that make it harder to organize a referendum to recall the president.

The anti-Chavez opposition coalition Coordinadora Democrática (Democratic Coordination), led by the bosses' organization Fedecámaras, had submitted a petition with more than 3 million signatures demanding such a referendum. The elections board rejected the petitions on September 12 on the grounds that the signatures had been gathered before the midpoint of Chávez's term, an electoral law violation. The rejection struck another blow against the two-year-long drive of Venezuela's capitalist class, with Washington's back-

oil industry to a near standstill, with production dropping to 250,000 barrels per day (bpd) at its high point from the previous 3.2 million bpd per day. The majority of PdVSA's production workers and other working people mobilized to keep the pumps running, break into the computer codes of the automated refineries that management locked down, repair damage from other sabotage, and get production going. It took until this summer to bring oil output up to last November's levels.

Los Semerucos is a residential complex owned by PdVSA. Like many others around the country, housing at the complex is reserved for company employees, with the best units going to the bosses. During the employers' lockout, the government fired 18,000 of PdVSA's 30,000 employees for taking part in the "strike" and refusing government orders to return to their jobs. More than 10,000 of those dismissed were managerial and administrative personnel, with monthly salaries of up to \$12,000. Wages of production workers are \$750 per month on average. Several thousand technicians and better-paid workers were also fired for taking part in the lockout.

Courts subsequently issued dismissed employees notices of eviction from company-owned housing. PdVSA employees pay a nominal rent for these accommodations and utilities are free. While many of the evictions have been carried out peacefully, a number of former PdVSA bosses have refused to leave. They have "organized armed thugs to guard what they consider

their property," said Yhonny García, in an interview here September 28. García is a member of the oil workers union, Fedepetrol, in Maracaibo, the country's second-largest city and capital of Zulia, the top state in oil extraction.

"These are the same people who were completely behind the Democratic Action government when it sent the army to crush the workers' rebellion in 1989," said García. "They have no right to stay in Los Semerucos or any of the other PdVSA housing. The

workers who replaced them need it."

García was referring to the "Caracazo," a rebellion by working people that exploded in Venezuela's capital and other cities against a steep rise in fuel prices, skyrocketing unemployment, and rapidly deteriorating living and working conditions. As tens of thousands of working people broke into supermarkets to get food and began marching toward rich neighborhoods, the social democratic government of Carlos Andrés Pérez sent the army against the workers with orders of shoot to kill. More than 3,000 were killed in Caracas alone.

García said he believed that mobilizing

## Unionists hold conference to found Workers Party of Venezuela



Militant/Argiris Malapanis

Mildre Daza (right), a miner at the Crystallex mine in the state of Bolívar, Venezuela, speaks at the First National Conference toward Building the Workers Party of Venezuela held September 27 in Puerto Ordaz. Daza described the strike the iron ore miners launched June 2 for better wages and against unsafe working conditions. Next week's *Militant* coverage will include a firsthand report on the conference, which some 200 delegates attended.

working people to demand these evictions would have been more effective politically, and would have dampened the effect of the small opposition rallies. In contrast to the well-heeled former oil company managers, millions of people in Falcón and other states have nowhere to live but in shacks, he said. "Short of that, there was little that could be done to avoid violence at Los Semerucos, given what the opposition was planning there for months."

"Their cries of 'I'm losing my home' are sheer hypocrisy," said Jesús Fajardo, referring to the former PdVSA bosses' claims around the September 25 evictions in Falcón. "These people have many houses, many mansions. They were never concerned before when any worker got

evicted from their apartment, the only roof under our head, or had their electricity cut off. I'm glad they are out of there."

*El Nacional*, *Universal*, and other big-business dailies shrilly denounced the National Guard actions at Los Semerucos. *El Universal* compared the incident to "the war in Bosnia and the annihilation of the Jewish ghetto in Warsaw." At the urging of the pro-imperialist opposition, the Organization of American States gave the Venezuelan government 15 days to present a report on the conditions of these former PdVSA employees.

Prior to the bosses' lockout, which ended February 4, a third of the top generals of Venezuela's armed forces had staged a

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Militant/Carlos Cornejo

*Militant* reporter Argiris Malapanis (left) interviews Jesús Fajardo (center) and Alexis Aray, members of the steelworkers union SUTISS, during September 29 visit to giant SIDOR steel plant in Puerto Ordaz, in eastern Venezuela.

ing, to topple Chávez's government. The opposition protests at the end of September were a rearguard action to shore up this faltering campaign, which earlier was dealt blows by the failure of the April 2002 coup attempt and the bosses' lockout at the beginning of this year.

### Helped lead employer 'strike'

One of the top managers of the state-owned oil company, Irausquín was among the PdVSA bosses who spearheaded the two-month employer lockout last December and January in a failed attempt to topple Chávez. The bosses' "strike" brought the

## Fund appeal for digital camera

Continued from front page

right away. As readers can see from this week's coverage, a two-person reporting team of *Militant* editor Argiris Malapanis and Carlos Cornejo from Vancouver, Canada, is now on the scene in Venezuela. Some of the first photographs taken with this equipment—which allows digital pictures to be downloaded directly from the camera and sent quickly by e-mail—appear in this issue.

Contributions to help pay for this photographic equipment are needed now. *Militant* readers in the Boston area have already responded with \$400 in pledges and contributions, and other donations have begun to arrive at the *Militant* offices.

In fielding the reporting team to Venezuela, the *Militant* responded to an invitation to cover the founding conference of the Workers Party of Venezuela, which took

place September 27 in the eastern city of Puerto Ordaz, a center of steel production. Coverage on that event will appear in the next *Militant*.

During their one-week reporting trip, Malapanis and Cornejo will be traveling to a number of cities to meet fishermen, peasants fighting for land, and workers involved in recent factory occupations, as well as to learn about the work of Cuban internationalist volunteers collaborating with Venezuelans on the mass literacy drive known as Mission Robinson and the Plan Barrio Adentro, a project involving volunteer Cuban doctors who serve in some of the poorest working-class neighborhoods.

Funds are still needed. Please send your contribution (earmarked for the Photo Equipment Fund) to the *Militant* at 152 W. 36th St. #401, New York, N.Y. 10018.

## CALENDAR

### NEW YORK

#### Queens Mass rally for the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride at Flushing Meadows-Corona Park, October 4, 10:00 a.m.

Information from [www.iwfr.org](http://www.iwfr.org). Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride sponsors include AFL-CIO, National Council of La Raza, UNITE, United Food and Commercial Workers.

#### Open House After the Rally: Meet the Socialist Workers Candidates for N.Y. City Council

At Food Forum Restaurant, upstairs. 36-58 Main Street, Queens. Directions from rally: Take #7 train east (away from Manhattan) and go one stop (end of the line) to the Flushing-Main Street exit. Walk north on Main Street 3 short blocks. Sponsored by the N.Y. Socialist Workers Campaign.

### WASHINGTON, D.C.

**Reality of the World Capitalist Crisis Today.** Help meet the \$80,000 Socialist Workers Party-Building Fund. Speaker: James Harris, member of SWP National Committee. Sat., Oct. 11. Dinner 6:30 p.m., program 7:30 p.m. Donation \$5 each for dinner and program. 3717 George Ave., NW. Tel: (202) 387-1590.

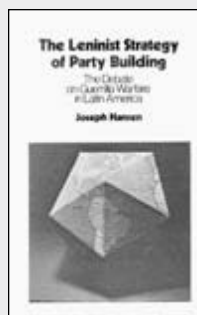
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### FLORIDA

#### Tampa

**The Palestinian Struggle and the Real Road Map to Peace in the Middle East.** Militant Labor Forum—panel discussion. Speakers: Nahla Al-Arian, teacher; Dwight Lawson, Tampa Bay Coalition for Justice and Peace; John Benson, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Oct. 10, 7:30 p.m. Donation: \$5 dinner. 1441 E. Fletcher Ave., Suite 421, Tampa. Tel. (813) 910-8507.

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# Unionists, youth seek out Calero in Sweden, Iceland

BY BJÖRN TIRSÉN

STOCKHOLM, Sweden—On his September 11–12 visit here Róger Calero talked with meat packers and high school students about his recent victory against the U.S. immigration authorities’ attempt to deport him. He was also the featured speaker at a public meeting organized as part of his “Sí Se Puede/Fight to Win” international tour. Calero arrived in Stockholm, the capital of Sweden, from a visit to Gothenburg in the south of the country.

A number of workers and youth in Sweden had signed letters of protest on hearing of Calero’s jailing on Dec. 3, 2002. The *Militant* staff writer and *Perspectiva Mundial* editor was seized by immigration agents at Houston Intercontinental Airport as the first step in deporting him to his native Nicaragua. The U.S. government dropped the case in May after a public campaign won widespread backing for his fight (see accompanying article from *El Español* for details of the case).

At the Samfood meatpacking plant Calero met some of the 30 workers who had signed a petition in support of his struggle. Lars Bykvist, the president of the Foodworkers Union local in the plant, escorted him into the cafeteria.

A worker from Chile described a spate of recent restaurant raids in which the Stockholm police targeted immigrant workers for arrest and deportation. A meat packer from Turkey, who is shop steward for the union in the plant, discussed the question of speedup and job safety. “When a worker gets injured, the bosses have to pay. It’s their responsibility,” he said.

A Kurdish worker said that he had been working at Samfood for a year in consecutive temporary hirings. “This way they can take our job from us whenever it suits them,” he said.

Calero talked to two women from Bosnia sitting at a table. Others gathered around as he explained the organizing drive at Dakota Premium Foods, the Minnesota meatpacking plant where he had worked.

Safa Al Aboudi described his struggle for citizenship. In spite of law permitting foreign-born legal residents to become citizens after five years, after seven years in Sweden Al Aboudi has still not been granted his citizenship. Authorities have refused to accept his Iraqi ID card as valid identification.

A reporter from the Foodworkers union paper took pictures and gathered material for an article during the visit, after interviewing Calero earlier.

The day before Calero had visited a high school in Huddinge, in the south of the city. He and supporters handed out leaflets promoting that evening’s public meeting. One signed up for a *Perspectiva Mundial* subscription.

Supporters of the defense campaign organized the public meeting, at which Calero discussed the lessons of his fight. Anita Östling from the Communist League, the sister organization of Calero’s party, the Socialist Workers Party, also spoke.



BY ÖGMUNDUR JÓNSSON

REYKJAVÍK, Iceland—“It’s wonder-



Mål & Medel/Malin Brulin

**Róger Calero talks to workers at Samfood meatpacking plant in Stockholm September 12. Thirty union members had signed petition supporting his defense campaign.**

ful to know that those little steps, like me signing for my family, can make such a big difference,” said Katrín Sigurdardóttir to Róger Calero September 14. Sigurdardóttir and Helga Valdimarsdóttir met with Calero in the town of Keflavik September 14. Sigurdardóttir had signed the petition for the anti-deportation fight in February after meeting Lawrence Mikesch, a supporter of Calero’s fight from Miami.

