

THE MILITANT

INSIDE
Protest beating of Palestinian fighter
Farouk Abdel-Muhti by prison guards
 —PAGE 10

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE VOL. 67/NO. 43 DECEMBER 8, 2003

Bush visit to UK bolsters imperialist ‘war on terror’ ‘Stop Bush’ protests, marked by nationalism, aid British rulers

BY TONY HUNT

LONDON—The November 19–21 state visit by U.S. president George Bush to the United Kingdom served to bolster the imperialist foreign policy aims of Washington and London, carried out under the banner of the “war on terrorism.” Bush and Labour prime minister Anthony Blair affirmed this course of strengthening the position of the U.S. and British ruling classes relative to their imperialist competitors in the world, including through the use of military force.

In a keynote speech in London on the first day of his trip, Bush defended what he called the “three pillars” of U.S. foreign policy. One “pillar,” he said, is “the willingness of free nations...to restrain aggression and evil by force”—that is, using military means against governments targeted by Washington, as in Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, and Iraq. Another “pillar” is the use of international organizations, especially the NATO military alliance, to advance the goals of the U.S. rulers.

The third “pillar” cited by the U.S. president was “the global expansion of democracy.” He said, “We cannot rely exclusively on military power to assure our long-term security.”

Bush indicated that Washington’s goal is not to establish dictatorships but to press for certain benchmarks of bourgeois democracy in a way that will advance the U.S. rulers’ dominance in the Mideast politically, not just militarily. These include elections, religious freedom, freedom of the press, and “new protections for women.” Clearly refer-

Continued on Page 7



AFP/Luke Frazza
 Above, U.S. president George Bush at London press conference with British prime minister Anthony Blair November 20, where both vowed to stay course on occupation of Iraq. Right, protest in London on same day, billed by organizers as action to “Stop Bush,” drew 100,000. Marchers focused their fire on Washington, letting British rulers off hook.



AFP/Eric Feferberg

Union miners, oil workers in Utah back Co-Op coal strikers

BY MARCO ANTONIO RIVERA

HUNTINGTON, Utah—“We have the firm belief that every coal miner should have a safe place to work and be able to come back home every day,” said Robert Silliman, a longwall electrician at Deer Creek, a mine near here owned by Energy West and organized by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA). Silliman said his local’s organizing committee, of which he is a member, has just been expanded by miners from every work shift who have volunteered to organize support for the Co-Op miners’ fight to get their jobs back and win union recognition.

Silliman was addressing a November 22 meeting at the town hall here, organized by the Co-Op miners to thank UMWA members at Deer Creek, a half-hour from Huntington, and oil workers from Salt Lake City, Utah, for their solidarity. The oil workers had braved a blizzard on their way here that day, as they crossed Soldiers’ Summit, the mountaintop near Huntington.

“The safety you work in is appalling,” Silliman said. “That is one thing the union means for us. We make the safety very good in our mine. It will be an exciting day and I look forward to be able to welcome you as brothers when you become UMWA. That

Continued on Page 5

Rivalry between U.S., European powers flares over next steps to halt Iran’s nuclear plans

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, D.C.—At a November 20 meeting of the governing board of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), representatives of Washington, London, Paris, Berlin, and other imperialist governments debated a resolution condemning the Iranian government for its nuclear program.

Having pressured Tehran in October into agreeing to allow surprise inspections of Iran’s nuclear facilities, the IAEA members discussed how to extract further concessions. The wrangling over the wording of the resolution registered the ongoing imperialist rivalry between Washington, which pressed for sharper language, and

Paris and Berlin.

A number of imperialist powers in the European Union (EU) argue that pushing too fast and too far against Tehran could prompt it to cut off cooperation with the IAEA. For Paris and Berlin, in particular, this is the justification for holding back U.S. designs on Iran. The EU, led by France and Germany, has an annual trade of \$8 billion with Iran, unlike Washington.

An IAEA report released in mid-November stated that Iran had manufactured small amounts of enriched uranium and plutonium as part of a nuclear program that operated in secret over 18 years. It said the agency would continue investigating the charge by the U.S. government that Tehran has attempted to develop nuclear weapons, an accusation the Iranian government denies.

The Bush administration demanded that the IAEA refer the matter of Iran’s nuclear program to the UN Security Council, an action that could have paved the way for imposing sanctions against Tehran.

Since the release of the report, diplomats from London, Paris, and Berlin had been negotiating to find language for a resolution on Iran’s nuclear program that would be acceptable to Washington. U.S. government officials rejected two drafts presented by the three European governments as being too weak.

After several days of debate, the IAEA meeting recessed over the November 22–23 weekend without reaching agreement. A day after it reconvened, Washington and its European allies, who are also competi-

Continued on Page 2

Protesters in England demand prosecution of killer cops

BY XOSE AÑEL

BRIXTON, England—“What do we want? Justice! When do we want it? Now!” chanted dozens of people marching through the streets of the London suburb of Brixton November 22 to protest police racism and brutality. The demonstration took place on the second anniversary of the killing of Ricky Bishop, a Black man, while in police custody and after a recent inquiry that whitewashed the cops.

A similar protest of 500 people took

Continued on Page 7

Save the dates!

December 13–14 New York City

Saturday, December 13: RED SATURDAY

A full day of work to begin building the new national headquarters of the Socialist Workers Party, an expanded New York Pathfinder bookstore, and offices of the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*—all in the same location.

Sunday, December 14: PUBLIC MEETING

The Bipartisan War Party, Working-Class Resistance, and Building the Communist Movement

Speakers include **Jack Barnes**, SWP national secretary, and **Mary-Alice Waters**, president of Pathfinder Press. Others will report on efforts to upgrade and expand Pathfinder bookstores in London and Toronto; renovate the national center in London of the Communist League in the United Kingdom; and strengthen the regional center in Toronto of the Communist League in Canada. An early afternoon meeting.

Time and location to be announced. See upcoming issues of the ‘Militant.’
 Sponsored by the Socialist Workers Party National Committee and Young Socialists.
 For further information call (212) 695-7358 or see directory on page 8.

Also Inside:

- Rallies across the U.S. back 73,000 striking grocery workers 2
- U.S. occupiers broaden military operations in Iraq; arrests exceed 5,000 3
- Judge in Colorado orders deportation of Irish freedom fighter 4
- W. Sahara independence fighter speaks from behind bars 6

U.S.-European rivalry

Continued from front page

tors, announced they had reached agreement on language for a resolution that “strongly deplores Iran’s past failure and breaches” of provisions of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). UN officials said they expected the resolution would be approved by consensus.

The NPT allows Washington and other major imperialist powers to have nuclear weapons but bars other nations from acquiring them.

The agreement also includes a “trigger” clause demanded by Washington. It would send any future violations by Tehran to the UN Security Council without further investigations or reports.

According to the *Washington Post*, an example of disclosure of a future violation would include any “credible” report by the National Council of Resistance of Iran, a pro-imperialist group aiming to overthrow the regime in Tehran.

During the debate on the draft, U.S. representatives conceded not having enough backing to have Iran’s nuclear program referred to the UN Security Council. But they insisted that the resolution include a phrase declaring Iran in “noncompliance” with the NPT.



Women demonstrate October 24 after Friday prayers demanding Tehran pull out of agreement allowing surprise nuclear inspections. Sign refers to nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Just before the IAEA meeting, during a trip to meet with EU foreign ministers, U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell described the draft resolution on Iran as “not adequate.”

Washington was joined by IAEA chief

Mohamed ElBaradei in calling for stronger language, saying Iran was guilty of violating the treaty. “Iran’s breaches and failures are, of themselves, a matter of deep concern,” ElBaradei said in a speech to the agency’s board.

At the same time, Kenneth Brill, the U.S. ambassador to the IAEA, sharply criticized ElBaradei for declaring in his report on Iran that there was “no evidence” that Iran was seeking a nuclear bomb.

On October 21, under intense pressure from the governments of Britain, France, Germany, and Russia, Iran agreed to allow the UN agency to conduct unannounced inspections of nuclear facilities. By pressing Tehran to accept that agreement, known as Additional Protocols, the four governments hoped to hold Washington at bay.

ElBaradei reported that although Tehran has not yet signed the agreement, the IAEA had begun conducting its inspections as if it had been signed and ratified. “We are acting as if the protocol is in force and we have been getting all the access we need, both to locations and to information,” he said.

Opposition to the October 21 agreement allowing the snap inspections has been reflected both within and outside the Iranian government. About 100 people demonstrated against the British, German, and French foreign ministers who visited Tehran to negotiate the agreement. One banner read, “Shame on your hypocrisy, imperialist ambassadors!” Another 1,000 protested the agreement during Friday prayers. At the University of Tehran students shouted “Death to America.”

Demonstrations against the agreement reportedly subsided after Iran’s “supreme religious leader,” Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, publicly endorsed it. The newspaper *Jomhourī Eslami* advised in a November 8 editorial that the current silence “is an obedient silence,” not one of agreement. Iran has the right to develop nuclear weapons even if religious doctrine prevents their use, the editorial argued. “With the least indication” from Khamenei, “all these suppressed sentiments would be reflected in the form of a great explosion,” it said.

The Iranian government reiterated its promise not to build a medium-range missile, the Shahab-4, which imperialist powers

Rallies in California, Washington, D.C., back 73,000 striking grocery workers



Militant/Nancy Boyasko

Above, 300 members of the United Food and Commercial Workers union and supporters picket and rally outside a Safeway supermarket in Washington, D.C., November 22 to urge residents not to shop at Safeway stores, whose owners have locked out their southern California workforce. They were joined by contingents of grocery workers from California, West Virginia, Ohio, and Kentucky. In the latter three states 3,300 workers are locked out by the Kroger chain. The rally was joined by Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton and a number of AFL-CIO officials, including the federation’s president John Sweeney. The same day, similar rallies took place in Los Angeles and Oakland. The Los Angeles rally drew 1,500 strikers and supporters. In Oakland another 500 rallied and marched to a Safeway store. That action was joined by contingents of Teamsters, some of whom work at Safeway and Albertsons distribution warehouses in the Bay Area. “This is a good example of the unions coming together,” said Scott Pulido, a Teamsters Local 70 member and worker at an Albertsons warehouse in San Leandro, California, “and I wanted to be a part of it.” The 70,000 locked out workers in California got a boost November 24 with the announcement that the Teamsters union will halt deliveries to grocery chains, shutting off supplies during Thanksgiving week—one of the year’s busiest.

have warned would be capable of carrying a conventional weapon as far as Europe or a nuclear warhead to Israel. Tehran also voluntarily suspended its enrichment of uranium. Hassan Rohani, head of Iran’s Supreme National Security Council, warned that any language in the resolution “that turns our voluntary suspension into a legal commitment will be unacceptable for us.”

Bourgeois forces in Iran that expressed opposition to the October 21 agreement have insisted that a clause in the declaration stating that the inspections will not undermine Iran’s sovereignty must be strictly adhered to. The sentence was intended to reassure Tehran that the inspections would be less aggressive than those imposed on Iraq.

Iranian officials have also pressed London, Paris, and Berlin to keep promises to provide aid to ease Tehran’s access to technology for nuclear power. According to diplomats, “that’s not in the agreement, but it’s understood.” The *Washington Post*, reported that one official involved in the negotiations said such assistance would come “only after years of confidence building” by Iran.

In its campaign against Iran, Washington has seized on a trace amount of weapons-grade nuclear material reportedly found in two Iranian facilities. U.S. and IAEA officials have demanded that Iran reveal the source of the material. Tehran says the material is most likely the result of contamination from parts its purchased through a third party, the identity of which it does not know.

During the November 20 meeting, IAEA officials stated that China, Russia and Pakistan were the probable suppliers of the technology that Iran is accused of using to enrich uranium and produce small amounts of weapons grade plutonium. The Russian and Pakistani governments have denied the accusations.

For years Washington has worked to prevent Iran from developing, with Moscow’s help, a 1,000-megawatt nuclear reactor in the port city of Bushire. In mid-October Moscow announced that plans to start up the power plant would be delayed.

Just before the release of the IAEA report, however, Rohani announced that Tehran would send a letter to the IAEA confirming its agreement to unannounced inspections of its nuclear facilities. Russian president Vladimir Putin then stated that as a result he saw “no obstacles to nuclear cooperation with Iran.”

Washington has also charged that the Iranian as well as Syrian governments are allowing armed groups opposed to the U.S. occupation regime in Baghdad to use their borders to enter Iraq. On November 17 U.S. military officers told the Associated Press that an Iraqi scientist who had headed the development of a long-range missile program for the government of Saddam Hussein had fled to Iran. They asserted that other scientists who worked for the Hussein regime are currently in Syria and Jordan. A foreign ministry spokesman for Iran denied the charge as “completely baseless.”

THE MILITANT

Solidarity with striking grocery workers

Some 70,000 grocery workers are on strike in southern California and 3,300 more in West Virginia, Kentucky, and Ohio. The ‘Militant’ brings you the truth from the picket lines about the supermarket workers’ struggle to defend their health coverage and their union. Don’t miss a single issue!



SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

NEW READERS

☐ \$10 for 12 issues

RENEWAL

☐ \$15 for 12 weeks

☐ \$27 for 6 months

☐ \$45 for 1 year

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP

UNION/SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION PHONE

CLIP AND MAIL TO THE MILITANT,
152 WEST 36TH ST., #401 NEW YORK, NY 10018.

12 weeks of the Militant outside the U.S.: Australia and the Pacific, \$A20 • United Kingdom, £8 • Canada, Can\$15 • Caribbean and Latin America, \$15 • Continental Europe, £12 • France, 20 Euros • Iceland, Kr1,800 • New Zealand, NZ\$20 • Sweden, Kr75 (Send payment to addresses listed in business information box)

The Militant

Vol. 67/No. 43

Closing news date: November 25, 2003

Editor: ARGIRIS MALAPANIS
Business Manager: MICHAEL ITALIE
Washington Bureau Chief: SAM MANUEL
Editorial Staff: Róger Calero, Michael Italie, Martin Koppel, Sam Manuel, and Paul Pederson.
Published weekly except for one week in January, July, September and December.
The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 152 West 36th St., #401, New York, NY 10018. Telephone: (212) 594-1014; Fax (212) 594-1018.
E-mail: TheMilitant@verizon.net
The Militant **web site** is: www.themilitant.com
Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to The Militant Business Office, 152 West 36th St., #401, New York, NY 10018.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 152 West 36th St., #401, New York, NY 10018.

Subscriptions: **United States:** for one-year subscription send \$45 to above address.

Latin America, Caribbean: for one-year subscription send \$65, drawn on a U.S. bank, to above address. By first-class (airmail), send \$80.

Asia: Send \$80 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

Canada: Send Canadian \$75 for one-year subscription to Militant, 1237 Jean-Talon est, Montréal, QC. Postal Code: H2R 1W1.

United Kingdom: £50 for one year by check or international money order made out to Militant Distribution, 47 The Cut, London, SE1 8LF, England.

Southern Ireland and Continental Europe: £70 for one year by check or international money order made out to Militant Distribution at above address. **France:** Send 115 euros for one-year subscription to Militant, Centre MBE 175, 23 rue Lecourbe, 75015 Paris; chèque postale: 40 134 34 U.

Iceland: Send 6,500 Icelandic kronur for one-year subscription to Militant, P.O. Box 233, 121 Reykjavik.

Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark: 550 Swedish kronor for one year. Pay to Militant Swedish giro no. 451-32-09-9.

