

# THE MILITANT

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 68/NO. 43

NOV. 23, 2004

## U.S., Iraqi troops assault Fallujah in offensive to take ‘Sunni Triangle’

Iraqi gov’t declares state of emergency, seals border with Syria

BY SAM MANUEL

A force of 15,000 U.S. troops and Iraqi National Guard soldiers launched a major ground offensive into Fallujah November 7. Three days later, as this issue went to press, they had reportedly taken over most of the city and were battling antigovernment militias block by block. The assault is aimed at destroying these militias, which

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### OUT OF IRAQ NOW!

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have had several thousand members in the city, and putting Fallujah under the control of the Iraqi interim government prior to elections scheduled for the end of January. The attack in Fallujah is combined with operations to consolidate the regime’s control in nearby Ramadi, and will be followed by assaults in dozens of cities in the “Sunni Triangle” in central Iraq.

British troops of the Black Watch regiment that recently redeployed to Baghdad to free up U.S. troops for the current offensive are now part of the 25,000-strong U.S.-led forces that have surrounded Fallujah and Ramadi. A small number of British soldiers have taken control of two bridges over the Euphrates River leading into Fallujah, with the aim of cutting off efforts to resupply the militias. The killings of four soldiers from the Black Watch regiment the first week of November has firmed up London’s determination to get more deeply involved in the imperialist war.

The offensive in Fallujah includes at least 2,000 Iraqi soldiers, including members of the Iraqi 36th Commando Battalion. The operation started after sustained



Getty Images/Scott Nelson

U.S. Army troops prepare to seize building in Fallujah during assault on November 9.

bombardment of militia positions by U.S. warplanes and artillery for three weeks, and following formal authorization by Iraqi prime minister Iyad Allawi.

On November 7, the Allawi administration declared a 60-day state of emergency throughout most of the country, except the Kurdish areas in the north, and a 24-hour curfew in Fallujah. In addition, Allawi said Iraq’s borders with Syria and Jordan would be sealed, allowing only essential goods to pass through.

Washington and Baghdad claim that “foreign fighters” crossing the border from Syria are largely responsible for the campaign of bombings of civilian and military targets, as well as kidnappings and beheadings of hostages, in the “Sunni Triangle.”

Under the state of emergency, the inter-

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## Meat packers in Toronto strengthen picket line, not intimidated by boss

BY NATALIE STAKE-DOUCET  
AND JOHN STEELE

TORONTO—“We’re not gonna take it and you’re not gonna make it, we’re not gonna take it anymore!” chanted 50 strikers from the Quality Meat Packers and Toronto Abattoirs plant as they marched in downtown Toronto and around the plant November 5.



Militant/Natalie Stake-Doucet

Members of UFCW Local 175 on strike against Quality Meat Packers in Toronto stand in doorway of picket shack. Sign has “on strike” written in 19 languages, reflecting the many nationalities of the workforce.

During the first week of the strike, which began November 1, the 573 members of United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW) Local 175 have been taking initiatives to strengthen the picket line and have refused to be intimidated by the bosses who have threatened them that they may lose their jobs. A large picket shack was built at the main plant entrance with most of the wood being donated by some freelance carpenters who work in a warehouse across the street from the plant. The carpenters make sets for movies and the theater. “This will help keep you warm,” said Jon Brooks, one of the carpenters.

The strikers also collected over Can\$200 (Can\$1=US\$0.83) in one-dollar contributions among themselves to buy some of the wood. Shelters have also been put up at the three other entrances to the property.

The picket shack has also been decorated by strikers. Some brought in framed paintings, a coat rack, and a television. On the outside wall of the shed the words “on strike” have been written in 19 different languages,

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## French troops step up intervention in Ivory Coast

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

The government of France sent hundreds more troops to Ivory Coast the first week of November to bolster its failed efforts at brokering a deal between the government of President Laurent Gbagbo and rebel forces based in the north of the West African nation. By November 8, French armored columns were patrolling Abidjan, Ivory Coast’s commercial center, and confronting thousands of Gbagbo supporters who charge Paris with trying to oust the president. Dozens of French tanks have surrounded Gbagbo’s home, said his spokesperson.