For the past year the women have helped organize protests against cuts in services in Keflavik’s public health clinic. “It is a basic right to have health care in our own community,” Valdimarsdóttir said.

The day before Calero spoke to more than 20 people at a public meeting in Reykjavík. Among them was Högni Eyjólfsson. A month earlier he and his companion, who is from Sierra Leone, had been kept in jail overnight after their apartment had been searched for several hours. The cops said they were investigating claims that the couple might be assisting illegal immigration to Iceland. Robert Marshall, president of the Union of Icelandic Journalists, also

attended the meeting.

Ólöf Andra Proppé spoke on behalf of the Communist League in Iceland, which was instrumental in winning support for Calero. She described attacks on immigrants by the Icelandic government, including the deportation to Greece of an Albanian woman and her children, in spite of the woman’s ill-health and the fact that her husband was nowhere to be found. This was done under the Schengen Agreement—a European border-control pact signed by 15 governments. The agreement states that if an applicant for refugee status has a work permit in another country that is part of the agreement, they must be sent to that country.

Proppé described a fight for union wages by workers on a dam construction site at Kárahnjúkar in eastern Iceland. Site workers, both Icelandic and foreign-born, held a meeting with union representatives, where they made clear that they want the union to renegotiate their contracts.

On September 15, the last day of Calero’s international tour, he met with two of these workers to discuss their fight. He also visited workers in the Grandi fish processing plant, spoke at a class in MK High School, and met with officials of the Efling trade union.

Efling organizes unskilled workers in Reykjavík, including food workers, and has a membership of around 20,000, some 2,000 of whom are immigrants. Calero met with union president Sigurdur Bessason and Thráinn Hallgrímsson, the editor of the union’s paper, which gave substantial coverage to his defense effort. Bessason noted that the fight that’s developing at Kárahnjúkar will be a test of what the bosses can get away with elsewhere in Iceland.

At MK High School, Calero spoke to several combined classes in history, a group of 70 students. One student asked: “Do I understand you correctly, that you are for socialism and against capitalism?”

“That is correct,” replied Calero, as his final remark on his international “Fight to Win” tour.

## New Zealand gov’t uses ‘secret evidence’ to seek deportation of Algerian refugee

BY RÓGER CALERO

Immigration authorities continue to hold Ahmed Zaoui, an Algerian man seeking asylum in New Zealand, using “secret evidence” despite a decision by a court to grant him refugee status.

The government has held Zaoui in solitary confinement at the maximum security prison at Paremoreno under “terrorism” charges since his arrival on December 4 of last year. He is now facing deportation pending the decision of Immigration Minister Lianne Dalziel, who under the law has powers to order the deportation of someone deemed a “national security threat.”

Zaoui was elected to Algeria’s parliament in 1991 as a member of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) before the Algerian military staged a coup and outlawed the FIS. New Zealand officials seek to tie him to the Islamic Armed Group (GIA), an organization that split from the armed wing of the FIS, and to brand him a “terrorist.”

The Security Intelligence Service (SIS), the secret police, issued a “Security Risk Certificate” against Zaoui last March based on alleged evidence linking Zaoui to “terrorism,” which he and his attorneys have not been allowed to see. This was the first use of the Certificate, which allows detention and deportation of immigrants based on secret evidence, since it was approved as part of measures adopted by Parliament in 1999 that strengthen the powers of the immigration police.

On August 4 a board of the Refugee Status Appeals Authority (RSAA), after a review of 5,000 pages of released materials, cleared Zaoui of the accusations and granted him status to stay in the country. Dalziel has defended the continued detention, however, claiming the appeals authority was not given “classified” information. In the meantime she has asked a retired judge to review these materials before deciding whether to rely on them alone to order Zaoui’s deportation.

Meanwhile, widespread media publicity has put a spotlight on the government’s violations of Zaoui’s rights.

The RSAA ruling granting him refugee

status says that on his arrival at the airport last December, Zaoui was asked by a customs official whether he belonged to the GIA. The official claimed he heard Zaoui answer “yes,” but Zaoui says he replied “efeeeyes”—FIS, the acronym for his political party.

In July immigration officials admitted the existence of an internal memorandum, written just days after Zaoui was arrested, stating that “everyone had agreed to lie in unison” about his detention.

Defenders of Zaoui have organized public vigils in Auckland demanding his release. A large billboard went up at a visible spot

in Wellington August 6 that said in large letters: “AHMED ZAOUÍ IS A THREAT. Yeah right.”

In an attempt to win some legitimacy for the Security Certificates, former prime minister David Lange said August 5 that he had gained appreciation for the secrecy of the intelligence system during his term. “Classified information could be the most ghastly, deficient hearsay, utterly prejudicial...but that is where you have the overlay of the judgment of the director general [of security] and the input of the [immigration] minister so there are checks and balances along the way,” he intoned.

## ‘El Español’ covers Calero’s Sydney visit

**The following are excerpts of an article that appeared in the September 16 issue of *El Español en Australia*, a Spanish-language weekly in Sydney, Australia. The article was headlined, “In the movie of life sometimes the good guys win.” The translation is by the *Militant*.**

BY ALEJO RIVAS

Róger Calero was arrested in Houston in December 2002, and released 11 days later, even though the deportation process continued. But in a rare event, the fascist immigration apparatus found itself overwhelmed by the pressure of the common people.

Calero was born in Nicaragua. He was 15 years old when his family immigrated to the United States (1985). In 1990 he was granted permanent resident status, which was renewed in 2000.

On December 3, 2002, Róger was detained by immigration agents at his arrival at the Houston airport upon returning from a work-related trip in Guadalajara and Cuba.... They explained to him that under the new immigration law they could deport individuals who had a criminal record, including by applying the law retroactively.

He had been arrested in his high school years for supplying marijuana to an under-

cover cop. By recommendation of the public defender he declared himself guilty, and he was given a brief suspended sentence.

When he was granted his permanent residency Calero was questioned about his record, and he explained that the conviction had been waived in order to allow him to obtain his residency card.

According to the 1996 Immigration Law, having a criminal record is grounds for deportation, even if the person has already completed his sentence. Among other atrocities, this law also allows for indefinite detentions, and gives powers to local police departments to get involved....

Róger remained in jail for 11 days, until due to the pressure of several social organizations...he was released from prison. After his release, contrary to what his jailers could imagine, Calero and the organizations that supported him stepped up their activities in denouncing [the attack] and demanding justice... and organized a tour in 23 cities in the United States. In that tour the journalist presented his case in front of different audiences and the general public.

The tour accomplished its objective; the support to Calero’s cause was overwhelming. Calero himself lent his support to others in similar situations.

Calero recently carried out a tour in Canada, New Zealand, Australia, England, and other countries. In his stop in Sydney we had the opportunity to meet him.

*Q: What is the real objective of the immigration restrictions in countries that benefit from immigration?*

By maintaining an important sector of the population in an illegal status, the capitalists count on having a source of cheap labor without rights to social benefits. It’s like counting on having an underdeveloped country within the borders of a rich country. Undocumented workers are also used as cannon fodder for wars.

*Q: To what do you attribute the success of your campaign?*

Undoubtedly to the support of social organizations and working people in general. The politicians sooner or later need the people, and that is why when we mobilize around an issue we can make unexpected gains.

The experience by Calero is an example of hope. It shows that in this world of western gunmen (and of the south) who daily step on the rights of others, there is a lot that we who don’t have armies, nor buy governments, nor plant bombs, can still do.

# Subscription drive

**Continued from front page**  
tional subscription drive for the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*.

For the next eight weeks, until November 23, supporters of socialist press will be campaigning to win hundreds of subscribers among workers, young people, farmers, and others.

The international goal of the drive is to gain 950 *Militant* and 400 *Perspectiva Mundial* subscriptions. As an incentive for subscribers to buy and read Pathfinder books, they will receive a 25 percent discount on any one Pathfinder title when they take out or renew their subscription. All the titles they buy at that time will count toward the 500 international book goal. In this way, the drive will reinforce the communist movement’s campaign to increase Pathfinder sales by 10 percent by the end of the year.

In California the subscription drive gives a boost to the Socialist Workers campaign. A worker at the Farmer John meat packing plant in Los Angeles hosted a meeting in his home for Joel Britton, the Socialist Workers candidate for governor of California. Twenty people, including four other workers at that plant, attended the meeting. A warehouse worker at the meeting decided to sign up for a subscription to the *Militant*.

At a peace demonstration in San Francisco, protesters expressed a wide range of views about the October 7 recall election. Many supported Democratic Gov. Gray Davis and opposed his recall. Some, however, wanted to find out more about the Socialist Workers platform, including its perspective of working-class political action independent of the two bosses’ parties, the Demo-

crats and the Republicans. One bought a subscription to the *Militant* to follow the socialist campaign.

Sendoff rallies for Immigrant Workers Freedom Riders in numerous cities, from Los Angeles to Chicago, proved fruitful places for *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* supporters to build momentum going into the start of the September 27–November 23 subscription drive.

Reporting from Chicago, Maurice Williams said that at a Freedom Ride event they sold two subscriptions to the *Militant* and one to *Perspectiva Mundial*, along with a copy of *Capitalism’s World Disorder* and a number of other revolutionary books and pamphlets.

Reporting from the September 14 New York is Book Country bookfair, Naomi Craine said sales of Pathfinder titles at the official Pathfinder booth and a Socialist Workers election campaign table a block away totaled \$1,300. Thirteen issues of *New International*, in both English and Spanish, were part of the tally, along with eight copies of *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning* by Jack Barnes.

Nine people, many of whom checked out

the fair while taking part in the Mexican Independence Day celebration, bought subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial*. Nearly all the new subscribers bought a book too, Craine said.

Luis Madrid, the Socialist Workers candidate for City Council in the 10th District, which is centered in the Manhattan neigh

borhood of Washington Heights, led the team at the campaign table. Members of Madrid’s entourage took turns soapboxing, Craine said, drawing small crowds around the table. The dozen or so Socialist Workers candidates around the country will have many such opportunities in the eight weeks of the subscription drive.