New Zealand: Send New Zealand \$90 to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand. **Australia:** Send Australian \$90 to P.O. Box 164, Campsie, Haymarket, NSW 2194, Australia. **Pacific Islands:** Send New Zealand \$90 to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand.

Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant's* views. These are expressed in editorials.

U.S. military steps up operations in Iraq

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

U.S. forces have broadened their military operations in Iraq, aimed at crushing remnants of the Saddam Hussein regime and others opposing the occupation. They have stepped up bombings of buildings and other selective targets, and carried out aggressive infantry sweeps, particularly in cities in central Iraq, bringing the total number arrested by the occupation forces to 5,000.

Traveling to London to meet with British prime minister Anthony Blair, U.S. president George Bush defended the imperialist occupation of Iraq as part of a “global war on terror.” In a November 20 speech he tied it to the truck bombing that had just taken place in Istanbul, Turkey, and to “terrorist” attacks over the past two years in Indonesia, Morocco, India, Kenya, Israel, and Saudi Arabia. “In some cases, the measured use of force is all that protects us from a chaotic world ruled by force,” he argued, in remarks echoed by Blair. (See front-page article on Bush’s visit.)

Responding to demonstrators in London who had organized peace marches to “S top Bush,” the U.S. president said the public protests proved his contention that the war and occupation in Iraq were justified as a way to end dictatorship and to guarantee freedom and security at home as well as in Iraq. Free speech, Bush emphasized, “is alive and well here in London. We have that at home, too. They now have that right in Baghdad as well.”

On November 21 Pentagon officials told *New York Times* reporters that to carry out its goals, Washington is now projecting a several-year-long occupation. They said they expect to maintain about 100,000 U.S. troops in Iraq through early 2006.

Two days earlier, U.S. jets dropped 2,000-pound bombs—among the biggest in the U.S. military’s non-nuclear arsenal—on

Baqouba, a town 30 miles northeast of Baghdad. Maj. Gordon Tate, a spokesman for the 4th Infantry Division, which called in the strikes, described the targets as “camps suspected to have been used for bomb-making.” Jets also dropped 1,000-pound bombs on “terrorist targets” near the northern city of Kirkuk, he said.

The bombing runs were part of a wide offensive launched in mid-November, as attacks on the occupying forces rose to their present levels of 25–30 a day. U.S. war planners have called the operation in and around Baghdad Operation Iron Hammer. The imperialist offensive in northeastern Iraq is dubbed Operation Ivy Cyclone. Commanders have used F-16 fighter-bombers, AC-130 gunships, assault helicopters, heavy artillery, and tanks.

The offensive has included a drive to assassinate or capture alleged leaders of the military resistance, such as Izzat Ibrahim al-Douri, former deputy head of the Baath Party; the destruction of buildings and sites claimed by U.S. commanders to have been used in attacks; and the jailing and interrogation of those accused of joining or aiding the anti-occupation forces.

5,000 in U.S. detention

U.S. officials told the press that in one four-day period in November, U.S. forces conducted dozens of raids and thousands of aggressive patrols—in Baghdad, Mosul, Haman, Tikrit, Balad, Iskandariyah, the Al-Anbar province, and other cities. At least 200 “anticoalition suspects” were captured and dozens of “anticoalition structures” destroyed. Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmett stated that U.S. forces have imprisoned a total of 5,000 people.

At a November 19 news conference Kimmett reported that U.S. troops at the borders with Syria, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia had

‘We demand to see our husbands’



AFP/Adalberto Roque

“We’re not asking for authorization to visit the United States as tourists, or to work there—much less to live there. We just want to see our husbands,” said Adriana Pérez (right), speaking at a November 20 press conference in Havana alongside Olga Salanueva (left). The two women, married to imprisoned Cuban revolutionaries Gerardo Hernández and René González, respectively, have been denied visas four times to enter the U.S. and visit their husbands. The two men are serving sentences in U.S. prisons of double life and 15 years, respectively, on frame-up charges that include conspiracy to commit espionage. Three others—Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González, and Ramón Labañino—were convicted along with them. The Cuban Five, as they are known, were collecting information on groups with long records of violent attacks against Cuba operating from U.S. soil with Washington’s complicity when federal agents arrested them in 1998. The five Cuban militants are in the process of appealing their sentences and convictions. Visit www.themilitant.com or www.freethefive.org to find out more about the fight to win their freedom.

stopped 198 people “without the proper credentials” from entering Iraq. In the central south zone under British command, he said, occupying forces “deported 77 illegal immigrants back to Iran.”

Maj. Gen. Charles Swannack, who commands the 82nd Airborne Division, stated November 18, “We are not finding foreign fighters coming across the borders in significant numbers to do the fighting; we’re finding mostly former [Saddam Hussein] regime loyalists doing that.”

Swannack said the use of “overwhelming

combat” power against select targets was based on the approach of “use a sledgehammer to crush a walnut.” He claimed that with U.S. military technology “we can do munitions from platforms way overhead that are very surgical and have very little collateral damage.” To a large extent, U.S. officers have so far sought to avoid large-scale “collateral damage”—Pentagon-speak for civilian casualties—in order to minimize popular opposition to the occupation.

In a November 13 speech to the U.S. Council on Foreign Relations, Douglas Feith, the under secretary of defense for policy, was one of the latest U.S. administration officials to speak at length about Washington’s goals in Iraq and more broadly.

Arguing from the standpoint of the U.S. capitalist rulers, Feith said that to win a “war on terror” there is “no practical alternative to a strategy of offense” as opposed to a defensive approach that would only lead to undermining “our way of life as a free and open society.” Instead, he said, “We have to reach out and hit the terrorists where they reside, plan and train.”

The U.S. government’s strategy in this offensive, said Feith, has three parts. The first part is military action, spying and disruption operations, killing or capturing targeted “terrorists,” and cutting off their sources of funds. The second part, the U.S. official said, is a political offensive to promote “democracy”—that is capitalism—against what he called “Islamism.” He said, “We refer to this part as ‘the battle of ideas.’” The third part of the strategy,” he said, “is securing the homeland.” Steps in that direction include the formation of the Department of Homeland Security and the “new Northern Command in which, for the first time, a combatant commander has the entire continental United States within his area of responsibility.”

The Northern Command was established by the Clinton administration and formally launched after the September 11 attacks with steps that include the mobilization of National Guard troops at airports, train stations, and other public facilities; the increased deployment of military aircraft over U.S. cities; and the stepped-up militarization of the U.S. borders.

As part of “securing the homeland,” Feith added, “we are in the process, also for the first time, of fielding defenses against ballistic missiles of all ranges.”

Feith reiterated the fact that Washington’s course is aimed not simply at Iraq but that Iran, Syria, Libya, and north Korea are on the “list of terrorist-sponsoring states.”

In addition, Feith hinted at U.S. military action inside Pakistan. “Afghanistan has a way to go before it achieves a stable, permanent government. Taliban forces are working regroup and attack, often from bases in the rough terrain of the tribal areas just across the Pakistan border,” he emphasized.

Pathfinder books on Cuban Revolution are big sellers at Montreal book fair

BY MICHEL PRAIRIE

MONTREAL—Pathfinder Press and the local Pathfinder bookstore participated in the annual Montreal Book Fair—the largest book fair in the French-speaking world after that of Paris—held here November 13–17. The publisher of revolutionary books last participated in the annual event in 1998.

Some 1,400 publishing houses and book distribution companies from France, Belgium, Switzerland, and Quebec occupied hundreds of stalls at the fair, as they do every year. This time, several Spanish-language publishing houses from Latin America also participated, sharing a large space in the exhibition hall.

The fair drew 120,000 people, showing its status as a major cultural event in this French-speaking state of Canada. Events were covered live on radio, and news reports were broadcast on television.

A special stand had been set up and a petition circulated during the fair by the Coalition in Favour of School Libraries, a grouping set up last year by writers, librarians, booksellers, publishers, and other book trade associations. The coalition is calling for increased financing for Quebec school libraries.

According to the Montreal daily *La Presse*, the Quebec Liberal Party government has budgeted to spend C\$3.75 (C\$1=US\$0.77) per student this year for the purchase of new books, down from \$5.29 five years ago, and just cancelled a \$70 million project aimed at renovating the province’s school libraries.

These steps are unpopular in Quebec, whose French-speaking majority has long been on the receiving end of discrimination by the Canadian ruling class. In the 1930s, for example, the province’s illiteracy rate was twice that of neighboring English-speaking Ontario. Of the 27 public libraries in Quebec at the time, only nine were French-language, even though French speakers amounted to 80 percent of the province’s population.

Today the Quebec government spends \$26 a year per person for public libraries, compared with \$35 in Ontario and British

Columbia. The Montreal library system has 2.5 books per person, compared with four in Vancouver and five in Toronto.

The Pathfinder team, which included volunteers from Boston and Toronto as well as Montreal, was kept busy by a steady stream of visitors to the booth. “You have damned nice books,” said one young Quebecois-Latina as she bought the Spanish-language editions of *Malcolm X Talks to Young People*, *Che Guevara Talks to Young People*, and *Socialism and Man in Cuba*, also by Che Guevara.

A few weeks before, she had met members of the Communist League and Young Socialists selling Pathfinder books, along with the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, in a subway station in the eastern part of Montreal.

Pathfinder’s books and pamphlets on the Cuban Revolution were the most popular single category, accounting for more than a third of the 36 books sold, including five copies of *Socialism and Man in Cuba*. One woman said that she remembered the publisher from its participation in the Havana International Book Fair in Cuba, where she lived for four years. The total value of sales was C\$671, helping to push the month’s sales for the Pathfinder bookstore in the city to more than \$1,000—the best monthly result in some years.

Volunteers promoted Pathfinder’s French-language titles using a specially produced leaflet. In the five years since Pathfinder last



Pathfinder booth at November 13–17 Montreal book fair

participated, it has significantly expanded the range of these titles in its catalog. A number were displayed prominently at the front of the stand, including *Capitalism’s World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium* by Jack Barnes, which attracted a lot of interest. Three copies—one each in Spanish, French, and English—were sold.

Team members also talked up the publisher’s web site—www.pathfinderpress.com—and sold several subscriptions to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*. A number of young people signed up to receive the weekly mailings for the Militant Labor Forum program held at the Pathfinder bookstore. One young librarian working in the Côte-St-Luc neighborhood took advantage of Pathfinder’s presence to help prepare for Black History Month in February, buying books by Malcolm X, Nelson Mandela, Thomas Sankara, and Víctor Dreke.

Judge in Colorado orders deportation of Irish freedom fighter

BY RÓGER CALERO

Former Irish political prisoner Ciarán Ferry has had his application for asylum in the United States turned down by a Colorado immigration judge. Ferry announced that he would appeal the verdict and continue his fight against the threat of deportation. Heaven Ferry, a leader of the defense effort and Ferry's wife, has undertaken a number of speaking engagements to build support for the fight.

In his November 4 ruling, Judge James Vandello said that Ciarán (pronounced Kee-ran) Ferry did not qualify for asylum because of a previous "serious nonpolitical crime"—a reference to his 1993 conviction and imprisonment in Belfast, Northern Ireland. Ferry was arrested after police claimed to have found two guns and ammunition in a car in which he was a passenger. He served seven years of a 22-year sentence in the H-Block wing of Northern Ireland's Long Kesh prison before being released in 2000 under the terms of the Good Friday agreement.

As precedent, Vandello cited a 1984 Board of Immigration decision against Peter McMullen, another immigrant from Ireland. Stating that McMullen was a member of the Irish Republican Army and had "participated in the persecution of others," the board declared that he was "therefore barred from receiving asylum."

The judge also stated that Ferry was a "late filer" for asylum "and is barred from asylum for that reason." He added that relocation in Britain was a "viable option" for Ferry, however "inconvenient" it might be.

The Irish prisoner's defenders have continued to explain the events that led up to his asylum application. Ferry married Heaven, who is a U.S. citizen, soon after his release. They lived in Belfast until emigrating to the United States—a decision that followed repeated reports that he was marked for assassination by pro-British death squads.

In spite of receiving a green card and a work permit, the former political prisoner was detained in January of this year after he and his wife turned up for what they thought would be a routine interview for

his permanent residency. He has been imprisoned ever since, and has been kept in solitary confinement for the majority of the time.

Ferry explained to the court that he applied for asylum "late," having already lodged an application for his green card. Judge Vandello said that although this was a "valid excuse," it "is not one that is recognized by the law."

The Irish Deportees of America Committee, an organization involved in the fight to stop the deportation of former Irish political prisoners, says that there are hundreds of families of former prisoners in the United States living under the threat of deportation on the basis of previous convictions stemming from their political activities in Northern Ireland.

Following the ruling, Heaven Ferry has spoken in opposition to the threatened



Above, Ciarán and Heaven Ferry at their August 2000 wedding, a month after his release from Long Kesh. A Colorado judge has ordered Ciarán deported. Right, Ciarán with daughter Fiona.



deportation of her husband at meetings in Detroit, Chicago, and Pittsburgh. To find out more about the case or to assist with the defense effort, contact the Irish American Unity Conference at (800) 947-4282 or visit www.iauc.org and www.freeciaranferry.com

Court reviews Padilla 'enemy combatant' case

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Two federal appeals court judges peppered government attorneys with questions at the opening of a hearing November 17 to determine whether the administration alone has the authority to declare U.S. citizens "enemy combatants," deny them access to a lawyers, and hold them indefinitely without charges. The three-judge panel is not expected to hand down a ruling for several weeks and the case will most likely end up at the Supreme Court.

The case is the latest example of tension between the administration and the courts over how far and how fast the government can press its attack on democratic rights under the cover of fighting its "war on terrorism." In a related matter the Supreme Court announced days earlier, over the objection of the Bush administration, that it would hear an appeal on behalf of citizens of other countries being detained under similar status at the U.S. prison camp in Guantánamo, Cuba.

The case before the appeals court involves

José Padilla, also known as Abdullah al-Muhajir, a U.S. citizen who was arrested in May 2002 at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport when he arrived there traveling from Pakistan. He was taken to New York for arraignment and given a court appointed attorney. Two days before a judge was to hear a challenge to Padilla's detention, however, the Bush administration declared him an "enemy combatant" and transferred Padilla to a Navy brig in South Carolina. Padilla has been held incommunicado there for 18 months without charges or access to his attorneys or family members.

Government attorneys argued that military principles, not the usual rules of a criminal court, must be applied in Padilla's case because of the "war on terrorism." Deputy Solicitor General Paul Clement said that the president as commander in chief has the power to detain military enemies.

The government bases that argument on the 1942 case of eight men who had all once lived in the United States but who were trained to use explosives in Berlin. The group was set ashore in two teams

by a German submarine along the Florida coast. Following their capture, Washington feared that the men might not be convicted in a civilian court because they had not committed a crime. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt decreed the eight must be tried by a military commission. All of the men were convicted and six were executed.

In a court room just blocks from the former site of the World Trade Center, government attorneys evoked scenes of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks saying "al-Qaeda had made the battlefields of the United States." In response, Judge Rosemary Pooler hinted at the dispute among the rulers over which branch of government has the authority to declare war, when she said, "If in fact, the battlefield is the United States, I think Congress has to say that, and I don't think they have yet."

"As terrible as 9/11 was," she continued, "it didn't repeal the Constitution."