The imperialist military intervention is part of the French rulers’ efforts to salvage their sphere of influence in their former colonial empire on the African continent. They face both popular opposition to their exploitation of African mineral wealth and labor, and fierce competition by their U.S. rivals encroaching on their domination of

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## Utah miners and their supporters press labor board to set union vote

BY ANNE CARROLL

SALT LAKE CITY—“We, the 50 members of the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement (LCLAA) Washington Chapter, urge you not to allow any members of the Kingston family to participate in this union election,” wrote the Washington State labor group in a recent letter to B. Allan Benson, regional director of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) in Denver, Colorado.

This is one of the many letters to the labor board by supporters of the 13-month-long struggle by coal miners at the Co-Op mine

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## Middle-class contempt for workers fuels liberal panic over U.S. elections

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

U.S. president George Bush won another four years in the White House November 2 by a significant margin. He received 51 percent of the popular vote, compared to 48 percent for Democrat John Kerry. The result was even more stunning to liberals and middle-class radicals because the turnout was larger than in previous elections and closer to what Democrats and their hangers-on worked for and dreamed about. About 116 million people, or 58 percent of eligible voters, went to the polls—the largest percentage since 1968, according to the As-

## NEWS ANALYSIS

sociated Press—and Bush won 3.5 million more votes than Kerry.

Middle-class liberals and social democrats in the United States and abroad reacted with contempt for the working class. They argued that Bush won the election because most of the “American people,” by which they mean a majority of working people, are ignorant and reactionary. They portrayed Bush as dumb and those who voted for him as even dumber.

In fact, during campaign speeches and in his televised debates with the president, Kerry asked people to vote for him because he would carry out a more intelligent war on terrorism, a smarter war in Iraq. And every time he implied that Bush, and those who might vote for him, were stupid, Kerry lost tens of thousands of votes.

American patriotism marked the entire bourgeois election campaign. All the capitalist parties that ran candidates campaigned along this line. In this framework, Bush took advantage of having been in office for four years. He played on the fact that no attacks involving “terrorists” from abroad have taken place in the United States since Sept. 11, 2001. And he made a more convincing case from the point of view of the ruling class that he will build on his record of taking the fight to the “terrorists” wherever they are—far away from any U.S. city.

In his election campaign, Bush also promised to cut taxes. He promised to simplify the tax code. He promised to allow everyone to put a smaller portion of their wages into the federal Social Security system and a larger portion into their own retirement accounts, “a nest egg you can call your own and government can never take away.” These proposals appealed to large layers of workers and the middle class.

Working people are deeply fearful of what the future has in store for them, and rightly so. They know they are working lon-

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# Cuba’s internationalist aid in Africa discussed at N.Y. school

**BY SAM MANUEL**

NEW YORK—“Cuba’s efforts to oppose Washington’s policies in Africa and to support the liberation movements go back to Che’s trip to Africa in 1964,” said Piero Gleijeses, referring to Ernesto Che Guevara, a central leader of the Cuban revolution, who traveled for three months in 1964 throughout Africa meeting with leaders of national liberation movements on the continent. A professor of American foreign policy at Johns Hopkins University in Washington, D.C., Gleijeses was speaking to about 70 people at a November 3 meeting here at Columbia University. The event was titled, “The Cuban Revolution, U.S. Foreign Policy, and African Liberation: the Untold Story.”

Gleijeses is the author of *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington and Africa, 1959–1976*. The book traces the history of Cuba’s internationalist aid to the independence struggles of African countries against colonial rule, beginning in Algeria in 1961 to the Congo and Guinea Bissau. *Conflicting Missions* also gives a detailed account of the first two years of Cuba’s mission to help defend newly independent Angola in 1975 against an invasion by troops of the apartheid regime in South Africa.

As he does in his book, Gleijeses reviewed the stakes involved in Angola for Washington and apartheid-era Pretoria, on the one hand, and for Luanda, Havana, and the national liberation movements in southern African, on the other.

The Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), Gleijeses said, “was winning popular support and the civil war against UNITA and FNLA. The inevitable military defeat of UNITA, in particular, forced Pretoria to intervene directly.” More than Angola was at stake for the apartheid regime, Gleijeses continued. “An independent Angola would provide a secure rear base of operations for troops of the South West Africa People’s Organisation fighting a guerilla war against apartheid rule in neighboring Namibia.”

On Oct. 14, 1975, an elite South African column intervened in the civil war in Angola against the MPLA in support of one of its rivals, the National Union for the

Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). The National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) was aided by the U.S.-backed regime of Joseph Mobutu in neighboring Zaire, now the Republic of Congo, with the help of the CIA.