Militant/Hugh Robertson

**Participants in union-backed September 6 rally demanding closure of Dungavel Detention Centre in Scotland, in which asylum seekers are held before being deported, crowd around literature table displaying the *Militant* and Pathfinder books.**

Militant/Perspectiva Mundial Fall Subscription Drive September 27–November 23			
Country	Militant Goal	PM Goal	Book Goal
AUSTRALIA	30	5	15
CANADA			
Montreal	12	6	15
Toronto	25	5	15
Vancouver	30	5	15
CANADA total	67	16	45
ICELAND	15	1	10
NEW ZEALAND			
Auckland	15	1	5
Christchurch	12	1	6
N.Z. total	27	2	11
SWEDEN			
Göthenburg	10	2	5
Stockholm	8	3	5
SWEDEN Total	18	5	10
UNITED KINGDOM			
Cent. Scotland	8		4
London	25	5	10
UK total	33	5	14
UNITED STATES			
Atlanta	40	17	25
Birmingham	18	3	5
Boston	35	25	25
Chicago	40	25	25
Cleveland	15	5	10
Des Moines	25	12	15
Detroit	25	8	15
Houston	25	10	20
Los Angeles	60	30	35
Miami	42	12	18
NE Pennsylvania	20	8	10
New York	75	35	40
Newark	55	20	25
Omaha	18	38	15
Philadelphia	30	7	7
Pittsburgh	25	2	12
San Francisco	50	20	40
Seattle	25	6	10
Tampa	20	8	10
Tucson	7	2	
Twin Cities	45	35	15
Utah	10	10	8
Washington	25	12	12
Western Colorado	15	10	
U.S. total	745	360	397
Int'l totals	935	394	502
Goal/Should be	950	400	500
IN THE UNIONS			
	Militant Goal	PM Goal	Book Goal
UNITED STATES			
UFCW	50	75	30
UMWA	13	3	6
UNITE	25	22	12
Total	88	100	48
AUSTRALIA			
AMIEU	4		1
NEW ZEALAND			
NDU	2		1

AMIEU—Australasian Meat Industry Employees’ Union; NDU—National Distribution Union; UFCW—United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA—United Mine Workers of America

## Fund campaigners close in on \$80,000 goal

BY ANGEL LARISCY

More than \$12,000 was contributed this past week toward the Socialist Workers Party-Building Fund, helping to continue closing the gap in the final weeks of the \$80,000 effort. Supporters of the fund effort have until October 15 to meet the goals. In two areas, the Twin Cities and Atlanta, fund supporters have decided to raise their goals, and in other cities pledges now surpass the local goals.

As the reports below indicate, public meetings organized for leaders of the Socialist Workers Party to address major questions of world politics facing working people and to discuss the opportunities to build the revolutionary workers movement continue to attract workers and youth interested in the socialist perspective.

Contributions to the fund should be sent to SWP, 152 W. 36th Street, Room 401, New York, NY 10018. Checks should be made payable to SWP. For funds to be included in the weekly chart they need to arrive by Saturday.



BY JASON ALESSIO

CRAIG, Colorado—On September 20 a Party-Building Fund meeting was held at the Pathfinder Bookstore here entitled “A Sea Change in Working-Class Politics and the Cuban Revolution.” The evening’s speaker was Joel Britton, the Socialist Workers candidate for governor of California and a leader of the Socialist Workers Party’s work in the labor movement.

People came from southwestern Colorado, Denver, New Mexico and Utah to attend. One person from Carbondale, Colorado, reconnected with distributors of *Perspectiva Mundial* through a recent campaign to get readers to renew their subscriptions to the socialist press. He arrived early to browse through the bookstore and decided to purchase \$70 worth of literature and renewed his subscription for 2 years.

In the discussion one person asked the Socialist Workers candidate, “If there are 135 candidates why don’t you unite with other parties on the left?” Britton replied, “There are no other parties or candidates that are for organizing the working class to defend its interests along a course that leads to taking political power and expropriating the capitalist rulers. They are for reforms of the existing capitalist system. We are for revolutionary change. Our movement’s history is made up of a number of fusions with other revolutionary groups and parties and this will be true again in the future as the class struggle unfolds, but none of the candidates today agree with a revolutionary program.”

A local coal miner, with nearly 30 years in the mines, came with his wife after becoming interested in the event through daily political discussions with a socialist coworker. He said that in the 30 years of living here he has never run into socialists and wanted to hear more about socialist politics. He is involved in an effort to organize the union at the mine where he works.

Larry Hales, a 26-year-old student and assistant teacher, came from Denver to the event. He said, “From what I know about Britton, he is the only candidate that speaks in the interest of working people. He is the only one that goes into the streets to discuss politics.”

The event raised \$670 toward the \$2700 local goal.



BY ERNIE MAILHOT

CHICAGO—Among those attending the Socialist Workers

Party-Building Fund event in Chicago were participants in the recent Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange, union activists, immigrant rights fighters, and a young woman from the neighborhood where the Pathfinder Bookstore is located. A unionist who had just been released from several weeks of detention and is fighting government deportation attempts attended with his wife.

The Chicago fund meeting featured a talk by Joe Swanson, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party in Des Moines, Iowa. Swanson began by saying that the Socialist Workers Party celebrates the many anniversaries that mark advances for working people, including the upcoming 45th anniversary of the victory of the Cuban revolution and the 55th anniversary of the founding of the Korean workers state. He explained that while the unions today are not growing in numbers or getting stronger today, the key thing is the continuing resistance of working people to the effects of the capitalist crisis.

A lively discussion of over an hour followed the presentation and took up why the Socialist Workers Party focuses its forces in the industrial unions, a socialist view of education, and the historic changes in today’s U.S. armed forces, among other things. Some \$976 was collected at the meeting for the fund. New pledges were made totaling \$700, raising the total Chicago pledges to \$4001 towards the goal of \$4200.

\$80,000 Party-Building Fund July 12–October 15: Week 11 of 13			
	Goal	Paid	%
Tampa	1,800	1,761	98%
Seattle	6,000	4,815	80%
Detroit	2,500	1,975	79%
Utah	1,100	820	75%
Twin Cities*	5,100	3,670	72%
Western Colorado	2,700	1,805	67%
Newark	3,500	2,200	63%
Los Angeles	7,500	4,535	60%
Miami	1,800	1,075	60%
Chicago	4,200	2,351	56%
Houston	3,500	1,940	55%
New York	10,000	5,511	55%
Des Moines	1,450	745	51%
Cleveland	1,000	485	49%
NE Pennsylvania	2,000	950	48%
Philadelphia	3,200	1,400	44%
Washington, D.C.	2,700	1,175	44%
San Francisco	8,000	3,100	39%
Birmingham	1,400	530	38%
Atlanta*	6,800	2,489	37%
Pittsburgh	3,600	1,230	34%
Boston	2,800	575	21%
Omaha	1,300	215	17%
Other		1,361	
Total	83,950	46,713	58%
Goal/Should be	80,000	66,460	83%
*raised goal			



# SWP candidate: ‘Nationalize energy industry!’

**Continued from front page**  
including three from the Black Student Union who had heard a presentation about the campaign at their business meeting earlier that day.

“Working people should say, ‘Because the big power companies won’t provide power at reasonable rates, and without blackouts and brownouts, then the industry should be taken out of private hands and run as public utility,’” Britton said in response to the student’s question.

He added, “The bosses have proven they aren’t competent to provide the most basic services. They are in business not to provide energy but only to make profits. And on top of that, they outright loot these businesses.

“We’re not for nationalizing the energy and power companies in order to get them into shape to turn back over to the capitalists, as was done with the steel industry in Britain in an earlier period. Rather, the demand to nationalize these companies must be part of a bigger fight by working people to take state power out of the hands of the capitalists—that is the only way to guarantee the energy industry is run in the interests of the vast majority,” Britton concluded.

“The Democrats and Republicans do have a hold on our people,” said Virginia Guerrero, a second-year student who is Chicano, during the discussion. “The media doesn’t include information on any other candidates, but we need to be more open.” Ten students signed up to stay in touch with the campaign; eight bought copies of the *Militant*, the campaign newspaper. Several are looking forward to a return visit by socialist campaigners to continue the discussions.

Earlier that day the team of Young Socialists for Britton campaigned on the campus and publicized the “meet the candidate” visit by the Socialist Workers candidate, who is on the ballot for the special October recall election in California. The socialist literature table in front of the student center was buzzing with discussions for several hours as students came by to find out what that campaign stands for. The Young Socialists for Britton team included, in addition to Scott, Mike Ellis from Chicago, Arrin Hawkins from New York, and Paul Sanger, one of the newest campaign volunteers, who goes to school at City College in San Francisco.

The next day another team of Young Socialists for Britton campaigned at San Francisco State University (SFSU). They set up a campaign table in front of the student center and engaged students in discussions about the revolutionary working-class perspective, inviting those who

like that perspective to join with them in campaigning. They distributed copies of the “Vote Socialist Workers!” statement by Britton to GIs abroad. Twelve people purchased the *Militant*.

That day Britton spoke at a candidates’ forum at SFSU sponsored by the campus newspaper, the *Golden Gate [X]press*, which was attended by some 80 students. The 18 gubernatorial candidates present were divided into panels by issue. Britton, along with two other candidates, fielded questions from the moderator on immigrant rights, the USA Patriot Act, and Proposition 54, an initiative on the California ballot that seeks to limit government collection of racial statistics.

### Part of an international working class

“Don’t the majority of people in California support the war in Iraq?” moderator David “Davey D” Cook, of KPFA radio, asked Britton. In opposing U.S. military interventions around the world, “Wouldn’t you be putting yourself in opposition to them?”

“No,” Britton replied. “I don’t consider myself a ‘Californian.’ I am part of an international class of working people, whose interests lie in opposing imperialism’s wars. Millions of working people around the world opposed the imperialist war against the people of Iraq.”

One feature of Britton’s visit to northern California was a September 25 stop at the Sara Lee meatpacking plant in San Lorenzo, near Oakland. Many workers in the plant are originally from countries in Asia. Some moved to the United States recently, while others have been here many years. The campaign team included Deborah Liatos, Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of San Francisco and a worker in the plant, which is organized by the United Food and Commercial Workers union.

A number of workers leaving the plant at the afternoon shift change came over to meet Britton and Liatos. Many were



Militant/Frank Forrestal

**Nicole Sarmiento and other Young Socialists for Britton campaign in Los Angeles September 23 for the Socialist Workers candidates in California.**

pleased to see the new campaign leaflet in Chinese and Vietnamese.

“The company wants us to work harder and longer,” one worker told Britton, who is a retired meat packer and longtime unionist and leader of the Socialist Workers Party.

“I used to work at the American Meatpacking Corporation hog slaughterhouse in Chicago,” Britton responded. “There, the bosses increased the line speed as much as they could with the equipment they had, and when that wasn’t fast enough, they started hanging the hogs closer together.”

The socialist campaigners explained why bosses everywhere are driven by their system, capitalism, to intensify labor, drive down wages and benefits, and cut jobs in order to maintain their profit rates and beat out competitors. They pointed to the Socialist Workers campaign program calling for jobs for all by reducing the workweek while maintaining union-scale wages, a raise in the minimum wage, and other measures around which to organize a fight to protect working people from the

ravages of the capitalist economic crisis.

Three Sara Lee workers bought the *Militant* and one purchased the Spanish-language *Perspectiva Mundial*.

Earlier in the day Ben Hawkins, co-editor of the *Laney Tower*, held a lengthy interview with Britton. Laney College, which has a large Black student population, is located in downtown Oakland. Britton also appeared that morning on the KPFA Pacifica radio “Morning Show,” a public affairs program hosted by Philip Moldavi.