Judge Barrington Parker added: "Were we to construe the Constitution as permitting this kind of power in the executive with only modest judicial review, we would be effecting a sea change in the constitutional life of this country and making changes that would be unprecedented in civilized society." Parker described the ease with which government attorneys transposed military rules into the civilian sphere as "troubling."

A third judge on the panel, Richard Wesley, was more sympathetic to the government's case but noted that the Patriot Act of 2001 placed strict limits on how long the government may detain a non-citizen without charges. He questioned why a citizen would be treated any differently.

Attorneys for Padilla called the government's action unprecedented. "Under this theory," said attorney Jenny Martinez, "the government could do this to anyone at any time. They can pick up any person off the street and so long as the president turns in a piece of paper that says that that person is associated with al-Qaeda, that person has no rights and the courts are powerless to intervene."

The designation of Padilla as an enemy combatant is based on information from two individuals who claim he met with leaders of al-Qaeda and discussed plans to detonate a radiological bomb in the United States. The device, dubbed a "dirty bomb," uses conventional explosives to disperse low grade radioactive material. Padilla's attorneys said that one of the individuals has since recanted his accusations and the other has a reputation of providing false information.

In addition to Padilla, Ali Saleh Kahlah al-Marri, a citizen of Qatar, and Esam Hamdi from Louisiana have also been designated "enemy combatants" and are being held under similar conditions. Al-Marri is accused of being an al-Qaeda "sleeper agent." Hamdi was captured during fighting in Afghanistan. His appeal, which was denied by judges from the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals, is now before the Supreme Court.

What's 'war on terror' and resistance in Iraq?

Continued from Page 10

anti-war movement here and around the world must give its unconditional support to the Iraqi anti-colonial resistance." A more recent article by Fred Goldstein in the November 6 *Workers World* stated, referring to the guerrilla attacks on U.S. and other occupation forces in Iraq, "The war of resistance is moving in the direction of a genuine people's war with widespread popular support."

The logic of these statements is a stance of political support for the Baathist regime of Saddam Hussein and favoring its return to power. The recent attacks on U.S., Italian, and other troops in Iraq have been largely carried out by remnants of the brutal party-police state the Baathist Party led, not a popular guerrilla force like the National Liberation Front of Vietnam that earned

that popularity through its decades-long fight against French, Japanese, and U.S. imperialism. The attacks have been concentrated in the Sunni-dominated region of central Iraq, which had been the Baathist Party apparatus's main stronghold. That's why the claims by the U.S. forces of support or at least acceptance of their occupation by many, if not most, Iraqis are not simply a hoax.

Most news reports from Iraq show that U.S. forces have faced far fewer attacks in southern Iraq than they have in the Sunni heartland.

The reason is that much of the population in the south is from the Shiite Islamic majority and had faced fierce discrimination from Iraq's predominantly Sunni ruling clique, including bloody repression by the

Hussein regime during the Shiite rebellions at the end of the 1991 U.S.-led Gulf War.

A November 24 *New York Times* article stated, "Hezbollah, the Iranian-backed Shiite group, has established a significant presence in Iraq, but is not taking part in attacks on American forces inside the country.... Iran is believed to be restraining Hezbollah from attacking American troops." Tehran fears Washington's concerted efforts to undermine Iranian sovereignty and push for another "regime change" in the region.

Not only in Iraq and Iran but throughout the Mideast, anti-imperialist-minded workers and farmers have no leadership that represents their interests. Decades of Stalinist counterrevolutionary policies, both by Moscow and by Stalinist organizations throughout the Middle East, created a void that bourgeois nationalist organizations waving Islamic banners fill today—groups such as Hezbollah, Hamas, and al-Qaeda, which have nothing in common with the popular liberation movements that marked an earlier period.

Years of Stalinist betrayals in Iraq helped pave the way for the Baathist regime to come to power, which under Hussein beheaded the 1958 popular democratic revolution and dealt crushing blows to the working class.

As the editorial in the November 17 *Militant* put it, "Revolutionists in Iraq today would fight for Iraqi sovereignty, which the U.S. armed forces prevent. At the same time, they would be opposed to the return of the Baathist regime. They would use whatever civic space exists to build and consolidate a revolutionary organization that could lead working people there down the road to get rid of the U.S. troops and keep the United Nations out as well."

—CALENDAR—

NEW YORK

Manhattan

Picket to Protest the Sentencing of the Vieques 12. Thurs., Dec. 4, 5:30 p.m. *At the United Nations, Ralph Bunche Park, E 42nd St. between 1st and 2nd Aves. Tel: New York, (718) 601-4751, (212) 927-9065; New Jersey, (201) 435-3244. ProLibertad Freedom Campaign.*

The Fight to Free All Puerto Rican Political Prisoners. Speakers: Representative, ProLibertad Freedom Campaign; Martin Koppel, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., Dec. 5. Dinner 6:30 p.m., program 7:30 p.m. *545 8th Ave., 14th Floor. Donation: \$5 dinner, \$5 program. Tel: (212) 695-7358. Sponsor: the Militant Labor Forum.*

U.S. Navy Out of Vieques and All of Puerto Rico: Celebrate New Year's Eve in Solidarity

with Vieques. Wed., Dec. 31, 8:00 p.m. *Taino Towers Lower Level Ballroom, 240 E. 123 St., off 2nd Ave. Tel: (212) 348-8004, (212) 426-7552. Sponsors: Todo El Barrio Con Vieques, East Harlem Pilot Block, Todo Nueva York Con Vieques.*

NEW JERSEY

Newark

March and Rally to Demand Release of Farouk Abdel Muhti

Sat., Nov. 29, 12:30 p.m. Meet outside Newark Penn Station (Raymond Plaza West entrance)—March to Peter W. Rodino Jr. Federal Building at Broad St. and Court one block past Newark City Hall. *For more information email: freefarouk@yahoo.com*

Campaigners score victory in sales drive

BY PATRICK O’NEILL

Touchdown! Partisans of the *Militant* sealed their victory in the last 24 hours of the eight-week sales campaign, sending in 84 subscriptions for a total of 991. They also went over the *Perspectiva Mundial* goal of 400, selling 414 subscriptions to the Spanish-language monthly, 32 of them the last day.



Militant/Dan Fein

Militant campaigners sell subscriptions and books in Brooklyn, New York, on the last weekend of the circulation drive.

Just over 400 of these readers took advantage of a special 25 percent discount to buy a Pathfinder book—91 short of the goal of 500.

During the drive campaigners used the *Militant*, *PM*, and Pathfinder books to build solidarity with several important labor battles—from the union-organizing fight by workers at the Co-Op mine in Utah, to the ongoing struggle by workers at Iceland’s Kárahnjúkar Power Station Project to improve conditions and wages for all.

Tony Lane from Pittsburgh reported on a sales trip to West Virginia in the last week of the drive. The team sold dozens of copies of the *Militant* to miners at the Cannelton and Robinson Run mines, he said. Cannelton is owned by Horizon Natural Resources. The bosses’ attempt there to impose greater health-care costs on miners prompted a union-backed protest march in Ashland, Kentucky, on November 6.

From Atlanta and Birmingham, campaigners reported on two days of successful sales at the annual School of the Americas protest against the U.S. training of military officers for Latin American governments.

Pathfinder titles carrying the speeches and writings of leaders of the Cuban Revolution proved especially attractive. Twelve people bought *Militant* subscriptions, and volunteers also sold \$450 worth of books.

Campaigners in Birmingham also reported that in the past two weeks two fellow workers in an underground mine renewed their *Militant* subscriptions. One delivered a clear message to his co-worker, a supporter of the *Militant*: “Don’t let my sub run out!” he said.

In the last week of the drive 241 people subscribed to the *Militant* and 96 to *Perspectiva Mundial*. Welcome aboard!

Oil workers, miners back Co-Op union fight

Continued from front page

is enough reason to support your fight. If you stay together and stay strong, we will be with you all the way. I look forward to the day you will be able to stand alongside us as members of the UMWA.”

The 74 miners at Co-Op, most of whom are from Mexico, are fighting for decent wages, benefits, job safety, and dignity. Most earned only \$5.25 to \$7 an hour and had no health insurance or retirement benefits. They were forced to work under unsafe working conditions in violation of federal mine regulations. The conditions imposed by the Co-Op bosses were responsible for three deaths on the job in the last half of the 1990s—half of the total coal mine deaths in the state.

“I was able to attend the meeting of the Deer Creek miners,” Arturo Rodríguez, a 14-year veteran miner at CW Mining Co., also known as Co-Op, told the meeting. “I was very glad I was able to go because I see now more than ever why we need to do this. More of us should go to one of these meetings especially for some of us who may be getting weak knees. You see the support we are getting and become more convinced of what we are doing.”

CW Mining fired the miners en masse September 22 after they protested the arbitrary suspension of a co-worker, with intention to discharge. According to a UMWA press release, three-quarters of the company’s 83 hourly employees have signed a representation petition with the union. With the UMWA’s help, the miners have since turned the lockout into an unfair labor practice strike and have been picketing the Co-Op mine.

The mine owners, the Kingstons, are a capitalist family notorious in the region for their brutality against workers they employ in their \$150 million business empire that stretches across six western states. They are also widely despised by working people for their abuse of women. One of the directors of the Co-Op mine, John Kingston, was convicted for savagely beating his daughter who had fled a forced polygamous marriage to her uncle, David Kingston, who spent four years in jail for sexual abuse of the 16-year-old.

“I’m proud to be here today,” Buddy Beck told the gathering. “This kind of solidarity and movement is good for everybody. We are doing this not for you, but for us.” Beck, vice president of the Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy Workers International Union (PACE) Local 8-0931, helped organize the trip to Huntington.

“My grandfather was a coal miner in Pennsylvania where he helped organize the union among Polish, Greek, German, Italian, and English-speaking miners,” Beck continued. “The union published a bulletin in those five languages. It was because the UMWA forged unity among all those workers that it became one of the strongest unions in the country. Your fight is one of the most important struggles taking place in this country. If you keep that unity and stay strong, we promise you we will be right here with you.”

The oil workers had been organizing to collect donations of food and money for a couple of weeks.

PACE members who came to Huntington said they had to counter arguments by some of their fellow unionists about why it is important to back the overwhelmingly immigrant coal miners here. “There has been some confusion among PACE members as to why this campaign is taking place,” said a flyer PACE locals posted at various workplaces in Salt Lake City. “Today, this strike in Huntington, Utah, is the most important strike in the United States! We cannot let these strikers be broken. Our grandfathers and great grandfathers formed the industrial unions. They built those unions by overcoming language barriers and racial prejudice. These immigrant workers are fighting the same battle our ancestors fought. Defending these workers and helping them fight goes to the heart of the labor movement. Race baiting and immigrant bashing is the bosses’ game—not ours.”

The PACE delegation brought two tons of food for the Co-Op miners.

The embattled coal miners had addressed three meetings of PACE union locals in the first half of November. “PACE workers have donated some \$3,000 so far,” said

Ana María Sánchez, from the Co-Op miners leadership committee. “Forty-five workers from the Chevron refinery also donated \$25 Smith Food coupons each, totaling over \$1,200 that our food committee can use to buy whatever is needed. The oil workers also brought cash donations, including some \$50 dollars from the staff of a radio station that has been helping. They also brought three pick-up trucks loaded with food that had been collected at KRCL 90.9 FM radio, thanks to the efforts of the Co-Op Miners Solidarity Committee in Salt Lake together with Gena Edvalson, the public affairs director.”

The November 22 event included a report from Co-Op miners who had just returned from a trip to the Navajo Nation. The UMWA locals there hosted a visit by the Huntington miners.

“The trip we made this week to visit our Navajo brothers was worth it. I never imagined the kind of welcome we received,” said Ricardo Chávez. “I was very impressed with what I saw—the Navajo miners have a lot of respect for each other. I admire what I saw and came back more convinced that we need to be organized. It is a necessity for us to organize ourselves even better. We invited the Navajos to visit us. They explained they have been wanting to come, but they have been forced to work a lot of hours and as soon as they get a break for the holidays they are planning to be up here.”

A number of Co-Op miners said they gained a better appreciation of the kind of struggles the Navajos have waged to build and defend the union. “When we went to visit the Navajo miners,” said Jesús Galavis, another Co-Op miner, “they gave us a very beautiful sticker with their union local number on it. I am saving this sticker for the day that we win this fight. I can’t wait to put it on my hard hat and go into to the mine and see the boss’s faces when they see this sticker on my hat.”

“We spoke at two union meetings of UMWA Local 1332,” said Alyson Kennedy, a member of the Co-Op miners outreach committee, referring to one of the locals on the Navajo Nation that Co-Op miners visited. “The local voted to give us \$500. They also took up a collec-



Militant/Anne Carroll

Robert Silliman (left), member of United Mine Workers of America Local 1759 from Deer Creek mine in Huntington, Utah, brings greetings to Co-Op miners at their food distribution center in Huntington’s town hall, November 22.

tion at the meetings that netted another \$136, in addition to paying the expenses for our trip. Two women from the women’s auxiliary were at the meetings. The women told us they are planning to organize a raffle to raise money for us. The auxiliary was formed during their last strike and is still active. Sandy Jesús, the president of the local, and Bob Brown, the vice president, took us to visit the Navajo Nation’s government office. Near this office is ground considered sacred by the Navajo.”

The Navajo miners described four strikes they have been through, she stated. Their last walkout was in 2000 and lasted 87 days. “They advised us many times to stick this out,” Kennedy said. “They explained to us that the company out there, P&M, said all of the same things Co-Op is telling us—they would close the mine, they would never give us what we were demanding—but they stuck it out and they won. They pointed out that they made gains in all of their strikes. Bob Brown showed us a beautiful scrapbook of all these struggles.”

A number of the miners said financial support is needed to help sustain them in their struggle. Those wishing to help can make out checks or money orders to the Co-Op Miners Relief Fund and send them to 525 So. 1st St., Price, UT 84501.