With superior armor and artillery, the apartheid army columns quickly overran MPLA forces in southern Angola. On November 7, at the request of the MPLA, the Cuban government sent the first battle group of 652 soldiers to help stop the South African advance. Hundreds of other Cuban volunteers would follow.

“Washington saw the Cuban intervention as a proxy for Soviet policy in Africa,” Gleijeses said. “But the archives containing the daily reports received by Kissinger about the arrival of Cuban troops in Angola confirm Havana’s contention that Cuba’s decision was taken completely independent from Moscow.” Henry Kissinger was secretary of state in the Nixon administration.

Gleijeses read from Cuban, U.S., and Soviet archives showing that Havana decided not to inform Moscow of its decision to send troops to Angola to fight the South African invasion until well after the operation had begun, in the belief that Moscow would not have agreed. Neither did Cuba receive aid from Moscow in sending troops to Angola. “The Cubans had to use very old planes that couldn’t make the trip without a couple for refueling stops,” Gleijeses recounted. “When the governments of Barbados, Jamaica, and Venezuela agreed to provide refueling stations, the U.S. came down on them like a ton of bricks.”

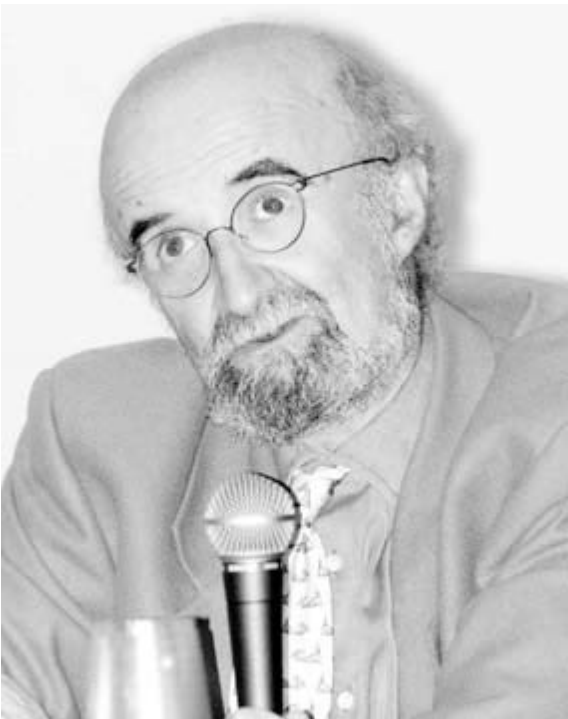
One question during the discussion was whether the Cuban internationalist mission in Angola was “a net gain or net loss.”

“The victory of the MPLA and Cuba in Angola went far beyond the bounds of Angola,” Gleijeses replied. “In 1987, when South African forces had trapped the best Angolan brigade in the town of Cuito Cuanavale,” he said, “Havana sent its best troops and equipment, not only to save Cuito Cuanavale but also to drive the apartheid troops out of Angola.”

During the first three months of 1988, integrated units of Cuban troops, the Angolan MPLA, and the Namibian SWAPO broke the back of the South African encirclement of Cuito Cuanavale and subsequently routed its forces in southern Angola. On June 13, 1988, representatives from Luanda, Havana, Washington, and Pretoria signed an agreement setting the framework for withdrawal of South African troops from Angola and the independence of Namibia.

The revolutionary victory at Cuito Cuanavale had broader repercussions throughout southern Africa.

“In Rhodesia,” Gleijeses said, “the Carter administration decided not to aid the white minority regime for fear that it might provoke military intervention by Cuban forces who were in neighboring Mozambique.” The white-minority regime ceded power in 1979. The following



Militant/Sam Manuel  
**Piero Gleijeses, speaking November 3 at Columbia University in New York City.**

year, Rhodesia, a former British colony, gained independence and the country was renamed Zimbabwe.

Gleijeses added that the Cuban mission in Angola also contributed greatly to the struggle to bring down the racist apartheid regime in South Africa. Citing Nelson Mandela’s tribute to the Cuban Revolution in a speech the African National Congress leader gave at a rally of tens of thousands in Matanzas, Cuba, on July 26, 1991, Gleijeses said, “The decisive defeat of the apartheid aggressors broke the myth of the invincibility of the white oppressors... Cuito Cuanavale was a milestone in the history of the struggle for southern African liberation.”