Supporters of the Socialist Workers campaign throughout the state are on a drive to raise \$5,000 and more to cover the costs of the working-class campaign—for travel, printing, media work, and other expenses in the last few weeks of campaigning. Volunteers have been phone banking during the evenings and, as of September 27, almost \$3,500 had been raised.

Contributions can be sent to the Socialist Workers Campaign offices at either 4229 S. Central Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90011 or 3926 Mission St., San Francisco, CA 94112.

## Three men arrested at Guantánamo camp

**Continued from front page**  
not specify who the “enemy” is.

The military conducted a secret search of al-Halabi’s personal belongings before arresting him and claim they found some 180 messages from men being held at the camp as well as “classified” Defense Department documents related to the detainees at Guantánamo, the Associated Press reported.

“The implication,” AP reported September 25, “is that al-Halabi was helping prisoners communicate among themselves

and with the outside world.”

According to Lance Wega of the Air Forces’s Office of Special Investigations, al-Halabi “made statements criticizing United States policy with regard to the detainees and U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East.” He added that al-Halabi “expressed sympathy for and has had unauthorized contact with the detainees.” Such alleged contacts included giving prisoners baklava desserts.

Investigators are seeking to link al-Halabi to the Syrian government, charging him with “failing to report improper contact with the Syrian Embassy.” Al-Halabi says his contact with the Syrian Embassy was related to a trip to Syria he planned in late July to get married.

Syria is one of the countries that Washington has targeted as a “sponsor of terrorism.”

The second soldier arrested, Capt. Yousef Yee, was detained September 10 as he got off a plane in Jacksonville, Florida. He had been stationed at Camp Delta as an Army chaplain since November of last year.

Although no charges have been filed against him, Yee is being held at a military prison in Charleston, South Carolina—the same prison where Abdullah Al Muhajir, also known as José Padilla, and Yaser Esam Hamdi are locked up. Labeled “enemy combatants” by Washington, the two men have been held incommunicado, without charges or the right to due process, since their arrests in May 2002 and November 2001, respectively.

A *New York Times* article reported that Yee was allegedly carrying sketches or diagrams of the U.S. concentration camp at the time of his arrest. CNN reported that, according to U.S. officials, he had a list of the names of some of the men imprisoned there, as well as the names of some of their interrogators.

Big-business press reports have also linked Yee, a native of Springfield, New Jersey, whose parents are Chinese immigrants, to the Syrian government and point to a visit there in the early 1990s following his conversion to Islam.

Almost three weeks after the military authorities put Yee behind bars, FBI officers arrested Ahmed Mehalba, a civilian translator at the base. Immigration officials claimed to have found classified documents “related to Guantánamo” when they searched him at Logan Airport in Boston after he returned from a trip to Cairo, Egypt.

Two other yet unnamed members of the U.S. military are reportedly under investigation. According to CNN, they are a U.S. Navy sailor and another member of the Air Force. No details have been released.

U.S. authorities are holding 660 people from 43 countries in their Guantánamo prison camp, which was set up in January 2002 after the U.S. assault on Afghanistan. They have branded these prisoners, who were arrested in Afghanistan or other countries, “enemy combatants” and are holding them without charges or the right to due process.

Camp Delta has more than 1,000 eight-foot-by-six foot cells, and the Army has plans to construct more. A medium-security unit has been built for those who “cooperate” with the high-pressure interrogation process. In a September 24 interview with *60 Minutes II*, Maj. Gen. Geoffrey Miller, who runs the prison, gave a picture of what the prisoners face.

“We interrogate seven days a week, 24 hours a day,” Miller said. “We don’t talk about the operational measures that we use, but I will tell you, everything we do, our nation can be proud of.”

The interviewer noted that “Miller did claim interrogators don’t use physical coercion. And, he said, Pentagon rules limit the length of interrogations to no more than 16 straight hours. The three juveniles at Camp Iguana, Miller says, are “de-briefed,” not interrogated.”

Camp Iguana is a section of the concentration camp set up for prisoners under the age of 15. In May of this year it was announced that the detainees included one 13-year-old, one 14-year-old, two 15-year-olds, and one 16-year-old, as well as an 88- and 98-year-old.

### Immigrant rights supporters join rallies across the country to kick off Freedom Ride



Above, Militant/Osborne Hart

**Above, some 350 people in Detroit took part in a September 27 rally in support of the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride. Similar events took place in cities across the country where the ‘Freedom Riders’ stopped on their way to New York City to support the demand for legal status and union rights for immigrant workers and their families. Left, trade unionists march in New York September 25 to build the final rally in Queens on October 4.**





# Miners seek union

**Continued from front page**

*no nos ganarán!* (Up with the union! Up with the miners! Down with the bosses! We fight to win, they will not defeat us!)

Jesús Salazar, a leader of the miners, addressed the rally from the speakers' platform and explained their fight. "We demand all miners must be reinstated with back pay. No more abuse and mistreatment of workers. We fight for dignity and respect.

"We demand fair wages. Average wages in the mining industry range from \$15 to \$20 an hour; at the Co-op mine most miners make between \$5.15 and \$7 an hour," said Salazar. The crowd let out a big "boo" when they heard this. Throughout the events, miners distributed a fact sheet in both English and Spanish to marchers and bystanders.

Miners granted numerous interviews to the local and national press about their fight. National Public Radio, the Spanish-language networks Univisión and Telemundo, the *Salt Lake Tribune*, *Nuestro Mundo Semanario*, and *La Prensa* interviewed the miners present.

Only three days earlier, on September 22, all 75 miners had walked out of the underground mine, protesting unsafe working conditions and in defense of a co-worker who had been suspended for union activity. The company refused to negotiate with a delegation of workers, fired everybody, and called in the Emery county sheriff's deputies to kick them off the property. The miners regrouped at a local park in town, and vowed to stay united and work with the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA).

## UMWA backing

On September 24, two international representatives of the UMWA, Mike Dalpiaz and Jim Stevenson, addressed a meeting of the miners. "For one month you've been organizing yourselves. Now I want to announce the full support of the UMWA. We'll be with you until we win," said Dalpiaz. The miners welcomed those words with a round of loud applause.

Dalpiaz also announced that the day before the UMWA had filed three unfair labor practice charges with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) against C. W. Mining on behalf of the fired miners. Stevenson asked miners to sign a petition to request that the NLRB organize a union representation election. All miners present—the big majority of the workforce—signed the petition on the spot.

The next day the UMWA representatives paid for the cost of the gas to get the min-

## UMWA convention

**Continued from front page**

delegates present as they were called to the stage by UMWA international president Cecil Roberts.

"We're fighting back and looking for support because we want to win," Jesús Salazar, a leader of the locked-out Utah miners, told the convention delegates. Speaking in Spanish, with translation provided by a coworker, he described the poor safety conditions, low wages, lack of respect from the bosses, and other conditions that led the miners to fight for a union. Salazar explained that all the miners were fired when they stood up to a company suspension of one of the workers.

Roberts pledged the support of the UMWA to the locked-out miners.

After Salazar's remarks, delegates representing UMWA locals across the country began pledging contributions to the miners. A collection brought in \$3,000 and more than \$2,000 was pledged.

The workers from the Co-op mine met many of the miners who made or pledged donations to their fight. For example, they were introduced to delegates from the UMWA local in Kayenta, Arizona, who are Navajo, who donated \$80 in gas money to the locked-out miners for their five-hour trip to the union convention.

They met long-time union fighters who told them about their experiences in other union battles, such as the 1989–91 strike against Pittston Coal. Among others they met a retired miner from Kentucky who is fighting to get the UMWA organized at a mine owned by RAG Coal Co.

ers and their families to the Freedom Ride event in Salt Lake City, which is two and a half hours away.

The miners have been meeting almost daily since they were fired in order to reach out, gain support, and raise funds among other miners, unionists, local communities, and organizations. "We raised \$250 at a yard sale organized by the wives who are members of the women's auxiliary group," said Ana Sánchez, one of three women workers at the mine.

"Eighteen wives have been involved so far, and we're planning more activities," Sanchez added. "One donation of \$50 was made by a retired miner who supports what we're doing!" she exclaimed.

The same weekend the yard sale took place, four miners from the nearby Deer Creek mine, which is organized by the UMWA, came to meet with the locked-out Mexican miners. One of them asked, "How can we help?" Lou Shelley, the president of the UMWA local at Deer Creek, told the miners they had the backing of more than 250 union miners from his local.

After that meeting the miners along with their wives and children got out to the streets and leafleted door to door through the town of Huntington, a town of about 3,000 people, where most of them live. The next day they planned to leaflet the city of Price, 20 miles away, at the local Wal-Mart store and other shopping centers. The leadership of the miners organized the children of miners, who are bilingual, to translate.

"Today we have an event at the San Rafael Catholic Church to explain to the congregation what we miners are doing," explained Zamaria Salazar, wife of one of the miners. "The retired miner from the Deer Creek mine organized this for us." A delegation of miners joined the event, which was attended by 35 people. "The church promised to help us with the bill payments starting with the

## Socialist candidate for Houston mayor is on ballot

**BY JACQUIE HENDERSON AND BRIAN WILLIAMS**

HOUSTON—Anthony Dutrow, the Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Houston, is on the ballot for the November 4 election. On September 22, after five weeks of campaigning, the candidate and his supporters filed 3,815 signatures—more than double the city requirement. Three days later the Houston city secretary informed him that he had been certified for ballot status.

After filing the petitions Dutrow was interviewed by Univisión TV Channel 45, and *El Día*, a Spanish-language daily. Pacifica radio station KPFT reported the filing on their evening news broadcast.

"Only one challenger says he is fighting first and foremost to improve the conditions of working people," began the KPFT radio evening news report. "Dutrow, a veteran of the U.S. military, calls for withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq to Guantánamo Bay. His platform also supports women's right to choose abortion and calls for debt relief for small farmers."

Dutrow told the Univisión interviewer that "the Socialist Workers' campaign presents a fighting working-class alternative to the twin parties of imperialist war, economic exploitation, depression, and racist oppression."

He added, "More than 2.6 million manufacturing jobs have been eliminated since July 2000—100,000 of these in Texas. My campaign puts forward a Jobs for All! program that calls for a massive program of government-funded public works to build and repair roads, a mass transit system, schools, housing, clinics, and child-care centers, and calls for shorter workweek at union scale to spread around the available work."

"The Texas law banning undocumented workers from getting drivers' licenses must be immediately repealed," Dutrow said, "and the bill that slashes the Children's Health Insurance Program, cutting off social benefits for 500,000 children in Texas, must also be revoked. These cuts simply compound an already horrendous health-care situation in the state, which has the highest percentage of uninsured children in the nation."

The evening after the filing Dutrow and campaign supporters participated in



Militant/Deborah Liatos

**Jesús Salazar (at mike), one of the 70 locked-out coal miners at Co-Op mine near Price, Utah, explains their fight for a union at a kick-off rally for the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride in Salt Lake City. To the left: Ana Sánchez, a miner at Co-Op, and Francisco Picado, a miner and United Mine Workers organizer.**

month of October."