Militant/Perspectiva Mundial Fall Subscription Drive September 27–November 23: Final Chart								
Country	Militant			PM	Book			
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold	Goal	Sold	
ICELAND	15	19	127%	1	0	10	8	
NEW ZEALAND								
Auckland	15	16	107%	1	0	5	4	
Christchurch	12	14	117%	1	1	6	4	
N.Z. total	27	30	111%	2	1	11	8	
UNITED STATES								
Utah	10	15	150%	10	11	8	5	
Des Moines	25	33	132%	23	29	15	18	
Cleveland	15	19	127%	5	7	10	8	
Western Col.	15	18	120%	10	10	8	8	
Omaha	22	26	118%	38	36	15	16	
Atlanta	40	47	118%	17	16	25	25	
Los Angeles	60	68	113%	30	38	35	35	
Birmingham	18	20	111%	3	3	5	5	
Newark	55	60	109%	20	21	30	31	
Houston	25	27	108%	10	12	20	22	
New York	75	81	108%	35	35	40	42	
Pittsburgh	25	27	108%	2	4	12	6	
Seattle	25	27	108%	6	6	10	11	
Washington	25	27	108%	12	11	11	11	
NE Pennsylvania	20	21	105%	8	4	10	7	
Boston	40	42	105%	30	35	25	29	
Detroit	25	26	104%	8	8	15	12	
San Francisco	50	51	102%	20	16	40	18	
Philadelphia	30	30	100%	7	6	7	10	
Chicago	40	40	100%	25	26	25	17	
Tampa	20	19	95%	8	7	10	3	
Tucson	7	6	86%	2	1		0	
Miami	42	33	79%	12	12	21	7	
Twin Cities	45	30	67%	35	27	15	5	
U.S. total	754	793	105%	376	381	408	351	
UNITED KINGDOM								
Cent. Scotland	8	9	113%	0	0	4	6	
London	25	25	100%	5	4	10	12	
UK total	33	34	103%	5	4	14	18	
CANADA								
Montreal	12	13	108%	6	6	15	10	
Vancouver	30	30	100%	5	5	15	8	
Toronto	25	25	100%	5	3	15	8	
CANADA total	67	68	101%	16	14	45	26	
SWEDEN								
Göteborg	10	11	110%	2	4	5	3	
Stockholm	8	7	88%	5	7	5	7	
SWEDEN Total	18	18	100%	7	11	10	10	
AUSTRALIA	30	29	97%	5	3	15	6	
Int'l totals	944	991	105%	406	414	494	409	
Goal/Should be	950	950	100%	400	400	500	500	
IN THE UNIONS								
	Militant			PM		Book		
	Goal			Goal		Goal		
AUSTRALIA								
AMIEU	4	6	150%			1	0	
CANADA								
UNITE	3	3	100%	4	0	4	0	
UFCW	10	2	20%	2	2	8	0	
Total	13	5	38%	6	2	12	0	
ICELAND								
Hlíf	1	1	100%			1	1	
NEW ZEALAND								
NDU	2	1	50%	0		1	0	
MWU	2	0	0%	0		1	0	
Total	4	1	25%	0		2	0	
SWEDEN								
Livs	3	2	67%	2	1	3	2	
UNITED STATES								
UFCW	50	51	102%	75	77	30	32	
UMWA	24	21	88%	6	10	9	9	
UNITE	25	18	72%	22	20	12	11	
Total	99	90	91%	103	107	51	52	

AMIEU—Australasian Meat Industry Employees’ Union; Hlíf—General Workers Union in Hafnarfjörður; LIVS—Food Workers Union; MUA—Maritime Union of Australia; MWU—Meat Workers Union; NDU—National Distribution Union; UFCW—United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA—United Mine Workers of America.

Saharawi fighter addresses Polisario congress from jail

BY PAUL PEDERSON

TIFARITI, Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic—"The political prisoners continue our fight against the king of Morocco for the independence of Western Sahara," said Ali Salem Tamek, speaking by satellite telephone from his cell in Morocco's Ait Melloul prison to the 1,600 delegates attending the 11th Congress of the Polisario Front. "The Saharawi population in the occupied zone is against the Moroccan occupation and remains strong in its sympathy with the Polisario Front in the face of the barbaric repression that the Moroccan authorities continue to carry out."

The aim of the congress was to chart a course for the next four years for the Polisario Front, the organization leading the struggle for independence for Western Sahara, a former colony of Spain in northwest Africa that has been occupied since 1975 by Morocco, with the backing of Madrid, Paris, and Washington. Salem Tamek's greetings were a highlight of the five-day gathering. They confirmed the continuing resistance

young Saharawis from the occupied zone, to escape and join the Polisario Front. They were caught by the Moroccan army along the border with Algeria and he was jailed for a year.

He made a second attempt to escape the occupied territory and join the freedom fighters in 1997. Caught at the border, he was again thrown in jail. This time, under the pressure of an international campaign on his behalf, the Moroccan authorities released Tamek after a month in prison.

On Aug. 26, 2002, Tamek presented Moroccan authorities with a petition demanding to be allowed to run in the legislative elections as a representative of a newly formed party, the Unified Socialist Left-Wing Party, which includes among its members a number of former political prisoners. He was arrested on the spot and sentenced 15 days later to two years in prison.

Tamek is also a member of the Forum for Truth and Justice Western Sahara Section, an organization founded in 2000 to expose internationally the brutality of the Moroccan



Ali Salem Tamek, a Saharawi political prisoner jailed by Morocco in August 2002 for his activities in support of independence for Western Sahara.

and inside the occupied zone. "They have an unemployment rate of something like 60 percent. Many are forced to live on relief and workers face repression just for fighting for union rights."

Cheikh said that three of the 24 members of the Ujtsario general council are living in the occupied zone. He explained that the Saharawi workers who are living under Morocco's boot have made a vital contribution to the independence struggle, forming an important source of supplies, intelligence, and a base of resistance to the occupiers.

In 1996 some 200 Saharawi workers at the phosphate mines in Bou Craa, among the largest deposits of the ore in the world, went on strike for better working conditions and against the plunder of their national wealth. Miners occupied the headquarters of the owners and then faced reprisals from the Moroccan regime for their strike. A small minority of the mining jobs are held by Saharawis today, Cheikh said.

In the fall of 2001 Moroccan king Mohammed VI visited Western Sahara for the first time, sparking a wave of protests. Dozens were rounded up for participating in sit-ins and other protest activity. Twenty-three of those arrested in these protests participated in a hunger strike at Al Ayoun prison in December of that year.

The strike at Al Ayoun, by 131 Saharawi prisoners held there, shone a light on the conditions that these prisoners face. They were protested the overcrowding, filth, and brutal treatment by the Moroccan police. The prison, which was built to house between 200 and 250 inmates, held over 700 at the time of the protest. They were also protesting the torture that Saharawi prisoners are routinely subjected to at the hands of the prison authorities.

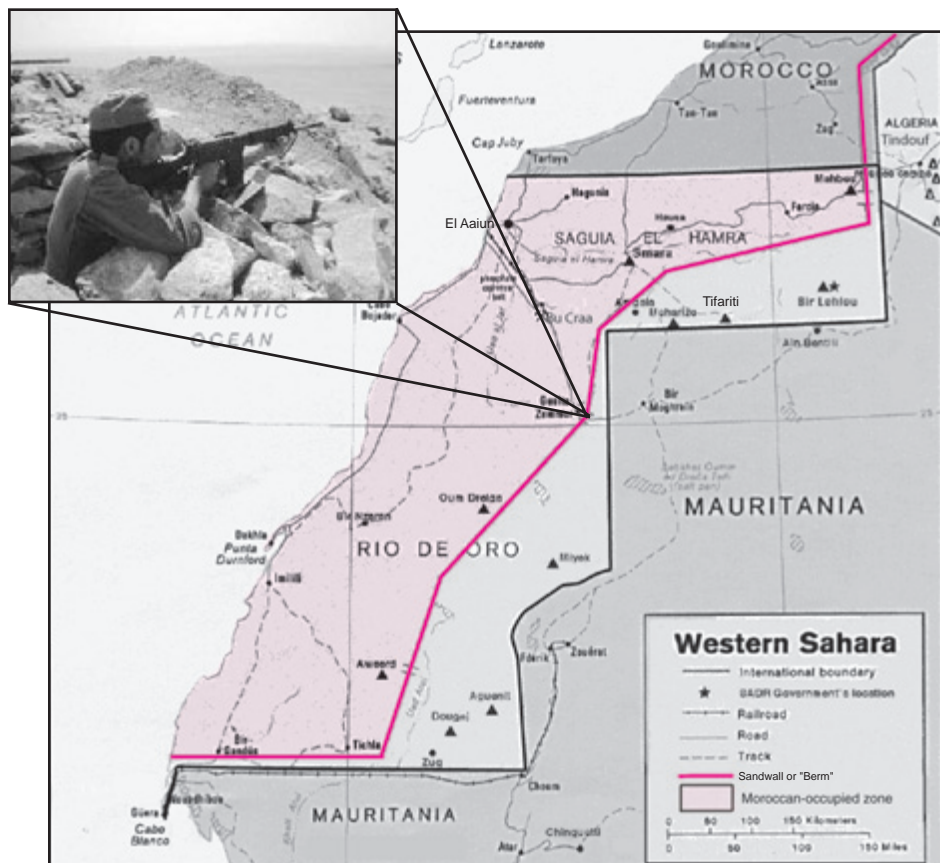
fore and he told them then that he was being subjected to torture on a daily basis.

Thousands of Saharawis were "disappeared" by Rabat in the course of the 28-year independence fight. The monarchy reserves this practice not only for members of the independence movement, but also for anyone who falls out of favor with King Mohammed VI.

After years of denying they existed, the Moroccan regime released 300 of the "disappeared" in 1991, the same year Rabat signed a cease-fire with Polisario. Today, the International Office for the Respect of Human Rights in Western Sahara (BIRDSHO) has a list of 526 Saharawis who are "disappeared" and remain unaccounted for.

The existence of hundreds of Polisario fighters who were captured in battle has also been denied by the Moroccan government. In 1996, 66 of these POWs were released. Polisario says some 150 more are still being held incommunicado by Morocco, a claim the Moroccan authorities deny.

Twenty of these freed POWs met with participants in the congress and told their



Former Spanish colony of Western Sahara, four-fifths of which is occupied by Morocco. Inset, Moroccan soldier at Guelta Zemmor guarding 1,500-mile sandwall built by Morocco with U.S. aid to keep independence fighters out of their land.

inside the four-fifths of Western Sahara that Morocco controls.

The congress took place in Tifariti, a town in territory liberated by the Polisario Front through its 16-year war with Morocco. Tifariti is just 40 miles from a 1,500-mile sandwall—defended by landmines, U.S.-supplied electronic defenses, and more than 100,000 Moroccan troops—that divides the 20 percent of the country that has been liberated from the occupiers' boot.

Ali Salem Tamek

Tamek, 29, has been imprisoned since August 2002 on a two-year sentence for "threatening the interior security of the state and affiliating to the organizations of the Polisario Front." He is one of 16 Saharawi political prisoners currently held in Moroccan jails.

In December 2002, Tamek waged a hunger strike demanding to be recognized as a political prisoner. After a broad campaign, Moroccan authorities transferred him to a jail in Rabat, Morocco's capital, and granted him his own cell. The Moroccan government, however, transferred him in May to a prison with worse conditions, a move that Tamek and supporters of his fight around the world have condemned.

The independence fighter was imprisoned twice previously. In 1993 at the age of 19 he attempted, along with a group of

can regime. The group played a key role in mounting the international campaign that led to the release of the longest-held Western Saharan political prisoner, Sidi Mohamed Daddach, in November 2001—after 23 years in Moroccan prisons.

The Moroccan government has tried to break up the group. Three of its leaders—Salek Bazaid, Moussamih Baba, and Bourhil Mohamed Lamine were arrested in 2002 and sentenced to 10 years in prison. This was the most severe sentence to be imposed on independence fighters in the occupied territories since 1999.

Conditions in occupied zone

The majority of the native population of Western Sahara, nearly 200,000 in total, lives in exile in camps in Tindouf, Algeria.

The official population of Moroccan-occupied Western Sahara is approximately 262,000, but Rabat refuses to count separately the native Saharawi population from those who settled there as part of the Moroccan occupation. According to figures collected by the UN, some 82,000 people in the occupied territory claimed Saharawi ancestry.

"Their conditions are worse than the rest of the population," said Mohamed Cheikh, the general secretary of the Saharawi trade union federation Ujtsario, which organizes Saharawi workers both in the refugee camps



Some of the 66 Polisario POWs released by Morocco in 1996—150 remain in prison.

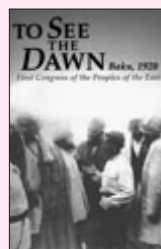
The disappeared

In November 2002 the relatives of Boucetta Mohamed Barka, 35, a Saharawi prisoner who was serving an eight-month sentence at Al Ayoun prison on a minor charge, were informed by Moroccan authorities that he had died in prison. When Barka's family members came to retrieve the body, they found his corpse still handcuffed and covered with burn marks and bruises. His family reported that he had been in good health when they visited him two days be-

stories of life in Moroccan prison. Many were held as long as 18 years with no contact with each other or the outside world until 1993, when Rabat admitted their existence and negotiations began for their release.

Over the past several months Polisario has released 543 Moroccan POWs that the independence fighters captured in the course of the 16-year war. More than 600 remain in POW camps near Tindouf. The Moroccan government has refused to negotiate in any meaningful way for their release.

Further reading from Pathfinder



To See the Dawn; Baku 1920, First Congress of the Peoples of the East

How can peasants and workers in the colonial world achieve freedom from imperialist exploitation? By what means can working people overcome divisions incited by their national ruling classes and act together for their common class interests? These questions were addressed by 2,000 delegates to the 1920 Congress of the Peoples of the East. \$19.95

Lenin's Final Fight, Speeches and Writings 1922-23

In the early 1920s Lenin waged a political battle in the Communist Party leadership in the USSR to maintain the course that had enabled workers and peasants to overthrow the tsarist empire, carry out the first socialist revolution, and begin building a world communist movement. The issues posed in this fight—from the leadership's class composition, to the worker-peasant alliance and the battle against national oppression—remain central to world politics today. \$19.95



ORDER ONLINE AT WWW.PATHFINDERPRESS.COM

Bush UK trip bolsters ‘war on terrorism’

Continued from front page

ring to Saudi Arabia and other countries, he added, “We will expect a higher standard from our friends in the region.” Meeting such standards, of course, makes the job of U.S. imperialism more complex than simply imposing completely subservient regimes.

The success of the U.S. president’s trip was only reinforced by the anti-American, pro-British tone of the demonstrations in the United Kingdom, organized by the Stop the War Coalition and other forces around the theme “Stop Bush.” Focusing their fire on the U.S. government and portraying Blair as a mere “puppet” of Washington, they buttressed the nationalist framework of the British rulers’ efforts to assert their own imperialist interests in the world.

During his visit, Bush gave the streets to the opposition, not carrying out a major motorcade or many public appearances. The anti-Bush protests, however, were smaller than earlier peace actions.

In the first full state visit ever by a U.S. president to the United Kingdom, Bush joined with Blair in highlighting the “special relationship” between the two governments. Since the post-World War II period, the phrase “special relationship” has been used to refer to the long-term strategic military alliance and economic ties between the wealthy ruling families on either side of the Atlantic. Because of their declining world role, Britain’s rulers have relied on this alliance to give them extra clout in their rivalry with other imperialist powers in Europe.

London currently has 9,000 troops in the imperialist occupation force in Iraq—the largest contingent after the 130,000 U.S. troops.

After the United Kingdom, the imperialist power that has aligned itself most closely with Washington is Italy, one of the governments that have received the short end of the stick as members of the European Union, which is dominated by German and French imperialism. With 3,000 soldiers, Rome has the third-largest number of troops in Iraq, followed by



Italian troops guard destroyed carabinieri base in Nasiriya, Iraq, November 12.

2,350 from Poland, 1,650 from Ukraine, 1,254 from Spain, 1,100 from the Netherlands, and 800 from Australia.

Visit fuels big-business debate

Bush’s visit fueled an ongoing debate among capitalist politicians and in the big-business press here around Britain’s relations with Europe and the United States. It reflected the divisions in the British ruling class over how to shore up the place of British imperialism in the world—between those who favor closer ties to the European Union, which is dominated by Berlin and Paris, and those who advocate adhering more strictly to the role of remaining Washington’s junior partner.

The debate intensified when, on the second day of Bush’s visit, two bombs exploded in Istanbul, Turkey, outside the British consulate and the offices of the British bank HSBC killing the British consul general and 26 others. A statement

purporting to come from a unit of al-Qaeda claimed responsibility for the attacks. The bombings pushed the Turkish rulers more toward Washington’s camp.

Joined by Bush at a press conference that day, Blair used the bombings to underline his support for British participation in future U.S.-led wars waged in the name of fighting “terrorism.” He declared, “There must be no holding back in the face of this menace, in attacking it wherever and whenever we can and in defeating it utterly.” Arguing for the continued deployment of British forces in Iraq and elsewhere, Blair emphasized, “We stay until the job gets done...done in Iraq, done elsewhere in the world.”

In hand-wringing editorials, newspapers critical of the Blair government warned about the perils of this course, but offered no alternative policy. In a November 21 editorial entitled “Reaping the whirlwind,” the liberal, pro-Europe

Guardian said, “This does not look like a war that is being won. It looks like a conflict that is in serious danger of escalating out of control.” The editors called for a “radical review of policy.” The paper complained in a subsequent editorial that “our national interests are now worse off”

The *Independent* lambasted Blair for getting “nothing” out of his talks with Bush—“Nothing on the British detainees at Guantánamo Bay. Nothing on steel tariffs.” The U.S. government imposed protectionist tariffs on European steel last year, and the European Union has threatened to retaliate by mid-December on \$2.2 billion of U.S. exports if Washington refuses to repeal them. Bush has said he is considering the issue.

In contrast, the *Daily Telegraph* said it was important that “Bush was in London this week, reinforcing our enduring ties with America.” *The Times* praised the U.S. president for his “carefully structured” speech outlining the “three pillars” of U.S. foreign policy in the Mideast. The right-wing *Sun* hailed the Bush visit as a “big success.” It added, “The Bush-Blair partnership is as solid as a rock and is a vital asset in these dangerous times.... This nation will not be cowed by the Istanbul bomb outrage.”

‘Stop Bush’ protests

A series of protests were organized by the Stop The War coalition and other groups around the theme “Stop Bush.” The British nationalist, anti-American theme of these protests was underlined at the November 20 demonstration of more than 100,000 people that rallied in Trafalgar Square. A 20-foot effigy of Bush was toppled to the ground in imitation of the bringing down of a large statue of Saddam Hussein when invading U.S.-British forces took over Baghdad in April. TV coverage of the rally also showed demonstrators burning a U.S. flag.

Demonstrators carried signs referring to Blair as Bush’s “poodle” and reading, “Troops out now—Stop the organ grinder and his monkey,” with the prime minister of the British imperialist state portrayed as Bush’s monkey.

Referring to the Istanbul bombings, Lindsay German, convener of the Stop The War Coalition, said, “I don’t think it can be any coincidence that these attacks have come against British targets on the day that George Bush is visiting London.” Her argument repeated a commonly heard nationalist theme that “Bush’s war” is hurting “our interests” by making Britain vulnerable to “terrorism.”

A half-page ad in the November 20 issue of *The Times* entitled “An Open Letter to President George W. Bush,” sponsored by a campaign called Our World Our Say, stated, “These protestors are not extremists. They are managers, builders, artists and stockbrokers.” It said that as a result of Bush’s policies the United Kingdom had become “one of the world’s foremost targets of fundamentalist hatred.”

The right-wing *Daily Telegraph* editorialized sympathetically about the demonstrators, stating, “Most of the marchers were decent people—even if we happen to think they are misguided.” John Hayes, a millionaire with more than 100 employees, told the paper, “I’m here because I think we are playing into the hands of terrorists with this occupation of Iraq.”

Current and former figures within the Labour Party were prominent in the debate. The mayor of London, Kenneth Livingstone, who was expelled from the Labour Party three years ago but is expected to rejoin in time for the mayoral elections next year, said in an interview with *The Ecologist* magazine that Bush was “the greatest threat to human life on this planet that we’ve probably ever seen.”

Quoted in the press a few days before Bush’s arrival in London, former foreign secretary Robin Cook said, “If the state visit takes on the character of the U.S. boss visiting his wholly owned British subsidiary, it will do further damage to relations with the Bush administration.” Another former cabinet minister, Clare Short, who resigned from the government after the war, urged people to protest because Bush had “made the world more dangerous.”

UK protesters demand prosecution of killer cops

Continued from front page

place November 15 in Birmingham, England, to condemn the killing of Mikey Powell, another Black man who died while under arrest in the early hours of September 8.

“We are calling for the police officers that were involved to be charged,” organizers of the Brixton march said in the flyer publicizing the action. “We are calling for an independent and external inquiry into Black deaths in custody.”

Protesters braved a pouring rain and marched through Brixton High Street to the location where Bishop had been stopped and arrested by the police on Nov. 22, 2001. Others joined the protest as campaigners drew bystanders to march towards the Brixton cop station, where Bishop had died four hours after his arrest.

“We are here today to make everyone aware that we can fight for justice,” Doreen Bishop, Ricky Bishop’s mother, told protesters. “We need to build a movement to stop police brutality. If it takes the rest of my life that’s what I’ll do.”

After a recent inquest into Bishop’s death, the coroner concluded that he had died from “misadventure,” a verdict which exonerates the cops. According to accounts by witnesses and his family, however, Ricky Bishop was stopped, arrested, and taken to Brixton police station, where he was assaulted and brutalized by police officers.

“Two police officers held Ricky to the ground whilst he was having a heart attack,” Rhonda Bishop, Ricky Bishop’s sister, told the *Militant* in an interview. “Only then did they go and call for a paramedic.” None of the eight police officers involved in this killing have been suspended or prosecuted. They remain on active duty. Doreen Bishop said Ricky’s family and their supporters are now looking into initiating private prosecu-



Hundreds march in Birmingham November 15 to demand justice for Mikey Powell, killed by cops.

tion against these officers, as criminal prosecution is excluded due to the costs of such a trial.

“Ricky was taken to Brixton police station, assaulted and brutalized, then drugs pushed into his mouth,” said the flyer publicizing the November 22 action. “The police officers involved in this crime then colluded together to cover up the violent assault. The inquest (which took place recently) was very misleading as vital evidence was withheld by the Metropolitan Police. The jury was only given a choice of 3 verdicts: death by misadventure, narrative, and an open verdict.” The latter two are methods of arriving at a verdict without assigning blame to anyone.

Rupert Sylvester, father of Roger Sylvester, who was also killed in police custody, spoke at the rally. “We’re here to support the Bishop family,” he said. “We were in Birmingham last week to support the Powell family. Wherever there is some action, be it Brixton or Timbuktu, we will be there.”

In October the inquest into the death of Roger Sylvester returned a verdict of unlawful killing. Eight cops involved were suspended as a result. Sylvester had

been arrested at his home Jan. 11, 1999. He died seven days later, after being held by force by six to eight police officers for over 20 minutes, causing him to stop breathing.

The Sylvester family joined the Powell family and hundreds of others at the Birmingham protest November 15 around the death in police custody of Mikey Powell. Protesters there also demanded prosecution of the officers involved. The Police Complaints Authority said that Powell was hit by a police vehicle and later collapsed while in police custody and died. An investigation has been launched into Powell’s death and an inquest is expected to begin in December.

Family members and other supporters of those who died in police custody, in prison, or while under psychiatric care attended a national demonstration organized by the United Family and Friends Campaign (UFFC) in Trafalgar Square on October 25. They then marched to Downing Street to hand a letter to British prime minister Anthony Blair demanding prosecution of those responsible for these deaths.

Celius Victor, a UFFC organizer, said in an interview at the Brixton march, “Inquests tell us what we already know—we want accountability.” Referring to a government campaign to deal with racism in the police force by recruiting more Black police officers, Victor said, “It makes no difference: whether Black or white, police officers are trained to act in a certain way.”

The UFFC campaign demands that “custodial institutions...be made accountable to the communities that they serve and criminal charges brought against the officers and staff that are responsible.”

Debs: for abolition, not reform, of prisons

Printed below is an excerpt from *Eugene V. Debs Speaks*, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month in November. It originally appeared in *Walls and Bars*, a book written by Debs in 1926.

Eugene V. Debs (1855–1926) was a socialist agitator as well as a militant trade union leader and pioneer fighter for industrial unionism. A founder of the Socialist Party in the United States, he ran for president four times as that party's candidate, the last time in 1920 while serving a 10-year sentence for a speech two years earlier in Canton, Ohio. In that speech Debs had spoken against the U.S. government's entry into the first imperialist world war, and in unqualified support of the 1917 Russian Revolution. He had also explained his conviction that workers and farmers in the United States needed to emulate the

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

Russian example. Debs received almost 1 million votes in that election.

Debs remained true to those revolutionary convictions even as an increasing majority of the leaders of the Socialist Party advocated accommodation with capitalism, and the pursuit of reforms instead of revolution. His work to win thousands of working people to socialist ideas played a formative role in the development of the early revolutionary workers movement in the United States.

"I believe that my enemies as well as my friends will concede to me the right to arrive at some conclusions with respect

to prisons and prisoners by virtue of my personal experience," Debs wrote in *Walls and Bars*, "for I have been an inmate of three county jails, one state prison and one federal penitentiary."

In his introduction to the book, he said, "I have undertaken to show that the prison in our modern life is essentially a capitalistic institution, an inherent and inseparable part of the social and economic system under which the mass of mankind are ruthlessly exploited and kept in an impoverished state, as a result of which the struggle for existence, cruel and relentless at best, drives thousands of its victims into commission of offenses which they are forced to expiate in the dungeons provided for them by their masters.... It ought not merely to be reformed but abolished as an institution for the punishment and degradation of unfortunate human beings."

Eugene V. Debs Speaks is copyright ©1970 by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission.



BY EUGENE V. DEBS

Crime in all of its varied forms and manifestations is of such a common nature under the capitalist system that capitalism and crime have become almost synonymous terms.

Private appropriation of the earth's surface, the natural resources, and the means of life is nothing less than a crime against humanity, but the comparative few who are the beneficiaries of this iniquitous social arrangement, far from being viewed as criminals meriting punishment, are the exalted rulers of society and the people they exploit gladly render them homage and obeisance.

The few who own and control the means of existence are literally the masters of mankind. The great mass of dispossessed people are their slaves.

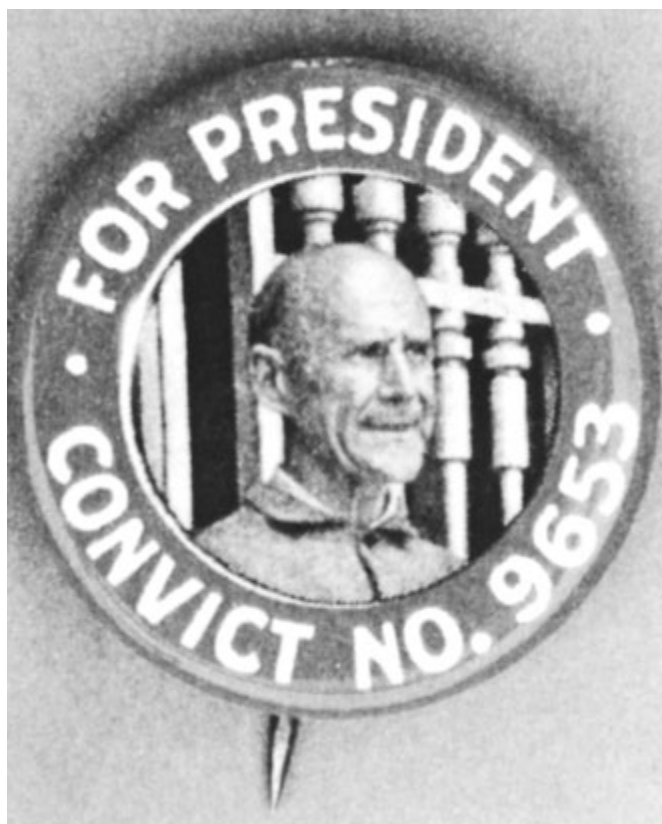
The ancient master owned his slaves under the law and could dispose of them at will. He could even kill his slaves the same as he could any domestic animal that belonged to him. The feudal lord of the Middle Ages did not own his serfs bodily, but he did own the land without which they could not live. The serfs were not allowed to own land and could work only by the consent of the feudal master who appropriated to himself the fruit of their labor, leaving for them but a bare subsistence.

The capitalist of our day, who is the social, economic and political successor of the feudal lord of the Middle Ages, and the patrician master of the ancient world, holds the great mass of the people in bondage, not by owning them under the law, nor by having sole proprietorship of the land, but by virtue of his ownership of industry, the tools and machinery with which work is done and wealth produced. In a word, the capitalist owns the tools and the jobs of the workers, and therefore they are his economic dependents. In that relation the capitalist has the power to appropriate to himself the products of the workers and to become rich in idleness while the workers, who produce all the wealth that he enjoys, remain in poverty.

To buttress and safeguard this exploiting system, private property of the capitalist has been made a fetish, a sacred thing, and thousands of laws have been enacted and more thousands supplemented by court decisions to punish so-called crimes against the holy institution of private property.

A vast majority of the crimes that are punished under the law and for which men are sent to prison, are committed directly or indirectly against property. Under the capitalist system there is far more concern about property and infinitely greater care in its conservation than in human life.

Multiplied thousands of men, women and children are killed and maimed in American industry by absolutely preventable accidents every year, yet no one ever dreams of indicting the capitalist masters who are guilty of the crime. The capitalist owners of fire traps and of fetid sweating dens, where the lives of the workers are ruthlessly sacrificed and their health wantonly undermined, are not indicted and sent to prison for the reason that they own and control the indicting



Button for Eugene V. Debs's 1920 presidential campaign on the Socialist Party ticket. At the time he was in prison for his revolutionary views. Debs received 1 million votes.

machinery just as they own and control the industrial machinery in their system.

The economic-owning class is always the political ruling class. Laws in the aggregate are largely to keep the people in subjection to their masters.

Under the capitalist system, based upon private property in the means of life, the exploitation that follows impoverishes the masses, and their precarious economic condition, their bitter struggle for existence, drives increasing numbers of them to despair and desperation, to crime and destruction.

The inmates of an average county jail consist mainly of such victims. They also constitute the great majority in the state prisons and federal penitentiaries. The inmates of prisons are proverbially the poorer people recruited from what we know as the "lower class." The rich are not to be found in prison save in such rare instances as to prove the rule that penitentiaries are built for the poor.

November BOOKS OF THE MONTH

PATHFINDER
READERS CLUB
SPECIALS

25%
DISCOUNT

Reform or Revolution

by Rosa Luxemburg

Why the working class cannot "reform" away exploitation and economic crises. \$10.95.

Special price:
\$8.25



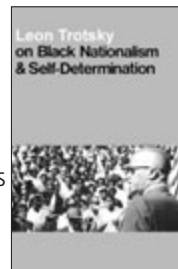
Eugene V. Debs Speaks

Speeches by the pioneer U.S. socialist agitator and labor leader, jailed for opposing Washington's imperialist aims in World War I. \$19.95. **Special price: \$14.95**

Leon Trotsky on Black Nationalism and Self-Determination

Explains why support to Blacks' right to national self-determination is an essential part of the strategy to unite the working class to make a socialist revolution in the U.S. \$12.95.

Special price: \$9.75



An Introduction to Marxist Economic Theory

by Ernest Mandel

A concise presentation of the basic principles of political economy. \$10.95.

Special price: \$8.25

Join the
Pathfinder Readers Club
for \$10 and receive
discounts all year long

ORDER ONLINE AT
WWW.PATHFINDERPRESS.COM

—IF YOU LIKE THIS PAPER, LOOK US UP—

Where to find Pathfinder books and distributors of the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, *New International*, *Nouvelle Internationale*, *Nueva Internacional* and *Ny International*.