Daniel Hernández, also a miner, reported from a fund-raising picnic that one of the trailer park owners where he lives decided to contribute by not charging rent for three or four months or however long the miners remained unemployed.

On September 26, when miners organized themselves in groups to pick up their paychecks, the Co-op mine bosses had the local sheriff show up again.

In an article printed in the *Salt Lake Tribune* that day, the Sheriff's Department denied they had ordered the miners out. Workers report that more than once Deputy Sheriff Jorgensen said, 'get out!'

"There is clearly a harassment campaign on the part of the police in Huntington," said Francisco Picado, a UMWA organizer. Workers have reported incidents of cops coming to their doors because of "complaints about loud stereos."

"We were in bed and the stereo was off when this cop came to our house," said one miner. "He then asked for all of our IDs."

In one instance a sheriff's deputy, ready with a translator in his car, arrested one of the miners for an unpaid traffic ticket and then questioned him about the meeting of miners he had just attended.

"The cop also told me all Mexicans were leaving town and asked when was I leaving," reported another miner. Picado contacted the Sheriff's Department and, with a delegation of miners, picked him up that same night from prison.

For more information on how to help, or to send a contribution for this fight, write to: Co-Op Miners, UMWA Region 4, 6525 W. 44th Ave. Wheat Ridge, CO 80033. Tel: (303) 425-7110.

*Bill Estrada is a locked-out coal miner at the Co-op mine.*

a meeting of over 300 people to send off the two busloads of Houston participants going on the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride. Dutrow has also spoken out in support of Southwest Airlines flight attendants who picketed Houston Hobby Airport September 18 to bring attention to their demands, including for an end to unpaid overtime. The flight attendants are members of the Transport Workers Union Local 556,

Since filing, Dutrow has received invitations to speak at number of candidates'



Militant/Jacquie Henderson

**The Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of Houston, Anthony Dutrow, shows some of 3,800 petition signatures filed September 22.**

forums, including a debate organized by a local cable access station. The *Houston Chronicle* editors will interview him. With the other candidates, on October 3. A tape of the event will be broadcast on the municipal cable station.

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# Soviet bureaucracy spurred anti-Semitism

Printed below is an excerpt from the pamphlet *On the Jewish Question* by Leon Trotsky, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for October. The selection is from "Thermidor and anti-Semitism," an article dated Feb. 22, 1937. Trotsky was a central leader of the October 1917 Russian Revolution. Following the death in 1924 of V.I. Lenin, the leader of the Bolshevik party, which led the revolution, Trotsky spearheaded the international struggle by the communist Opposition to defend the political course of Lenin and the Bolsheviks against a rising bureaucratic caste whose main spokesperson was Stalin,

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

which consolidated its political domination at the close of the 1920s. Copyright © 1970 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.



### BY LEON TROTSKY

At the time of the last Moscow trial I remarked in one of my statements that Stalin, in the struggle with the Opposition, exploited the anti-Semitic tendencies in the country. On this subject I received a series of letters and questions which were, by and large—there is no reason to hide the truth—very naive. "How can one accuse the Soviet Union of anti-Semitism?" "If the USSR is an anti-Semitic country, is there anything left at all?" That was the dominant note of these letters. These people raise objections and are perplexed because they are accustomed to

counterpose fascist anti-Semitism with the emancipation of the Jews accomplished by the October Revolution....

It has not yet been forgotten, I trust, that anti-Semitism was quite widespread in Czarist Russia among the peasants, the petty bourgeoisie of the city, the intelligentsia and the more backward strata of the working class. "Mother" Russia was renowned not only for her periodic Jewish pogroms but also for the existence of a considerable number of anti-Semitic publications which, in that day, enjoyed a wide circulation. The October Revolution abolished the outlawed status against the Jews. That, however, does not at all mean that with one blow it swept out anti-Semitism. A long and persistent struggle against religion has failed to prevent suppliants even today from crowding thousands and thousands of churches, mosques and synagogues. The same situation prevails in the sphere of national prejudices. Legislation alone does not change people. Their thoughts, emotions, outlook depend upon tradition, material conditions of life, cultural level, etc. The Soviet regime is not yet twenty years old. The older half of the population was educated under Czarism. The younger half has inherited a great deal from the older. These general historical conditions in themselves should make any thinking person realize that, despite the model legislation of the October Revolution, it is impossible that national and chauvinist prejudices, particularly anti-Semitism, should not have persisted strongly among the backward layers of the population.

But this is by no means all. The Soviet regime, in actuality, initiated a series of new phenomena which, because of the poverty and low cultural level of the population, were capable of generating anew, and did in fact generate, anti-Semitic moods. The Jews are a typical city population. They comprise a considerable percentage of the city population in the Ukraine, in White Russia and even in Great Russia. The Soviet, more than any other regime in the world, needs a very great number of civil servants. Civil servants are recruited from the more cultured city population. Naturally the Jews occupied a disproportionately large place among the bureaucracy and particularly so in its lower and middle levels....

He who attentively observes Soviet life, even if only through official publications, will from time to time see bared in various



Victims of anti-Jewish pogrom, or massacre, in Russia circa 1905.

parts of the country hideous bureaucratic abscesses: bribery, corruption, embezzlement, murder of persons whose existence is embarrassing to the bureaucracy, violation of women and the like. Were we to slash vertically through, we would see that every such abscess resulted from the bureaucratic stratum. Sometimes Moscow is constrained to resort to demonstration trials. In all such trials the Jews inevitably comprise a significant percentage, in part because, as was already stated, they make up a great part of the bureaucracy and are branded with its odium, partly because, impelled by the instinct for self-preservation, the leading cadre of the bureaucracy at the center and in the provinces strives to divert the indignation of the working masses from itself to the Jews. This fact was known to every critical observer in the USSR as far back as ten years ago, when the Stalin regime had hardly as yet revealed its basic features.

The struggle against the Opposition was for the ruling clique a question of life and death. The program, principles, ties with the masses, everything was rooted out and cast aside because of the anxiety of the new ruling clique for its self-preservation. These people stop at nothing in order to guard their privileges and power. Recently an announcement was released to the whole world, to the effect that my youngest son, Sergei Sedov, was under indictment for plotting a mass poisoning of the workers. Every normal person will conclude: people capable of preferring such a charge have reached the

last degree of moral degradation. Is it possible in that case to doubt even for a moment that these same accusers are capable of fostering the anti-Semitic prejudices of the masses? Precisely in the case of my son, both these depravities are united. It is worthwhile to consider this case. From the day of their birth, my sons bore the name of their mother (Sedov). They never used any other name — neither at elementary school, nor at the university, nor in their later life. As for me, during the past thirty-four years I have borne the name of Trotsky. During the Soviet period no one ever called me by the name of my father (Bronstein), just as no one ever called Stalin Dzhugashvili. In order not to oblige my sons to change their name, I, for "citizenship" requirements, took on the name of my wife (which, according to the Soviet law, is fully permissible). However, after my son, Sergei Sedov, was charged with the utterly incredible accusation of plotting to poison workers, the GPU announced in the Soviet and foreign press that the "real" (!) name of my son is not Sedov but Bronstein. If these falsifiers wished to emphasize the connection of the accused with me, they would have called him Trotsky since politically the name Bronstein means nothing at all to anyone. But they were out for other game; that is, they wished to emphasize my Jewish origin and the semi-Jewish origin of my son. I paused at this episode because it has a vital and yet not at all exceptional character. The whole struggle against the Opposition is full of such episodes.

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**Outside agitators**—“When it comes to fair play, capuchin monkeys don’t settle for any funny business. They demand their equal share of food or rewards for tasks they’ve done. They won’t settle for an injustice and are miffed when they think they have been cheated”—Reuters report of primate research findings at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia.

**Our pain, their gain**—R. J. Reynolds, the tobacco giant, announced it would lay off 40 percent

of its work force, throwing 2,600 workers onto the street. Wall Street was delighted—RJR stock jumped nearly 14 percent that day.—News item.

**Soft as pavement**—The head of an agency handling student loans says that graduates are finding that employment, if available, is not what they thought it was going to be. “Meanwhile they have to make rent, insurance, and car payments while they’re heavily in debt.” One newspaper delicately tagged it “a soft job market.”

**What to worry?**—“PCB-Laden Salmon Polluting Alaskan

Lakes,” “Spanish Navy Tests Take a Deadly Toll of Squid,” “Ozone Hole Expands to Match Previous Record”—Three-in-a-row In Brief science headlines, *Los Angeles Times*.

**...meanwhile**—“Military officials are stepping up efforts to locate radioactive material believed to be buried at the Castle Air Force Base, now home to a federal prison housing about 1,400 inmates.”

**They do generate affection**—Apparently with a distaste for cops, Moses Martin, a cook, pleaded guilty to adding mouse droppings, and his own urine, to

dinner he personally served to four cops in Kamikaze, Illinois. He got a four-year sentence.

**Try that under your pillow**—At a restaurant in New York’s SoHo (cool and costly), a somewhat elderly clipping describes a wedding cake crafted to look like a stack of *al la modal* shoeboxes. The tab, \$3,000.

**Doodle Dee dollar**—An equally elderly clipping may now be timely. In February, Labradoodles were on a waiting list. The cross between a Labrador and poodle looks shaggy but assertedly sheds little hair. From \$900 to \$3,000.

# Film depicts kidnapping of Aboriginal children

BY BRENDAN GLEESON

SYDNEY, Australia—The 2002 movie *Rabbit-Proof Fence* tells the story of three Aboriginal girls and their epic trek across 1,500 miles of outback Western Australia in 1931. It brings to vivid life the impact of decades-long policies of assimilation by the Australian government.

The film is based on *Follow the Rabbit-*

## IN REVIEW

*Proof Fence*, a memoir by Doris Pilkington Garimara, the daughter of Molly, the oldest of the three. The book and movie have added new heat to the debate about the responsibility of successive governments for the second-class status of Aborigines then and now.

Molly, Gracie, and Daisy begin their journey with their escape from the Moore River Detention Center near Perth in Western Australia. They had been incarcerated there after being taken from their families. Such removals were part of a systematic government attempt to separate “half-caste” children from their communities, and—in the cases of the “lucky” ones—place them with white families for lives of domestic servitude or wage labor.

The three girls follow the fence constructed to limit the spread of the plague of rabbits. One is recaptured, but by using survival skills accumulated through many generations of existence in the desert environment, Molly and Daisy make it all the way home.

The “Stolen Generations” policy—as the removals became known and were termed in a 1997 government study entitled “Bringing Them Home”—was only brought to an official halt in 1970. Under 1905 Western Australia legislation the Chief Protector of Aborigines was the legal guardian of all Aboriginal children up to the age of 16. A. O. Neville, featured in the film, held this position from 1915 until 1940.