UNITED STATES

ALABAMA: Birmingham: 3029A Bessemer Road. Zip: 35208. Tel: (205) 780-0021. E-mail: bhmSWP@bigfoot.com

CALIFORNIA: Los Angeles: 4229 S. Central Ave. Zip: 90011. Tel: (323) 233-9372. E-mail: laswp@earthlink.net
San Francisco: 3926 Mission St. Zip: 94112. Tel: (415) 584-2135. E-mail: sfswp@hotmail.com

COLORADO: Craig: 6 West Victory Way. Zip: 81625. Mailing address: P.O. Box 1539. Zip: 81626. Tel: (970) 826-0289. E-mail: westerncoloradoswp@yahoo.com

FLORIDA: Miami: 8365 NE 2nd Ave. #206 Zip: 33138. Tel: (305) 751-7076. E-mail: miamiswp@bellsouth.net; **Tampa:** 1441 E. Fletcher, Suite 421. Zip: 33612. Tel: (813) 910-8507. E-mail: TOC1004@aol.com

GEORGIA: Atlanta: 2791 Lakewood Ave. Zip: 30315. Mailing address: P.O. Box 162515. Zip 30321. Tel: (404) 763-2900. E-mail: atlpathfinder@cs.com

ILLINOIS: Chicago: 2901 W. 59th Street. Zip: 60629. Tel: (773) 737-1190. E-mail: Chicagoswp@sbcglobal.net

IOWA: Des Moines: 3720 6th Ave. Zip: 50313. Tel: (515) 288-2970. E-mail: swpdesmoines@cs.com

MASSACHUSETTS: Boston: 12 Bennington St., 2nd Floor, East Boston. Mailing address: P.O. Box 261. Zip: 02128. Tel: (617) 569-9169. E-mail: 103426.3430@compuserve.com

MICHIGAN: Detroit: 4208 W. Vernor St. Mailing address: P.O. Box 44739. Zip: 48244-0739. Tel: (313) 554-0504.

E-mail: DetroitMISWP@netscape.net

MINNESOTA: St. Paul: 113 Bernard St., West St. Paul. Zip: 55118. Tel: (651) 644-6325. E-mail: tcswp@qwest.net

NEBRASKA: Omaha: P.O. Box 7005. Zip: 68107. E-mail: omahaoc@netscape.net

NEW JERSEY: Newark: 168 Bloomfield Avenue, 2nd Floor. Zip: 07104. Tel: (973) 481-0077. E-mail: swpnewark@yahoo.com

NEW YORK: Manhattan: 545 8th Ave., 14th Floor. Mailing address: P.O. Box 30. Zip: 10018. Tel: (212) 695-7358. E-mail: ny_swp@verizon.net.

OHIO: Cleveland: 11018 Lorain Ave. Zip: 44111. Tel: (216) 688-1190. E-mail: swpcleveland@yahoo.com

PENNSYLVANIA: Hazleton: 69 North Wyoming St. Zip: 18201. Tel: (570) 454-8320. Email: swpnepa@intergrafix.net
Philadelphia: 5237 N. 5th St. Zip: 19120. Tel: (215) 324-7020. E-mail: PhiladelphiaSWP@yahoo.com
Pittsburgh: 5907 Penn Ave. Suite 225. Zip: 15206. Tel: (412) 365-1090. E-mail: pghswp@bigzoo.net

TEXAS: Houston: 619 West 8th St. Zip: 77007. Tel: (713) 869-6550. E-mail: swphouston@evl.net

WASHINGTON, D.C.: 3717 Georgia Ave. NW, Ground floor. Zip: 20010. Tel: (202) 722-1315. E-mail: swp.washingtondc@verizon.net

WASHINGTON: Seattle: 5418 Rainier Avenue South. Zip: 98118-2439. Tel: (206) 323-1755. E-mail: swpseattle@yahoo.com

AUSTRALIA

Sydney: 1st Flr, 3/281-287 Beamish St., Campsie, NSW 2194. Mailing address: P.O. Box 164, Campsie, NSW 2194. Tel: (02) 9718 9698. E-mail: cl_australia@bigpond.com

BRITAIN

London: 47 The Cut. Postal code: SE1 8LF. Tel: 020-7928-7993. E-mail: cllondon@onetel.net.uk

CANADA

Montreal: 1237 Jean Talon E. Montréal, QC. Postal code: H2R 1W1. Tel: (514) 284-7369. E-mail: Librpath@sympatico.ca

Toronto: 2761 Dundas St. West, Postal code: M6P 1Y4. Tel: (416) 767-3705. E-mail: milpathtoronto@sympatico.ca

Vancouver: 2645 E. Hastings, Room 203. Postal code: V5V 1Z5. Tel: (604) 872-8343. E-mail: clvancouver@lynx.net

FRANCE

Paris: P.O. 175, 23 rue Lecourbe. Postal code: 75015. Tel: (01) 47-26-58-21. E-mail: 73504.442@compuserve.com

ICELAND

Reykjavik: Skolavordustig 6B. Mailing address: P. Box 0233, IS 121 Reykjavik. Tel: 552 5502. E-mail: milpth@mmedia.is

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland: Suite 3, 7 Mason Ave., Otahuhu. Postal address: P.O. Box 3025. Tel: (9) 276-8885. E-mail: milpath.auckland@acrix.gen.nz

Christchurch: Gloucester Arcade, 129 Gloucester St. Postal address: P.O. Box 13-969. Tel: (3) 365-6055. E-mail: pathfinder.militant@paradise.net.nz

SWEDEN

Gothenburg: Ryttagatan 9, S-415 03 Gothenburg. Tel: (031) 21 56 90. E-mail: bokhandelnpathfindergbg@telia.com

Stockholm: Domargränd 16, S-129 47 Hägersten. Tel: (08) 31 69 33. E-mail: pathfbkh@algonet.se



Harry
Ring

Where have we heard that one?—An exposé of racist cops secretly filmed by the BBC caused enough reaction to get a response from Labour Party prime minister Anthony Blair. He has it that “the vast bulk of police officers are thoroughly decent, committed people who are not in any shape

or form racist.”

You can’t beat the house in Las Vegas?—Two members of the Nevada legislature lost their county parks job when it was established they were collecting sick leave pay for the days they “worked” in the legislature. How-

ever, they will rack up \$25,000 in separation pay. They were fired in October.

P.S.—The two operators above are a man and a woman. We don’t know why, but the man got \$17,000 plus, and the woman, \$7,000 plus.

Teapot and jughead—Louisiana district judge Timothy Ellender, a foul racist with a twisted brain, is hoping to ride out a protest. He had attended a Halloween party in blackface makeup and prison garb, including shackles. He said it was a harmless joke and a “tempest in a teapot.”

How Cuba aided revolutionary Algeria in 1963

Military support helped deter imperialist-backed aggression by Moroccan regime

Below are excerpts from *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa 1959–1976* by Piero Gleijeses—a compelling history of Cuban internationalist policy in Africa from 1959 and its inevitable clash with Washington’s course of deepening intervention to back colonial rule and re-inforce imperialist domination. Previous excerpts appeared in the November 17 and December 1 issues of the *Militant*.

The passages reprinted here are taken from the chapter entitled, “Cuba’s First Venture In Africa: Algeria,” in which Gleijeses describes the solidarity extended by the Cuban revolutionary government to the independence movement in Algeria, and to the workers and farmers government formed after the victory of that movement in 1962. Gleijeses describes Cuba’s response to Algerian president Ahmed Ben Bella’s appeal for assistance in the face of imperialist-backed military aggression in 1963 by the Moroccan government.

Earlier acts of solidarity by Havana included a 1961 shipment of weapons to the National Liberation Front (FLN) during its war against the French colonialists. The ship transporting the weapons brought back wounded Algerian fighters and 20 children from refugee camps, most of whom were war orphans. In May 1963, a mission of 55 Cuban doctors, nurses, and other medical workers arrived in Algeria.

The workers and farmers government in Algeria was overthrown in June 1965 in a counterrevolutionary coup led by Defense Minister Houari Boumedienne.

Among the Cuban revolutionaries mentioned below are Fidel Castro, the country’s president; Raul Castro, the head of Cuba’s Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR); Efigenio Ameijeiras, commander of the forces sent to aid Algeria against the Moroccan threat, and presently a FAR division general; and Jorge Serguera, Cuba’s ambassador to Algeria at the time.

From *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959–1976* by Piero Gleijeses. Copyright © 2002 by the University of North Carolina Press. Used by permission of the publisher and the author. <http://www.uncpress.unc.edu>. Curly brackets ({}) indicate notes added by the *Militant*, all other bracketed text is from the original.



BY PIERO GLEIJESES

Algeria gained its independence from France on July 3, 1962. On September 26, the National Assembly elected Ahmed Ben Bella prime minister. Two weeks later, Ben Bella left Algiers for New York to attend the ceremony marking his country’s admission to the United Nations.... On October 16, he boarded a Cuban plane in New York for a two-day visit to the island....

At the airport, Castro was waiting. And so were the Algerian children, the war orphans who were guests of Cuba. “I was terribly moved when I saw them there,” remembered Ben Bella.... “I don’t know who prepared the schedule, but Fidel paid no attention to it. Protocol was forgotten and we talked, talked...The two youngest revolutions of



Ernesto Che Guevara (center), a leader of the Cuban Revolution, meets with leaders of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola during three-month trip to Africa that began in December 1964. The previous year, Cuba had supplied troops and military equipment to the workers and farmers government in Algeria.

the world met, compared notes and together envisioned the future.”

When the Cuban medical mission arrived in Algiers in May 1963, Ben Bella was in Addis Ababa at the founding conference of the Organization of African Unity. There he electrified the assembly with his call for the liberation of Africa....

No African leader—not Egypt’s Gamal Abdel Nasser, or Ghana’s Kwame Nkrumah—had moved the assembly like Ben Bella did; none had found such passionate and sincere tones. Ben Bella, the Arab, “won approval of subsaharans,” the U.S. State Department noted dryly....

He returned home to a far grimmer situation.... Unemployment and grinding poverty contrasted sharply with the hopes raised during the war and bred discontentment.... Meanwhile internal power struggles alienated many in the revolutionary elite and aggravated unrest in the turbulent Kabylia region.

From neighboring Morocco a new threat arose. In the spring and summer of 1963, Morocco’s young king, Hassan II, veered sharply toward repression in the face of growing economic, social, and political tensions.... He flaunted his nationalism by demanding a greater Morocco. In addition to territories still in Spanish hands, he claimed Mauritania...a corner of Mali, and a broad strip of Algeria along the ill-defined border.

Through the late summer of 1963 tension between Morocco and Algeria grew.... On September 25, following weeks of border incidents, Moroccan troops occupied the Algerian border posts of Hassi-Beida and Tindjoub.... On October 8, the Algerians struck back, retaking Hassi-Beida and Tindjoub in a bloody clash. The War of the Desert had begun.

Algeria was at a disadvantage. Its army had neither modern equipment nor training in conventional warfare.... “The Algerians really reminded us of ourselves in 1959,” mused a Cuban volunteer. “One had a rifle, another had a shotgun, another a machine gun and so on. It was as if we were back in the days of our own Rebel Army in 1959.”

Taking advantage of this military superiority, and their shorter logistical lines, the Moroccan troops scored several successes along the disputed border....

{The Moroccan regime in} Rabat had just signed a three-year contract with Havana to buy a million tons of Cuban sugar for \$184 million, a considerable amount of hard currency at a time when the United States was trying to cripple Cuba’s foreign trade. Nevertheless, as soon as it received Ben Bella’s request {for assistance}, the Cuban government began forming the Grupo Especial de Instrucción (GEI), the special force that would be sent to Algeria, even though

this jeopardized the sugar contract....

{Sailing from Cuba on October 10 and 17, respectively} the *Aracelio Iglesias* and the *González Lines* were carrying a tank battalion with twenty-two T-34s; an artillery group with eighteen 122-mm guns; eighteen 120-mm mortars, antiaircraft artillery with eighteen guns; a battery of 57-mm recoilless rifles. The entire force had 686 men, including 170 who left Havana on October 21 on two special flights of Cubana de Aviación. (The *González Lines* carried also 4,744 tons of sugar that Cuba was giving the Algerian people.)

The commander of the GEI was Efigenio Ameijeiras, a highly respected officer who presided over the GEI’s five-member Military Council. “The orders I had from Fidel,” Ameijeiras recalled, “were to place myself at their [the Algerians’] complete disposal, to go wherever they wanted, whenever they wanted.”

—25 AND 50 YEARS AGO—



December 8, 1978

SAN ANTONIO—“*Solamente en San Antonio*”—“only in San Antonio”—is a popular slogan on T-shirts distributed by this city. But if San Antonio College (SAC) has its way, students wearing these shirts could be barred from campus.

The reason? The SAC administration has ruled that all non-English languages, such as Spanish and Persian, are prohibited on campus.

“This is an English-speaking institution,” [Earl] Wright [associate dean for student affairs] told the paper. “The educational program is in English, and all other functions of the college rely upon the English language.”

Could any bilingual materials be distributed? Wright answered, “The only reason I could see for approving such a piece of literature is if it would lose some of its cultural impact in the English translation. But if it does not lose that impact then it should be written (only) in English.”

Yet Spanish is the first language of more than half SAC’s student body. The majority of the 21,000 students are Chicano.

The ban on languages goes back to SAC’s attempts last year to control the activities of its several hundred Iranian students. Last year, the campus administration ruled that Iranian students could not form their own organization or distribute any literature in Persian.



December 7, 1953

American labor has already had considerable experience with fascist movements. Back in the Thirties, when the CIO was born in struggle against the despotic corporations, the Mohawk Valley Formula for breaking unions was introduced. A systematic campaign of terror plus propaganda was launched against the worker on strike.

Every agency was used. Shopkeepers, vigilante gangs, police, militia, and private company armies were launched into action around a red-baiting campaign. All these forces were moved in a concerted murderous attack against the workers.

The Mohawk Valley Formula was quite effective. It cost the workers many lives. But the revolt of the production slaves was too powerful. The CIO won and the corporation had to retreat.

In the late Thirties, fascist organizations like Father Coughlin’s “Social Justice” group and Pelley’s Silver Shirts came into prominence.

After World War II, American fascist activities took a spurt forward around the racist demagogue Gerald L. K. Smith.

Smith’s plan was to head up a post-war fascist movement and use the returning veterans against labor. But this sinister project was decisively smashed by the massive strike wave of 1946 which found the veterans on the picket lines everywhere.

Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959–1976
By Piero Gleijeses
\$24.95

Available from the University of North Carolina Press
www.uncpress.unc.edu/books

Free Farouk Abdel-Muhti!

We urge all defenders of democratic rights to send messages to immigration authorities to call for the immediate release of Palestinian fighter Farouk Abdel-Muhti, protest the brutal assault on him by prison guards, and demand the return of all the reading materials and medicine they confiscated from him (see news article below). We also urge you to build and turn out for the November 29 rally on his behalf in Newark, New Jersey.

This outrageous treatment of the Palestinian militant by his jailers is part of the government’s repeated attempts to isolate him and break his fighting spirit. Those efforts have failed, however, thanks both to Abdel-Muhti’s courageous refusal to give up his fight for justice and to those who have campaigned for his freedom. What is needed now is to step up efforts to publicize the facts about his case and win the broadest possible public support for the demand that he be released immediately.