After 1933 children with lighter skin would be selected by Neville’s officials and

sent from Moore River and similar prisons to different facilities to receive a “superior education,” supposedly to enable them to pass as white. Frequently justifying their actions by paternalistic rhetoric about bringing civilization to the Aborigines, the authorities aimed to avoid the alleged problem of intermarriage by “half-caste” and “full blood” Aborigines. Speaking at the first conference of Aboriginal administrators in 1937, Neville asked rhetorically, “Are we going to have a population of one million blacks in the Commonwealth?”

**‘Always be on the alert’**

Giving evidence to the government inquiry that resulted in the “Bringing Them Home” report, an Aboriginal woman described her community’s attempts to disguise their fairer-skinned children. “Every morning our people would crush charcoal and mix that with animal fat and smother that all over us, so that when the police came they would see black children in the distance,” she said. “We were told to always be on the alert and, if white people came, to run into the bush.”

The report stated that “between one in three and one in ten indigenous children were forcibly removed from their families and communities from approximately 1910 until 1970... Most families have been affected in one or more generations, by the forcible removal of one or more children.”

Present-day apologists for the policy claim the children were not accepted in their own community because they were “half-caste,” and were removed “for their own protection” from abuse. Forced removals were “close to fantasies,” wrote a former Liberal Party Aboriginal affairs minister, Peter Howson, in the *Australian* of March 11, 2002.

However, John Hewson, a former leader of the Liberal Party, the dominant partner in the ruling coalition, wrote in the April 12, 2002 *Financial Review*: “We can’t, as a nation, go on pretending that Aboriginal children were not forcibly removed.”

The national struggles by the Aboriginal people over the decades have helped to lift the lid on the impact of government policies.



Photo of “half-caste” Aborigine girls includes comments by prospective adopter

In one of the most dramatic illustrations of the changes these struggles have wrought, hundreds of thousands of people around the country joined “reconciliation” walks in May 2000 to oppose continuing racial discrimination.

That discrimination still marks the lives of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, who form a little more than 2 percent of

Australia’s 20 million people—a proportion that is growing. In 1999 the unemployment rate among Aboriginal people in the state of New South Wales was 27 per cent—four times the national average. Life expectancy is some 15 to 17 years below the average and infant mortality is three times the national rate. In 1991 the Aboriginal imprisonment rate was 18 times that of non-Aborigines.

## — 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —



October 13, 1978

Going beyond last summer’s infamous *Bakke* ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court, the *Weber* case challenges the right of unions to negotiate affirmative action programs to overcome employer discrimination in hiring and advancement.

At issue is an on-the-job training program for skilled jobs at Kaiser Aluminum. The program was negotiated by the United Steelworkers in 1974 and covers all Kaiser plants.

Under the plan, half of all trainee positions would go to minorities or women until a goal was reached based on the proportion of minority workers in the area of each plant. Kaiser’s Gramercy, Louisiana, plant had one of the highest goals—39 percent.

Brian Weber, a white, male worker at Kaiser Gramercy, sued to overturn the plan. He said it was “reverse discrimination.”

A federal district court and the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals have ruled in Weber’s favor. The courts held that Kaiser never discriminated against Blacks or women at Gramercy. Therefore the “voluntary” affirmative action plan was illegal. Employers cannot be forced to make up for general “societal discrimination,” the court declared.



October 12, 1953

[The U.S.] State Department has made a deal with the hated fascist dictator Generalissimo Francisco Franco [for military bases on Spanish territory].

The public deal is bad enough. But obviously there is a secret deal as well. *U.S. News and World Report* of Oct. 9 says, “Questioners are told, unofficially, that important matters are covered in unpublished agreements.”

We would like to pose some questions to the State Department, unofficially of course, about the secret deal with Franco:

What targets are being selected for atom-bombing from the air bases to be established in this fascist fortress? Specifically, if the workers of France, Germany, Italy, etc., or the people of Asia continue to develop their revolutions against capitalism, will their cities be bombed?

Is there a clause in the secret deal which guarantees Franco’s security from the revolution of the Spanish people in return for the air bases?

And one last question: Would the State Department dare to submit its deal with Franco (the open or secret edition) to a vote of the American people?

## Miami meeting builds support for Cuban Five



Militant photos by Eric Simpson  
**Leonard Weinglass (above) addressed a meeting of more than 150 on the case of the Cuban Five in Miami September 14. The Alianza Martiana organized the event to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the arrest of the five Cuban revolutionaries. Weinglass urged participants (inset) to “popularize the facts in this case.” He noted their appeal may be heard in Miami at the beginning of 2004. Antonio Maceo Brigade leader Andrés Gomez read a statement from the families of the five imprisoned Cubans, thanking the participants.**



# U.S. forces out of Latin America!

Recent trips to Colombia and other Latin American countries by top U.S. government and military officials register Washington's renewed emphasis on boosting its military presence in Latin America. The worsening capitalist crisis there, its brutal impact on workers and farmers from Argentina to Mexico, and their ongoing resistance to layoffs, inflation, and government austerity drives, make the region a social volcano—and the ruling billionaires in the United States know it.

Over the past year the U.S. rulers had put their challenges in Latin America on the back burner, while focusing on the conquest and occupation of Iraq, their broader economic and military offensive in the Mideast and Asia, and efforts to deepen their penetration of Africa.

The billionaire owners of the U.S. monopolies and banks have huge stakes in Latin America. They are determined to protect their investments and economic domination in the Americas. To do so, they are reinforcing their pressure on Latin American governments to maintain the flow of interest payments on the foreign debt—one of their main vehicles for siphoning off surplus value created by the labor of workers and farmers. No matter how much these governments pay—by tightening the screws on workers and farmers—the debt keeps mounting. The combined external debt of 23 Latin American and Caribbean countries grew by 50 percent in the years 1991–1997, and today stands at nearly \$700 billion—more than one third of the continent's Gross Domestic Product!

A two-pronged focus of U.S. imperialism's offensive in the region is its stepped-up military presence in Colombia and its support to efforts by the dominant sectors of the Venezuelan bourgeoisie to overthrow the government of President Hugo Chávez.

Through Plan Colombia, Washington is backing the Colombian regime's army with funds, military training, and Special Forces. Carried out in the name of "fighting drugs and terrorism," this U.S. military intervention is

aimed above all at the struggles of unionists and peasants. The U.S. military presence is expanding regionally: Washington uses military bases in Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru, and Paraguay, and is conducting semisecret military exercises in northern Argentina and elsewhere.

In Venezuela, the U.S. rulers are seeking ways to undermine and overthrow the Chávez government. They are concerned about the raised expectations and confidence of working people following the defeat of three attempts by the pro-imperialist opposition to topple the government—an April 2002 military coup, a bosses' "strike" last December and January, and the recent attempt to recall Chávez through a referendum. The September 19 bomb blast in the presidential palace compound was a sign that the imperialists and their local allies are prepared to resort to rougher methods. These include assassination attempts and efforts to intervene militarily against Venezuela through a regional war with Colombia.

The imperialists have reason to be concerned about Latin America. In face of the devastating impact of the capitalist economic crisis and the exploiters' demands for more and more "sacrifice," workers and farmers have organized continuing resistance. They have mounted general strikes in Uruguay, Chile, and today in Bolivia. Land occupations by landless toilers have stepped up in Brazil.

The U.S. labor movement has a deep stake in these developments. Workers and peasants in Latin America face the same enemy as working people here—the billionaire capitalists in the United States and other imperialist powers. To gain the experience and forge the political organizations and leadership they need to mobilize for a revolutionary overthrow of the system, our fellow workers and farmers need to get the boot of Washington and its military off their necks. We should join with others to demand:

Withdraw all U.S. military forces from Latin America!  
Cancel the Third World Debt!

## Venezuela: fired oil bosses evicted

Continued from Page 3

short-lived coup with Washington's tacit support on April 11, 2002, attempting to oust Chávez. Mass mobilizations by working people caused divisions in the military and Chávez returned to power within two days.

Chávez was elected in 1998 with huge popular support against the two traditional capitalist parties—the social democratic Democratic Action and the Social Christian COPEI. While capitalist property relations have remained largely intact under his administration, the wealthy families that rule Venezuela have been on a collision course with his government, especially since 2001. At that time

the government passed a series of measures that cut into the profits of big capital. These included new laws on agrarian reform, fishing, and protection of the country's national patrimony in oil and other minerals against imperialist superexploitation. The Chávez government's closer political and economic relations with Cuba, as well as Chávez's public criticisms of Washington's wars of conquest in Afghanistan and Iraq, have added fuel to the hostility of U.S. imperialism and its local allies.

### Another try at recall referendum?

The same day as the incident at Los Semerucos, the National Elections Council (CEN) announced new regulations for conducting petitioning on a referendum to recall the president, which the board adopted unanimously. According to the new rules, the opposition will have four days to collect three million signatures, each of which has to be verified by the fingerprint of the signer. Observers to guarantee the accuracy of the process will be appointed only by the CEN.

Soon after the announcement, Coordinadora Democrática issued a call through the big-business media for demonstrations against the new rules. According to *Universal*, several hundred people responded in Caracas as well as other cities. The protesters denounced the new regulations along with the evictions at Los Semerucos.

"The regulations impose conditions on popular participation and abrogate citizens' rights, they don't show respect for the people," said Jesús Torrealba, an opposition spokesman. "But they still leave a window open for an electoral solution."

Opposition leaders said they would pursue a new petition drive to recall Chávez, indicating that the Venezuelan bourgeoisie and its backers in Washington have not given up on this line of attack.

Actions similar to the one in Caracas took place around Venezuela. These reporters witnessed an antigovernment rally of fewer than 100 in Puerto Ordaz on the evening of September 26. It took place outside the main entrance of Alta Mira, a wealthy neighborhood that is fenced in. "Down with Chávez" and "No to communism" were the main slogans on the placards. Many motorists passing by countered with shouts of "Viva Chávez!" at the mostly young anti-Chávez protesters.

Two days earlier Chávez denounced as "unacceptable" statements that José María Aznar, prime minister of Spain, made while in Miami. "I recommend that my friend Chávez not follow Cuba's communist model, because it doesn't work," Aznar had stated.

On September 24 Chávez announced on national television that his administration has proof that Washington is allowing former Venezuelan military officers in exile in the United States to conduct training on U.S. soil in preparation for armed attacks on his government. The U.S. ambassador to Venezuela, Charles Shapiro, confirmed in a press conference that the Venezuelan government has shown him such evidence, including clippings from the U.S. press. He said Washington is "investigating the allegations."

## Cuban foreign minister condemns U.S. embargo at New York meeting

BY OLGA RODRÍGUEZ

NEW YORK—More than 800 people attended a meeting here September 27 to hear Cuba's foreign minister, Felipe Pérez Roque, who was in New York heading Cuba's delegation to the 57th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

The event was sponsored by dozens of organizations that oppose U.S. policy toward Cuba. Among the participants were activists from Cuba solidarity coalitions in Los Angeles, Miami, San Francisco, Boston, Detroit, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., and Hartford, Connecticut.

Noted entertainer Harry Belafonte and Cuba solidarity activist and author Jane Franklin chaired the event. New York state assemblyman José Rivera brought greetings. Greetings also came from members of three youth contingents from New York that traveled to Cuba this past summer. These included Monifa Akinwale Bandele of Black August, Bonnie Massey of the Venceremos Brigade, and Graciano Matos of the Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange.

A few of those present had originally come to New York to hear Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez speak the day before. Chávez canceled his U.S. visit citing security concerns, however, and a meeting was organized to protest Washington's hostility to the Venezuelan government.

Messages were read from three of the five Cuban revolutionaries currently locked up in U.S. prisons on frame-up charges of conspiracy and espionage. The five are Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González, and René González.

### Campaign to free the Cuban Five

Pérez Roque thanked those present for being part of the international campaign to win the release of the Cuban Five. The accusations that they were spying on the U.S. government are false, he said. Before their arrests in 1998, they had infiltrated right-wing Cuban-American groups operating in Florida in order to obtain information on their plans to carry out attacks on Cuba. The Cuban leader noted that this was at a time when nine Havana hotels had been bombed, resulting in the death of an Italian tourist. "The Cuban government reported the information they had on the plans of terrorist groups in Miami, including plans to blow up civilian aircraft," he said. Instead of going after these groups, U.S. officials "acted against those people they determined had uncovered the plans."

The five Cuban revolutionaries were sentenced to long prison terms—three of them were given life sentences. They face harsh treatment. Two have been denied the right to see their wives and children, an elementary human right, he said. The case is under review by the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals in Atlanta. Lawyers for the five Cubans have submitted arguments for a new trial outside of Miami.

Pérez Roque called on supporters of the fight for their freedom to get the facts out to more people in this country, where most are simply not aware of the case.

More-than four decades of U.S. economic war on Cuba has had a brutal impact on the Cuban economy, Pérez Roque explained, causing \$72 billion in losses as a result of severe trade restrictions, including a tightening of the embargo in the 1990s with the Torricelli and Helms-Burton Acts. Not only Cubans but U.S. residents are victims of Washington's aggressive policies toward Cuba, he said, pointing to Washington's ban on travel to Cuba.

"Why do they prevent U.S. citizens from learning about the Cuban reality firsthand?" asked the foreign minister. "Could it be that it is because they would see the truth about our island?"

Pérez Roque pointed to the resolutions adopted by the UN General Assembly year after year that ask Washington to lift the embargo. Last year, only the governments of the United States, Israel, and the Marshall Islands voted against that resolution.

"We know that in the end the blockade will be lifted and relations between our two governments will be normalized," he said. That would advance cooperation between the U.S. and Cuban governments, he stressed, pointing to proposals by Cuba for joint efforts to "halt drug trafficking, alien smuggling, and the fight against terrorism," all of which have been rejected by Washington.

Addressing the situation in the world today, the foreign minister contrasted the gains won by the Cuban people since the 1959 revolution with the intolerable economic and social conditions that exist for most of the world's inhabitants, particularly in Third World nations. What is needed, he said, is a "new system of economic and political relations." He called for "multilateralism" as opposed to Washington's "unilateral" use of force in the Mideast.

Pérez Roque called for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq. "We are for the United Nations assuming control of the situation in Iraq," he said.

Declaring that Cuba will remain true to its record of international solidarity, Pérez Roque ended by reminding participants of the hundreds of thousands of Cuban internationalist volunteers who over the years joined with African combatants in the independence struggles in Angola, Mozambique, Guinea Bissau, and other countries, and who fought together with Angolans to defeat invasions by the South African apartheid regime.

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# Union: ‘Court ruling won’t stop fight for justice at Smithfield’

BY HILDA CUZCO  
AND RACHELE FRUIT

TAR HEEL, North Carolina—On July 30 a federal court of appeals overturned an earlier ruling in a civil rights lawsuit won by the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) against Smithfield Foods for violation of workers’ rights during the 1997 union election vote. The April 2002 decision by a jury in federal district court in Raleigh, North Carolina, had ordered Smithfield to pay union supporters \$750,000 for damages.

In December 2000 the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) found that Smithfield waged a systematic, illegal campaign to suppress workers’ right to join a union at the Tar Heel plant during two separate campaigns in 1994 and 1997. The union lost both times.

In a 400-page ruling, the NLRB judge found that Smithfield managers conspired with the local sheriff’s department to physically intimidate and beat union supporters. Workers were subjected to meetings that they were required to attend at which the company threatened them for supporting the union. Latino workers were told the INS would raid the plant if they voted for the union.

The labor board also found Smithfield guilty of illegally firing seven workers during the 1994 campaign and four more in 1997. The NLRB ordered the company to allow the UFCW free access to the workers in the plant.

“It’s unfortunate that a legal technicality let Smithfield get out from under the monetary judgment,” said Marc Perrone, UFCW vice president and director of the union’s organizing efforts, in an August 21 press release. The “technicality” he was referring to was that after being arrested by the cops the plaintiffs—a union organizer and a former worker in the plant—were

required to sign a release not to take legal action against the company or police as a condition for being freed. On that basis, the appeals court ruled that the case for damages on charges of civil rights violations should not have been heard.

“But justice at Smithfield isn’t about a monetary ruling,” Perrone continued. “Or an appeals court ruling. Justice at Smithfield is up to North Carolina communities, and communities across the country, standing together with Smithfield workers and demanding the company respect workers and obey the law. Their day of reckoning will come.”

The union launched a labor rights campaign last June in Atlanta, Georgia, called “Witness: Justice @ Smithfield.” The union appealed for support in protesting “human rights abuses at Smithfield’s plant in Tar Heel,” and presented a video documenting the 10-year effort to organize a union at the plant. The video includes interviews with workers who had been the target of abuses by the company and shows how the company promotes divisions between Black and Latino workers.

The 975,000 square-foot plant located in Bladen County, North Carolina, employs 6,000 men and women, 60 percent of whom are Latino. Most other workers are



Meat packers at Smithfield plant in Tar Heel where there is a union organizing effort

Black. Smithfield brags that its facility at Tar Heel is the world’s largest pork slaughterhouse, killing 32,000 hogs daily. The plant also has an extremely high turnover rate, and its injury rate is among the highest in the nation, the UFCW web site states. The company reported record profits of nearly \$200 million and sales of more than \$7 billion in 2002.

Many workers leave Smithfield because they consider it a dangerous place to work. “I worked there six months and injured my wrists,” a Latino worker, who asked not to be identified by name, told *Militant* reporters. “But they make sure that you pass all the tests on dexterity with your hands. They make sure that everything is perfect, to destroy them.” Now he works at a hog farm “run by Smithfield, of course,” he said. Smithfield raises 11.6 million hogs per year. About 90 percent of hog farmers in North Carolina sell directly to the company.

A Black worker, who also preferred not to give her name, said that three years ago she worked at Smithfield for six months. “I saw how the boss made a Hispanic worker keep working after he cut his hand. I can’t take that kind of abuse against workers. I decided to leave that job.”

Some of the workers these reporters talked to expressed their support for getting a union in the plant. A worker with two years in the slaughterhouse, who asked that only his first name, Ricardo, be used, said he is for the union “because we can defend ourselves better against company abuses.”

Another worker said she had signed a union card and would vote for the union again because the company “was pushing us around for too long.”

*Hilda Cuzco and Rachele Fruit are UFCW members in Philadelphia and Tampa, Florida, respectively.*

## Ottawa threatens deportation of Basques

BY GRANT HARGRAVE

MONTREAL—On September 18 Canada’s minister of justice, Martin Cauchon, announced that Gorka Perea Salazar and Eduardo Plagaro Perez de Arrilucea would be extradited to Spanish authorities.

Perea, 28, and Plagaro, 31, have been in an immigration prison here since June 6, 2001. They came to Canada in 1997 as

political refugees from the Basque country, in northeastern Spain. There the two supporters of Basque independence had been sentenced to six and seven years in prison, respectively, on charges of criminal arson. The only evidence presented against them was confessions they said were made under torture. After they applied for refugee status from the Canadian Immigration Commis-

sion, the two men were jailed after Madrid requested their extradition.

In a letter to lawyers for Perea and Plagaro, the justice minister claimed, “It has not been established that the extradition of your clients will expose them to a serious risk of torture, to an unacceptable situation or a situation that shocks the conscience.”

At a September 19 press conference called by the Basque Prisoners’ Support Committee, spokesperson Veronique Gauthier said that “we are going to fight this decision.” Lawyers for the two Basque independence activists said they would appeal the justice minister’s decision.

Daniel Turp, a Parti Quebecois member of the National Assembly, Quebec’s parliament, spoke at the press conference. In response to the remark in Cauchon’s letter that “it wasn’t in Canada’s interests to become a refuge for those who are fleeing justice,” Turp said, “it’s not justice they are fleeing, it’s torture.”

The Basque Prisoners’ Support Committee recently sponsored a successful fund raising concert that was supported by several well-known artists and musicians.

Those who want more information on the fight to free Perea and Plagaro and oppose their extradition to Spain can contact the Support Committee at solidarite\_gorka\_eduardo@hotmail.com.

## New York rally protests summary deportation of workers applying for citizenship

BY RÓGER CALERO

NEW YORK—Nearly 50 people gathered at a press conference in front of the Federal Building here September 21 to protest a number of recent arrests and deportations of workers who have gone to immigration offices for what they thought were routine appointments on their applications.

“They kidnapped Juan,” said Mariana Tapia, cousin of 19-year-old Juan Diego Jiménez, who was deported to the Dominican Republic just 16 hours after appearing for his appointment. “They didn’t even grant him his right to call a lawyer. They just threw him on a plane,” she said. “But all of his friends are here today to tell the government: We want him back!” she said, to chants by the crowd of “Bring back Juan Diego now!”

Tapia explained that Jiménez, a permanent U.S. resident, received a letter asking him to come in September 3 for what he thought would be the final interview for his citizenship application. After turning 18 he had submitted his request for citizenship. He completed his paperwork, was fingerprinted, and passed the required test. When he showed up, however, U.S. officials put him on plane to the Dominican Republic the next day under an old deportation order dating to when he was 14.

Aarti Shahani, of the New York-based immigrant rights group Families for Freedom and an organizer of the press conference, read a message from Georgiana Facey, a U.S. citizen whose husband, Howard Facey, was arrested a few weeks ago when he went to immigration offices to pick up his work permit, or green card, and was quickly deported to Jamaica.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) claims the summary deportations are legal because in both cases an old deportation order existed.

“But how can it be?” said Subhash Ka-teel, of Families for Freedom. “Neither of them saw an immigration judge or received notice of their deportation order.” Neither of the two men had even been informed of the old deportation orders during any of their prior visits with immigration officials, he said.

Shahani explained that Jiménez was deported and the DHS ordered a 10-year ban on his return to the United States, a restriction that is usually difficult to obtain a waiver to reverse. Immigrants who are 18 or younger are generally not subjected to such measures. Jiménez had turned 19

just two days before he was deported. An attorney with the organization Dominicans 2000, Lisa Reynoso, appealed to workers of all nationalities to join in the fight to defend immigrant rights. “It’s about the basic right to due process and the right to counsel,” she said.