Abdel-Muhti has been locked up in immigration jails in New Jersey and Pennsylvania for more than a year and a half without charges filed against him and with the threat of deportation hanging over his head. As he told the *Militant* in an interview from behind bars last December, the U.S. government’s threat to deport him is part of a nationwide wave of arrests and harassment of immigrants, especially from the Middle East and South Asia. Government officials have explicitly targeted his political activities as an opponent of Washington’s policies and a defender of the Palestinian struggle for a homeland. Immigration cops have

more than once threatened to deport him and turn him over to Israeli police if he does not give them information about other individuals in the United States and Palestine.

Over the past decade the U.S. government has expanded the number of deportable offenses as well as the powers of the federal cops to summarily detain and deport immigrants. In the name of “fighting terrorism” Washington has rounded up hundreds of people, holding many indefinitely without charges. At the same time, the immigration police has stepped up its terror raids in workplaces and elsewhere. These raids target workers and their unions—as in the recent arrests of 250 janitors at Wal-Mart stores across the country—and aid the bosses’ efforts to superexploit workers lacking legal protection.

As a result, hundreds of thousands of workers have faced victimization by the hated *migra*. At a time of continuing working-class resistance, an increasing number of immigrant workers have refused to be intimidated and have stood up to fight. Several have won important victories in their antideportation struggles—from immigrant rights fighter Julieta Bolívar in Chicago to *Perspectiva Mundial* associate editor Róger Calero.

Farouk Abdel-Muhti is among those behind bars who have refused to bend their knee, remaining true to his convictions as a fighter for Palestinian self-determination.

Let’s join forces to demand: Stop the abusive treatment of Farouk Abdel-Muhti! Return his literature and personal possessions! Free him now!

New Jersey prison guards assault Abdel-Muhti

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

Farouk Abdel-Muhti, an outspoken defender of Palestinian self-determination who has been jailed for more than a year and a half and faces deportation, was assaulted November 19 by guards at the Bergen County Jail in Hackensack, New Jersey. His supporters report that prison authorities, targeting him for his political views, confiscated his personal possessions, including the *Militant* and other reading material, and denied him medical treatment.

The Committee for the Release of Farouk Abdel-Muhti issued an action alert urging that messages be sent to immigration officials to demand that he be freed immediately and to protest the abusive treatment against him. A march and rally to demand Abdel-Muhti’s release were called for Saturday, November 29, at 12:30 p.m. in Newark, New Jersey (see calendar on page 4).

Defenders of Abdel-Muhti report that the incident began when prison officials carried out a search of all cells in a wing of the Bergen County jail where 62 immigration detainees are being held. In the cell where Abdel-Muhti is being held, they went through his reading material, including the *Militant*, the *Revolutionary Worker*, *Northstar Compass*, and pamphlets by the Partisan Defense Committee—publications which the Palestinian activist receives regularly, as allowed by the prison’s own rules.

“The two officers became abusive, calling the publications ‘antigovernment’ and telling Abdel-Muhti to ‘shut the f___ up’ and to ‘go back to Palestine,’” the defense committee bulletin reported. They shoved him against the wall, kicked him to the ground, and punched him on the side of the head. Then they confiscated his publications, address books, and medicine, which was prescribed for high blood pressure and a thyroid condition. “Abdel-Muhti, who is 56

and in poor health, did not resist in any way,” the defense campaign bulletin noted. The next day, prison authorities filed a disciplinary report against Abdel-Muhti, claiming he was concealing medicine. As the *Militant* goes to press, he is still being denied medicine and medical attention.

Abdel-Muhti was recently transferred to the Bergen County Jail from the York County Jail in York, Pennsylvania. As part of the authorities’ unsuccessful efforts to break his spirit and isolate him, the political activist has been moved around to several county jails, first in New Jersey and then in York.

A well-known advocate of Palestinian self-determination, Abdel-Muhti was arrested in New York on April 26, 2002. He faces the threat of deportation from the United States, where he has resided since the 1970s. The immigration police have kept him locked up for the past 19 months without a hearing and without filing any criminal charges against him. Behind prison walls, Abdel-Muhti has continued to speak out and write about the Palestinian struggle and other fights for justice, and has been receiving newspapers and other publications.

Militant editor Argiris Malapanis stated, “We are demanding that the prison authorities immediately return all of Farouk’s reading materials and other possessions. Their assault on him, the denial of medical care, and the attempt to suppress his right to literature are outrages that should be protested by everyone who supports elementary human rights.”

Protest messages should be sent to David Venturella at the Office of Detention and Removal, Department of Homeland Security: fax (202) 353-9435; tel. (202) 514-8663; e-mail: davidventurella@dhs.gov, with copies to the defense committee at freefarouk@yahoo.com.

Venezuela steelworkers fight for safety, pay

Continued from page 12

main dailies, SUTISS president Ramón Machuca stated that the union has organized 300 work stoppages or slowdowns the last five years, in addition to a strike in 2001 that stopped production for 23 days.

In response to the slowdown, SIDOR began withholding three to five days pay from a number of union militants, according to Alvarez. The bosses also launched a media campaign, claiming that the union was putting the jobs of thousands of workers in jeopardy with irresponsible actions. On October 14, the company obtained a court ruling ordering the union to put an end to the production slowdown.

“What SIDOR claims is not new,” said union president Ramón Machuca at a press conference. “They claim that the workers don’t produce enough or they are violent. SIDOR fails to point out that, for the first time in the company’s history, the workers are producing a record of nearly 4 million metric tons of steel.”

Faced with this company offensive, the union organized massive workers’ assemblies on the job. On October 28, about 4,000 union members and supporters, including hundreds of contract workers at SIDOR, took part in a march in nearby Puerto Ordaz to press their cause. According to Fajardo, other unionists who joined the demonstration included members of the electrical, health, and aluminum workers unions as well as many public employees.

The workers assembled at the offices of the Venezuelan Company of Guyana, which controls the stake at SIDOR owned by the government. In an open letter the union sent to president Hugo Chávez, SUTISS demanded that the government support their fight to enforce the union contract and improve conditions for all workers. In this letter, the

union formally requested that the government renationalize SIDOR if the bosses refuse to abide by the contract.

“When we suggested the demand for nationalization in one of the assemblies on the job,” said Alvarez, “workers responded with a tremendous standing ovation, which took many of us by surprise.”

It was only when the workers showed their determination to take their struggle to the governmental level and after many mobilizations that the company backed off and agreed to some concessions, several unionists said.

The fight between the bosses and the workers at SIDOR is part of the intensification of the class struggle nationwide. Venezuela’s capitalist class has been trying for the last two years to topple the Chávez government because it has adopted a series of measures that have increased the expectations and self-confidence of working people. These include a bill strengthening state control over the country’s oil and natural gas resources.

Steelworkers and other unionists are now using these laws to try to tilt the relationship of forces towards the workers.

Meanwhile, Fedecámaras, the country’s main big-business association, is spearheading a referendum to recall the president. The opposition coalition Coordinadora Democrática (Democratic Coordination) is scheduled to collect signatures on a petition demanding such a referendum the first week of December.

“If they want a recall referendum against Chávez, let them try to do it,” Fajardo said. “The workers, however, are overwhelmingly with the president because he is the only politician who has had the will to confront the opposition by the rich.”

What’s the ‘war on terrorism,’ resistance in Iraq?

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS
AND SAM MANUEL

In a letter in the December 1 *Militant*, reader Richard Young said a clearer explanation of Washington’s “war on terrorism” is needed. “Why is the U.S. spending huge material and human resources to occupy Iraq and Afghanistan?” he asked.

This has been a central feature of lead articles and editorials in the *Militant* this year. The *Militant* doesn’t assume, however, that readers go back to previous coverage. For a fighting working-class newsweekly seeking new readers constantly, frequent explanations of phrases such as “war on terror,” not assertions, are necessary. For this reason, Young’s question is very welcome. We’ll try to summarize the main points.

The lead editorial on Iran in the July 7 *Militant* stated: “Washington is leading an international coalition of impe-

REPLY TO A READER

rialist powers and their allies under the banner of ‘smashing terrorism’ to defend the imperialist system and extend its domination. They are doing it by concentrating on their most vulnerable foes—armed opposition groups able to maintain themselves as an alternative because of the declining political prospects of the national bourgeoisies in the semicolonial world. The U.S. and other imperialist powers have wide support for going after all these groups that often carry out suicide bombing attacks and other similar such actions. There are no disagreements among the imperialist powers, or within bourgeois public opinion, on the policy of targeting ‘terrorists.’ Washington has kicked its French competitors around enough with the war on Iraq and is successfully pushing Paris to get back in line as a deputy sheriff helping to maintain the world imperialist order.”

In addition, Washington is going after states it accuses of “harboring terrorists,” including Iran and Syria, and, in a different form, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

The editorial “Bring the troops home now!” in the March 24 *Militant*, written just before the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, explained the reasons for the imperialist attack on Iraq. They underlie the current occupation as well.

“This is not just a war for oil,” the editorial said, calling on working people to oppose not only the Anglo-American assault but the entire imperialist system and its wars. “It is about *which* among the competing imperialist powers will control the mineral and strategic Mideast platform that Iraq sits on. It is part of a wider conflict over the redivision of the former colonies in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East among the ‘civilized hyenas’—as Bolshevik leader V.I. Lenin aptly called the imperialist powers. This interimperialist conflict, with Washington-London on one side and Paris-Berlin on the other as the main unstable poles, is at the center of the ongoing UN-sanctioned assault on Iraqi sovereignty and the imminent U.S.-led invasion. This war is the first of a number of imperialist wars in coming years, as the capitalist system worldwide sinks deeper into a prolonged depression.”

It continued: “Far from being ‘Bush’s war,’ as the current situation is described by many critics of the current U.S. administration, the course has the full support of the entire U.S. ruling class. If U.S. forces succeed in taking over Iraq, Washington will have massive ground forces in place along the Afghanistan-Iran and Iraq-Iran borders. It will exercise domination of the Arab-Persian Gulf region and be in a much stronger position to threaten the ruling monarchy of Saudi Arabia to not take any further steps that contradict U.S. interests in the Middle East. Such an outcome would mean a significant economic and military shift in the relationship of forces in the world in favor of Washington.”

And that’s what happened. The U.S. government succeeded in achieving “regime change” and imposing a de facto American protectorate in Iraq. Paris, on the other hand—the most aggressive of Washington’s rivals, which pushed for regime continuity and no American protectorate in Iraq—came out the biggest loser among the gang of imperialist thieves.

This turn of events has exacerbated, not smoothed, the conflict between the competing imperialist blocs, as shown by the rivalry between the U.S. and European powers over forcing Iran to halt its nuclear plans.

What’s the character of resistance to U.S. occupiers?

In his letter, Young also asked for “more coverage of the occupation [of Iraq] and the response of those fighting against it.” Recent *Militant* articles have outlined the current reality in Iraq and the aims of the occupiers. Young’s request, however, calls for addressing the character of the resistance in Iraq more explicitly.

A number of groups in the middle-class left have attempted to paint up resistance to the U.S. occupation as a national liberation movement. The most prominent among them in the United States is the Workers World Party. An article by Richard Becker in the May 15 *Workers World*, the party’s newspaper, concluded with the following: “Having achieved their victory... the occupiers now confront a people who have a long and proud history of resistance. The

Continued on Page 4

Twin Cities event marks 75 years of ‘Militant’

Printed below is an article on one of the first events held to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the *Militant*—the first issue of which was dated Nov. 15, 1928. In addition to the St. Paul celebration reported here, similar forums were held over the November 14–16 weekend in Chicago, Des Moines, Detroit, and Los Angeles. More than a dozen such events were held the following weekend. Reports received by the *Militant* on these gatherings will appear in upcoming issues. The *Militant* launched this column six weeks ago to aid the preparation of these public meetings.

BY JOHN PINES

ST. PAUL, Minnesota—“The *Militant*, above all, has been a party-building newspaper,” and carries with it “the lessons and principles of organization that have been learned through decades of struggle,” said Tom Fiske to an audience of workers and youth here at a 75th anniversary celebration of the *Militant* on November 15.

Fiske, a longtime contributor to the *Militant* and active socialist in the Twin Cities, pointed to the role the *Militant* has played in recent years in providing accurate, timely coverage of the sit-down strike at Dakota Premium Foods in South St. Paul in June 2000 and the subsequent fight that led workers there to win UFCW representation.

One of those participating in the *Militant* celebration was Matthew Quaschnick, one of more than 70 students who had occupied administration offices at the University of Minnesota October 28 to support striking clerical workers. He spoke about the student action and explained he was glad to find others opposed to capitalism.

A high point of the meeting was a message sent by veteran socialist Mildred Solem from Duluth, Minnesota, which was read to the audience by chairperson Becky Ellis. (see excerpts of message reprinted on this page)

The panel of speakers included Augustina Borreal, a packinghouse worker at Dakota Premium Foods and participant in the victorious UFCW Local 789 organizing drive at that plant. She explained that the *Militant* is an accurate source of information and offered an important perspective during the fights she has been involved in.

Becky Ellis spoke about how the *Militant* was part of the public campaign the socialist movement helped lead in Texas in 1971 to defeat the Ku Klux Klan’s bombing and harassment campaign against political organizations and activists.

Ellis, who took part in these events, explained that the Socialist Workers Party had established a branch in Houston in 1970, and in February 1971 announced its first campaign for public office, running Debbie Leonard for mayor of Houston. The

next month the Klan bombed the SWP campaign headquarters as well as the local Pacifica public radio station. In response, the Socialist Workers Party initiated the Committee to Defend Democratic Rights, a broad formation that involved students, leaders of women’s rights organizations, leading activists in the anti-Vietnam War coalition, professors, a Black minister who had been targeted by the racist outfit, and others. “There was a huge response to the attacks,” Ellis said.

She described how the *Militant*, which covered the response to the Klan attacks,

was sold frequently at campuses and shopping centers and served as an essential tool in the fight against the ultrarightists. “Our candidate was on TV twice debating the Grand Dragon of the KKK,” Ellis said. The *Militant* ran excerpts of the SWP candidate’s remarks. “The conclusion was so successful that the Klan night-riding against political activists stopped. Twelve Klansmen were indicted and some were eventually convicted,” she said. Following that success, in December 1971 the Young Socialist Alliance held its national convention in Houston without an incident.

John Pines, a member of the Young Socialists, spoke about the *Militant’s* role in winning a number of youth to the revolutionary movement in the late 1990s during struggles in defense of immigrant rights and affirmative action in California. He also explained how a *Militant* reporting trip to Puerto Rico that he participated in helped him see the importance of the *Militant’s* decades-long record of accurate and trustworthy reporting, and how it has won the trust of many Puerto Rican independence fighters and others involved in struggles for social justice.

Letter from lifelong partisan of the ‘Militant’

The following is a letter that Mildred Solem—a lifetime partisan and distributor of the *Militant*—sent to the paper’s 75th anniversary banquet in St. Paul, Minnesota, on November 15 (see above). The letter was read at the meeting.

Greetings from Duluth to the anniversary celebration for the *Militant*!

I have been asked, because of my age, to relate some of the highlights of my years in the Socialist Workers Party. I will try to give you a feel of those times, hopefully, without putting you to sleep.

I was born on the prairie of northwestern Minnesota to Swedish immigrant parents at the beginning of World War I. “The war to end all wars,” it was said.