“These laws cannot just be fought in the courts,” said David Chung, one of the protesters, in an interview. He said his son, who was born in Jamaica, is locked up at the York County prison in Pennsylvania and faces deportation. “We have to involve the masses of working people. That’s the only time the government will respond,” he said.

## — LETTERS —

### Socialist for governor

I was happy to read in your recent issues that a meat packer and socialist is running for California governor. The news this morning says that the election will take place on October 7, so good luck with the Britton campaign. Anyone who has worked in industry (or even worked an honest day in their life!) gets my vote.

Also, I agree that the governor’s race shouldn’t be seen as just a circus because of the large number of candidates. We should be glad there are meat packers and honest workers running, instead of just the usual Democrats and Republicans.

There are big stakes involved, and perhaps we can even see some hint of what could happen in bourgeois (and working-class?!) politics in the next year.

*Phil McCracken  
Berkeley, California*

### Protest move to deport

The American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) Los Angeles and

Orange County chapters strongly condemn the Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) decision to seek the deportation of two Palestinian permanent residents for their political associations in violation of their constitutional rights.

In papers filed last week, the DHS announced that it will seek to deport Michel Shehadeh and Khader Hamide under provisions of the McCarran-Walter Act that were declared unconstitutional by a federal district court in 1989, and repealed by Congress in 1990. The DHS is also seeking to add new charges under the USA PATRIOT Act, marking the first time the government has enforced a PATRIOT Act provision making foreign nationals deportable for their support of “terrorist groups,” broadly defined as any two or more persons who have threatened to use or used a weapon to endanger person or property.

Hamide and Shehadeh, both green card holders, have built their lives with their families in the United States for the last three decades. The government charges

that Hamide and Shehadeh were associated with and supported the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, a faction of the PLO, in the mid-1980s.

However, when they were arrested (with six other student activists in Los Angeles) in 1987, the then-FBI Director William Webster testified in Congress that after an extensive three-year FBI investigation, the respondents “have not been found to have engaged themselves in terrorist activity,” and admitted that “if these individuals had been United States citizens, there would not have been a basis for their arrest.”

*ADC  
Los Angeles and Orange County*

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

**Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.**



# Maori assert rights to the sea's riches

BY ANNALUCIA VERMUNT

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand— On June 19 the New Zealand Court of Appeal ruled that representatives of a group of *iwi*, or Maori tribes, in the South Island could take their claim to the foreshore and seabed to the Maori Land Court. The ruling was a rebuff to the government and local governing bodies and fish-farming interests from the Marlborough area at the top of the South Island that had opposed the Maori claim.

The New Zealand government is seeking to extinguish Maori claims of customary title to the foreshore—the area between the high tide and low tide marks—and the seabed. Maori leaders have said the government is attempting “the last land grab.”

A grouping of *iwi* has come together to defend their customary rights, explaining that they include the right to set up marine farms and other ventures. Maori are the indigenous people of New Zealand. They form 12 percent of the population and a much higher proportion of the industrial working class in both the cities and countryside.

Through large-scale struggles in the 1970s and '80s to regain stolen lands and combat discrimination, Maori forced successive governments to legally recognize their claim to some traditional lands. The sea and shore are among the remaining disputed areas. Business forces there see the Maori claimants as potential competitors.

Attorney General Margaret Wilson said that the effect of the decision “has been to channel the recognition of any Maori customary connection with the seabed into a process that could result in exclusive title.” She added, “The Crown is going to clarify that in fact the seabed and foreshore is owned by all New Zealanders in the form of the Crown.”

On July 12 1,000 Maori representing 78 *iwi* met in Paeroa in the North Island to condemn the government's stance. Amid the controversy, Labour's Maori members of parliament threatened to vote against any legislation against Maori claims.

Faced with this opposition, government officials beat a tactical retreat. On August 18 they announced proposals to transfer the seabed and the foreshore into the “public domain,” less than Crown ownership but still a framework for extinguishing customary claims. Under the proposals, a special section of the New Zealand Maori Land Court would handle the relevant claims, a step intended to recognize customary rights on paper but negate associated property rights of development and exploitation.

The National Party parliamentary opposition has launched a petition and held public meetings under the demagogic theme of “Beaches for All”—implying, like the attorney general, that Maori title would close off the country's shoreline to popular use. Party leader William English spoke to 150 people in the small coastal town of



Militant/Janet Roth

**Maori rights march in Waitangi, New Zealand, February 1999. Through large-scale struggles Maori forced successive governments to recognize their claim to some traditional land. Maori representatives are now staking claims to seashore and seabed.**

Waikanae August 19. Businessman John Paterson told the crowd, “We're all bloody New Zealanders.”

Five hundred people marched in Nelson July 28 carrying placards that read, “Whites have rights too” and “One law for all New Zealanders.” The Nelson-Marlborough region at the top of the South Island is the center of lucrative marine farming—which expanded substantially during the

1990s—and tourism industries. Both rely on the beauty and riches of the foreshore and sea.

There are currently some 600 marine farms in the region. In the Marlborough Sounds more than 200 boat jetties, or wharves, have been built for the enjoyment of boat-users and vacationers. The region is not the only one slated for this kind of capitalist development, which has major

implications for public use of the beaches and sea. A February report by the Land Access Reference Group said that up to a third of the country's coastline is effectively closed to the public because landholders refuse to allow access across their land.

John Mitchell, an *iwi* spokesperson, told the July 5 *Christchurch Press* that the push to lodge a claim effectively dates back to the 1971 Marine Farming Act, which did not recognize traditional fishing grounds. “You will not find a single *iwi* who was an applicant or recipient of a marine farming license,” he said. “We figured that to apply for one of the spaces would give recognition to the [Marine Farming] Act.”

Legislation in 1991 gave some legal recognition to traditional Maori claims. As the 1990s rolled on, however, Mitchell and others became concerned with the discriminatory decisions of the Marlborough license allocation committee. In 1997 they began legal action to establish their customary rights—the step that led to the June 19 appeals court ruling.

To try to win support for their approach, government ministers have begun a series of 11 public meetings nationwide, after which they plan to introduce legislation. There has been little enthusiasm for their proposals at the seven meetings held so far. Protesters forced the cancellation of a Northland meeting, an Auckland event was rescheduled after tribal leaders refused to host it, and one leader told a meeting of 300 people at Rapaki, near Christchurch, that his *Ngai Tahu* people “will never give up on this issue.”

Annalucia Vermunt is a member of the Meat Workers Union.

## Al-Arian wins access to wiretap tapes

BY KARL BUTTS

TAMPA, Florida—At a pretrial hearing here August 27, U.S. assistant attorney Walter Furr announced that Justice Department officials had decided to declassify more than 20,000 hours of wiretap tapes compiled for their “terrorism” case against Sami Al-Arian and three other Palestinian activists.

Until then, the prosecutors had refused Al-Arian's request for access to the tapes, saying that disclosure of the tapes would reveal “sources and methods” of government snooping.

Al-Arian, a former professor at the University of South Florida here, was fired from his job shortly after he and three co-defendants—Sameeh Hammoudeh, Hatem Naji Fariz, and Ghassan Zayed Ballut—were arrested February 20 on phony “terrorism” charges outlined in a 50-count federal indictment. The government asserts that Sami Al-Arian is the leading U.S. representative for Islamic Jihad, a Palestinian organization based in the Israeli-occupied territories that Washington has labeled “terrorist.” Their trial is set for January 2005.

The issue of secret evidence was becoming increasingly contentious in the case. At a July 25 hearing, the court granted Al-Arian's request to represent himself while warning him that only lawyers with a security clearance and sworn to keep what they heard secret, including from the defendants, would be allowed access to the tapes. Al-Arian promised to challenge the constitutionality of the secret evidence.

Al-Arian and his co-defendants are outspoken defenders of the Palestinian national liberation struggle. Al-Arian and Hammoudeh have been held in solitary confinement since March at Coleman Federal Prison, 70 miles north of Tampa. They are subject to frequent strip searches and are confined in a 7 by

13 foot windowless cell that is constantly lit. They have no access to a clock. And they are allowed one 15-minute monitored family phone call per month, and one hour of exercise on weekdays in a larger empty steel cage.

Knowledge has spread about these inhuman conditions and the government's attempt until recently to insist on keeping the evidence secret. On August 3, the *Palm Beach Post* reported on the July 17 letter from Amnesty International's London bureau, denouncing Al-Arian's detention as “gratuitously punitive.”

An August 8 editorial in the *Tampa Tribune* said, “Prosecutors must reveal to him that evidence they plan to use to prove their case.”

An August 20 *St. Petersburg Times* editorial chimed in, stating that Al-Arian “should be given access to the audio and videotapes related to his case.” Referring to Amnesty International's letter to the Fed-

eral Bureau of Prisons, the *Times* editors concluded that “the government appears to be doing all it can to break the man and make it more difficult for him to mount a defense.”

The increasing concern over the punitive conditions the Palestinian is being subjected to was also registered in an August 21 press release issued by the North Central Florida chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union. The release covers Al-Arian's history as “a visible, outspoken and opinionated Muslim and Palestinian.”

“He must be freed from the excessive limitations of Coleman Prison and returned to the Tampa area to prepare for his defense,” the ACLU statement continues. “It would seem that Dr. Al-Arian is being treated more severely because he is a Muslim, a Palestinian, and most importantly an outspoken political activist at odds with the ideology of his accusers.”

## Paper workers in Vancouver vote for contract after 4-month strike

BY NATALIE STAKE-DOUCET

VANCOUVER, British Columbia—Workers at the Eurocan pulp and paper mill in Kitimat voted 213-74 in favor of a proposed contract on September 15. The vote came after a nearly four-month strike over safety and benefits, in which the union also demanded protection of seniority rights and the elimination of job classifications that restricted more senior workers from applying for higher-paying jobs.

Terms of the agreement are not available. In an interview with the *Militant*, Communications, Energy and Paperworkers (CEP) Local 298 president Peter King said, “The union wanted no concessions and that's what we got.”

A company official said the contract was “modeled on agreements reached at other mills in the region,” according to a

Reuters dispatch, that have tied increases in wages to the “health” of the companies' paper sales.

During the strike, the unionists extended a hand of solidarity to workers at the Carnaby sawmill that closed two years ago. Workers there are members of CEP Local 404. “The company owes \$3.7 million to the workers,” said King. “They keep saying that they'll reopen the plant, that the workers are on layoff, to justify them not paying.” On August 9 two strikers from Local 298, Jack McCamy and Kevin Read, were arrested at the Carnaby saw mill as they joined Local 404 members in blocking the removal of equipment from the mill that the company had sold off.

“What's happening to them today could be us tomorrow,” said King. “This fight has become a priority for us.”

### From Pathfinder

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