I was a teenager during the terrible Depression that followed the stock market crash of 1929. We were never hungry because my father was a small farmer and we raised our food, but we read about the soup lines and the starving people in the big cities.

We learned to never throw away anything and I still eat leftovers, compost garbage, keep and reuse paper and plastic bags and containers, and wash and reuse any paper towels. And yes, we saved string.

While attending business college in Minneapolis in 1934 I followed the accounts of the truck drivers strike in the newspapers. I did domestic work for my board and room and my employer complained because there was no fresh produce and the grocery shelves were getting bare because the truck drivers had tied up all deliveries to the city. In 1935 I moved to Michigan to find work in the auto plants and I lived in Pontiac during the sit-down strike in Flint. We were very excited by that struggle and the militancy in the auto unions which had been organized by the new CIO (Congress of Industrial Organizations).

We returned to Minnesota. After the sudden death of my husband I was offered a job on the Works Project Administration (WPA). This project took me to St. Paul where I worked at the Historical Library and I discovered the SWP headquarters just down the street from where I was living. Soon I became a member of the St. Paul branch. I got involved in the work of the unemployment organizations and we worked together with the Minneapolis Teamsters union Local 544, which had its own unemployed section. I will never forget the parade and demonstration of unemployed workers. It was a huge demonstration with 544 guards escorting us. Unfortunately when we marched past the Historical Library my supervisor was watching out the window and that ended the WPA for me.

I was staying at the home of Henry and Dorothy Schultz while they went to Coyoacan, Mexico, to visit with Leon Trotsky and Natalia and to check on their safety there. Shortly after their return we heard the terrible news that Trotsky had been assassinated by their housekeeper’s lover, an agent of Stalin’s KGB. Our members were in shock with the loss of our great leader. George Novack and Evelyn Reed came from New York and their optimism and confidence in the future of the party and their enthusiasm to carry on inspired all of us.

Another dark period in our party’s history was during the trials and the indictments of the SWP leaders and leaders of the Midwest Teamsters union for their opposition to the U.S. entry into the second world war. Jenny Dunne, Vincent R. Dunne’s wife, organized a commissary at the Minneapolis headquarters and with the help of the other wives of

Minneapolis Tribune headline Aug. 1, 1934, left, reporting on the seizure of the Teamsters Local 574 headquarters and arrest of three of the union’s central leaders by the Minnesota National Guard during truck drivers strike that year. Right, *The Organizer*, Local 574’s paper, announcing victory in strike Aug. 22, 1934.



the targeted leaders they provided meals for all of the defendants throughout the trials. It was a very sad day indeed when the “Honorable Eighteen,” which included one woman, Grace Carlson, left for prison.

Chester Johnson, who later became my husband, was the literature agent and financial secretary of the Minneapolis branch. Ray Dunne once told me that in the early years of the publication of the *Militant* at times there was not enough money to get the paper out, and then they would call Chester for help. One night when he was selling the *Militant* at a Stalinist-controlled union he was beat up by Stalinist thugs. This earned him a letter from Leon Trotsky. When our daughter was old enough to walk with us we would go out door-to-door on Sunday mornings to sell the *Militant*.

Then came the McCarthy period when J. Edgar Hoover and Joe McCarthy ran amok over our rights. It was suggested that we not carry our red membership cards and they were no longer issued to new members. The Rosenbergs were executed by the government and communists and their supporters were on trial all over the country by HUAC, the House Un-American Activities Committee. Our activities were limited because of the anti-“Red” hysteria, but we continued our Sunday forums and served a meal afterwards which helped to keep

up our morale.

During the Vietnam War we marched and demonstrated in Minneapolis and St. Paul and we went to New York and Washington to march and sell the *Militant*, which carried the headline “Bring the Troops Home Now.” University and college students participated in them and helped to make them very spirited with songs and music and we recruited new members from them.

The Cuban Revolution was an exhilarating time for all radicals, young and old. It was the most memorable event of all. The civil rights movement and the women’s movements and their organizations were also wonderful periods of progress.

What a privilege it was for me to live through those interesting times in history as a member of the SWP and to meet so many of our great leaders, and to sit spellbound through those great speeches delivered by Jim Cannon, Farrell Dobbs, and Ray Dunne.

The workers here and in the Third World are stirring again and I believe the future of the SWP will be equally exciting, but always with its ups and downs, and it will produce more great revolutionary leaders and bring an end to imperialist war and plunder and save our earth from capitalist destruction.

Mildred Solem
Duluth, Minnesota

— LETTERS —

A rise in temp workers

The new Federal Reserve survey on the “Current Economics Conditions” has showed that in certain regions, under certain conditions, that there kind of is a possible boost in the economy that may (or may not) be more powerful than the preceding two years. Well, the actual survey did not convey these precise and stunning results, but economists and columnists throughout the United States have interpreted it this way.

The continuing theme in articles referencing this survey is that due to a rise in the hiring of temporary workers in certain districts (Richmond, Chicago, Minneapolis, and Dallas), there is going to be a boost in the economy and a rehiring of previously laid-off and new employees. The reporters claim that these temporary workers are going to be the bridge between the failing economy of the past three years and the booming economy of the future. Temporary employees are an indication that organizations are using their intuition to predict the future of the most volatile economy of the past 50 years.

Temporary workers are more like pawns than employees. They can simply be passed from one job to the next and terminated for any number of reasons providing society

with a question that needs to be answered: How are workers and organizations benefiting from the use of temporary employees in long-term positions?

Scott Holliday Wilson
Washington, D.C.

‘No S. Korean troops to Iraq’

Around 25 protesters, mostly Koreans, demonstrated outside the office of the Korean Consulate General in New York at noon on November 13 to demand “Stop Sending South Korean Combat Troops to Iraq!” Yong Un Yuk, a spokesperson for the ad hoc coalition that sponsored the rally, told the crowd, “We Koreans in America do not support the decision of the South Korean government to dispatch additional troops to Iraq. We desire peace and we respect the sovereignty of Iraq.”

Dan Fein
New York, New York

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

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

— CELEBRATE MILITANT’S 75TH ANNIVERSARY —

Below is a list of the programs to celebrate the *Militant’s* 75th anniversary. The events will be held at the Pathfinder bookstore in each city (see directory on page 8). Many similar events were already held the November 14–16 and 21–23 weekends.

FLORIDA Tampa

Saturday, Dec. 6, 7:30 p.m. Speakers: Karl Butts, Rachele Fruit, John Benson, Socialist Workers Party; Linda Jenness; Frances Sesler, plaintiff in class-action lawsuit by Black farmers against USDA; Rudolfo Valentín, Carpenters Union member.

PENNSYLVANIA Philadelphia

Friday, Dec. 5, 7:30 p.m. Speakers: John Staggs, John Studer, Hilda Cuzco.

Northeast Pennsylvania

Saturday, Dec. 6, Dinner 6:00 p.m., Program 7:00 p.m. Speakers to be announced.

UK farmers demand fair milk price

BY PAMELA HOLMES

EAST KILBRIDE, Scotland—Dairy farmers across England and Scotland have been holding protest actions in face of a ruinous price squeeze. The farmers, whose production costs are 20 pence per liter of milk but receive an average of 18 pence per liter, are pressing the big dairy processing and supermarket owners for an increase in the prices they are paid in order to protect their livelihoods.

On November 11 more than 1,000 dairy farmers blockaded five distribution depots of the Somerfield supermarket chain in England. All five were closed down.

Mike Haskew, a dairy farmer in Herefordshire and vice-chair of Farmers for Action (FFA), which has been spearheading the protests, said the actions have been getting broader support. "More and more people are turning up," he said. "Some are NFU [National Farmers Union] members, and many are farmers we have never seen out at protests before."

The protests have been going on for the past two months. On October 28, for example, *Militant* reporters visited farmers picketing a distribution depot of Sainsbury, a supermarket retailer here in East Kilbride, southeast of Glasgow. By 8:00 p.m. Sains-

bury's entrances and exits were blockaded by farm equipment. Trucks couldn't move in or out.

"We're here till we get direct talks between [FFA chairman] David Handley and Dairy Crest," said Alex Wilson, FFA representative for Scotland, speaking to more than 200 protesting dairy farmers. Dairy Crest is a major milk processing company that has been at the center of the price squeeze. "The supermarkets blame the processors and the processors blame the supermarkets," Wilson reported.

Most dairy farmers sell their milk to processing companies, which then sell milk products and cheese, as well as liquid milk, on to the supermarket chains. The farmers are demanding that a price increase of 2 pence per liter (ppl) agreed by the supermarkets be paid to them.

Wilson explained that Asda-Walmart and Tesco, two supermarket giants whose distribution depots have already been targeted by angry dairy farmers, said they had told Dairy Crest to pay the 2ppl.

"Sainsbury has been particularly difficult—Dairy Crest and Glanbia claim Sainsbury are not paying the extra 2 pence on cheese," the FFA leader said, referring to two milk processors. "We want no more



October 16 protest in Nuneaton, England, of dairy farmers outside a Dairy Crest milk processing plant. Cops roughed up farmers and their families there.

secrets in this industry. Our numbers are growing and all seven Sainsbury depots are shut down tonight."

After several hours of this coordinated action, the picket was lifted when Sainsbury agreed to discuss the price issue with Dairy

Crest.

While most of the actions have been relatively calm, an October 16 demonstration by 600 farmers and their supporters at Dairy Crest in Nuneaton, Warwickshire, England, were roughly manhandled by more than 70 cops. Another 600 assembled at Nuneaton that day.

In mid-October some 150 dairy farmers from Scotland and England maintained a 12-hour blockade outside the Dairy Crest plant in Cumbria, England (Dairy Crest has no plants in Scotland).

A number of protesting farmers who spoke to *Militant* reporters explained that they used to receive better prices from the Milk Marketing Board (MMB). Abolished in 1994, the MMB had been established by the government in 1933. All farmers were legally required to sell their milk through the MMB, which negotiated a price with the Dairy Trade Federation, representing the dairy processing bosses.

By establishing a monopoly over milk sales it was possible to restrict the big dairy processing companies' ability to profit from competition among farmers in the marketplace. Farmers were paid a "pooled price" for the milk that they delivered to the MMB, and were charged the same for delivery and haulage costs. Bigger farmers closer to the processing plants would effectively subsidize smaller farmers more distant from the plants.

Big dairies drive down prices

The abolition of the MMB by the previous Conservative Party government opened the door for the big dairies to start driving down the prices paid to farmers. Recently, dairy farmers have been receiving about half or less of the final selling price for milk.

The FFA is working on proposals for a national milk agency that they hope to use to get farmers a higher percentage of the final selling price. Robert Lawrie of the government's Office of Fair Trading has told FFA representatives that they have "the green light to start developing details of the agency."

The Farmers Union of Wales has called for a public forum to discuss the industry's costs and pricing structures. "Between 1992 and 2002 some 30 percent of Welsh dairy farmers quit the industry, and unless the economics improve we will see further hemorrhaging of producers," the group said in a statement.

On October 17 a press release announcing an "unprecedented move for common action by British and Irish farmers," was released jointly by the Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Association (ICMSA) and the British FFA. The two organizations announced the establishment of the British and Irish Dairy Farmers' Forum to "combine and co-ordinate efforts to combat the growing power" of the chains. The ICMSA represents 26,000 dairy farmers in the Republic of Ireland.

Paul Davies in London contributed to this article.

Venezuela steel workers fight for safety, pay

BY CARLOS CORNEJO

VANCOUVER, British Columbia—Thousands of metal workers in Venezuela's Orinoco Steel Works (SIDOR) carried out job actions the past two months that resulted in a 50 percent drop in production in the month of October. The workers, organized by SUTISS, the steelworkers union, fought for wage increases stipulated in the contract that the company had not paid for five years, and for improved safety conditions on the job.

"We gave the company plenty of time to respond to our demands and they made fun of us," said Jesús Fajardo, a worker at SIDOR, in a November 13 telephone interview. "Faced with the bosses' intransigence, we had to take measures like lowering production to press the company to give us what was due."

Fajardo is one of the 4,050 members of SUTISS at the huge steel works in Ciudad Guyana, Bolívar state. He first came in contact with the *Militant* when a reporting team for the paper visited Venezuela in September.

Faced with the union-organized slowdown, SIDOR was forced to make some concessions. It agreed to pay workers bonuses scheduled for 2004 and to give them a wage raise. This amounts to a pay increase of 129,000 bolívares (\$80) per month. SUTISS members make an average monthly wage of 700,000 bolívares (\$438).

Among the main demands of the workers was to be given the incentive pay stipulated in the contract, which says the company has to provide such bonuses based on the overall productivity, efficiency, and safety record of employees in the steel works. According to Fajardo, this amounted to about 10 percent of the workers' annual pay and union members used to get it every year. "But since the company was privatized five years ago, we haven't gotten any incentive pay," Fajardo said.

The union and the company agreed to submit the productivity bonus dispute to arbitration, which is supposed to issue a ruling by February, four months before the current contract expires.

According to Valdemar Alvarez, a SUTISS executive board member, Venezuela's constitution, adopted after Hugo Chávez was elected president in 1998, prohibits companies from cutting benefits such as incentive pay contained in union contracts.

"We are right and we have the proof to defend ourselves," said Carlos Ramírez, a technician and union member at SIDOR,



Militant photos by Argiris Malapanis
Workers enter SIDOR steel works in Ciudad Guayana, Venezuela, during morning shift change September 29 (above) and tend a furnace (left).

in a telephone interview. "The bosses were never able before to take such benefits away. We won't let them."

SIDOR is the top private company in Venezuela in terms of exports. It's the fourth-largest steel producer in Latin America and the continent's top exporter of finished steel products. Last year, SIDOR produced 3.3 million metric tons of liquid steel and its total exports amounted to \$584 million.

The company was state owned until 1997. That year, shortly before Chávez's election to the presidency, the government of Rafael Caldera sold a majority stake to foreign investors. Today, the Amazonia consortium—which is owned by capitalists in Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, and Venezuela—controls 60 percent of the company's shares. The Venezuelan government has a 40 percent stake.

After the company was privatized, the bosses cut the workforce from 18,000 to 11,000. About half the workforce is now made up of *contratistas*, that is, temporary (or contract) workers. According to Fajardo and Ramírez, the bosses pushed back the union and succeeded in displacing some 5,000 SUTISS members with temporary workers who are not covered by the union contract.

The contract workers get paid the minimum wage of 200,000 bolívares per month (\$125), which is more than \$300 per month

less than union members.

Ramírez said that union members carried out the job actions in October not only to secure a wage raise but also to press the company to improve safety conditions. Accidents on the job have shot up in the last five years, the unionist said, as the workforce was reduced while production increased by 39 percent. "Over the last year, five workers have died from accidents on the job," Ramírez said. "All of them were contract workers. They are more vulnerable because they are forced to work under worse conditions than those of us in the union."

The unionists are also fighting to bridge the gap in wages and working conditions between contract and full-time workers, several union members said. "SUTISS is in the process of collecting signatures on the job among contract workers to press their demands for safer working conditions," Alvarez said. "They are the most affected by the bosses' offensive. We are also holding meetings with the company to press their demands and have approached unions who organize contract workers to put pressure on the company from that angle too."

The confrontation between the company and the union in October was typical of the guerrilla warfare between the bosses and the workers at SIDOR for the last five years. According to *Universal*, one of the country's

Continued on Page 10