## Growth of U.S. labor productivity slows down

**BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS**

The growth of labor productivity in the United States slowed to 1.9 percent for non-agricultural jobs in the third quarter of 2004, down from 3.9 percent the previous quarter, according to figures released November 4 by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

This is the first time the rate has been below 3 percent since the final months of

2002. The slowdown notwithstanding, U.S. labor productivity—measured as output per hour worked—has risen for 14 consecutive quarters, that is, more than three years. The rate shot up especially in 2002 and 2003.

The increase in labor productivity is the result of speed-up and stretching the workday. Many companies have maintained or increased production levels while cutting the workforce. This is especially true in manufacturing, where productivity grew in the first three quarters of the year by 6.9 percent, 8.3 percent, and 4.6 percent, respectively. Workers in factories, mines, and mills feel the result on their bodies as on-the-job injuries rise and the workweek is lengthened.

Total hours worked, for example, jumped 2.1 percent in the July–September period, after a 0.3 percent increase the previous quarter.

At the same time, joblessness persists at steady levels. According to Bloomberg News, unemployment was expected to remain at 5.4 percent in October, even though 175,000 new jobs were created that month—the most in five months.

“By producing more with less, compa-

nies have been able to avoid hiring many new workers, a critical reason for the slow job growth that has characterized the economic recovery,” said an article in the November 5 *Wall Street Journal*.

Meanwhile, real wages—that is, hourly pay adjusted for inflation—continued a slow but steady decline the first half of the year, falling 0.4 percent and 1 percent the first and second quarters of this year, respectively.

All this has meant higher profit margins for many employers. Profits of corporations in the Standard and Poor’s 500, for example, are forecast to rise 19 percent this year, according to the *New York Times*.

If the slowdown in the growth of labor productivity continues, employers may be forced to increase hiring to meet rising orders, the *Times* and other big-business dailies said. This may result in lower unemployment and somewhat higher wages, as workers feel more confident to demand livable pay while competition among the bosses for labor power rises.

Real wages inched upward by 2 percent between July and September, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

THE MILITANT

*Find out about Utah miners’ fight for union*

*After a 10-month strike, Co-Op miners in Huntington, Utah, returned to work July 12 and have continued the battle for the union from inside. From day one of the strike the ‘Militant’ has given weekly coverage to this important labor struggle. New subscribers can get two back issues of their choice to find out more about it.*

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### The Militant

Vol. 68/No. 43

**Closing news date: November 10, 2004**

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Published weekly except for one week in January, June, July, and September.  
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**E-mail:** TheMilitant@verizon.net  
The Militant **website** is: [www.themilitant.com](http://www.themilitant.com)  
Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to The Militant Business Office, 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.  
Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.  
**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to the Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.  
Subscriptions: **United States:** for one-year subscription send \$35 to above address.  
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# Berlin to close 20% of its military bases

BY PAUL PEDERSON

Germany’s defense minister, Peter Struck, announced plans November 2 to close more than 100 military bases—about one-fifth the total—as part of a downsizing and restructuring of the German armed forces, reported the *International Herald Tribune*.

The plan coincides with steps by Washington to move tens of thousands of U.S. troops from bases in Germany to other locations in the United States and abroad, as part of sweeping changes in Washington’s military. This “transformation,” as the U.S. Department of Defense calls this ongoing process, includes moving most of the U.S. forces currently in Western Europe toward the Middle East, Central Asia, and Africa, and a shift in their organization toward smaller and more mobile and lethal units poised for rapid deployment around the world.

The announcement by Struck is an indication that the only future for the militaries of imperialist powers is as specialized part-

ners of the transformed U.S. war-fighting machine.

“Struck said the reductions were necessary to make a final break with the cold war,” reported the *Tribune*. “During that time, Germany, like other countries belonging to the Atlantic alliance [NATO], maintained large and inflexible armies trained for territorial defense that could withstand a conventional attack from the Warsaw Pact, the Soviet-dominated military alliance.”

As part of these moves, Berlin is seeking to take steps towards transforming part of its bloated military into effective combat units. Plans are on the table to establish a 35,000-strong elite combat force backed up by 70,000 troops designed for deployment in “peace-keeping” missions. The remainder, about 150,000 troops, would be slated for “civil defense.” The overall size of the German armed forces is being reduced from 285,000 to 250,000. The number of brigades will be slashed to 12, from 22.



NATO tank exercises in Germany in 1989. Washington is removing last of its massive Cold War—era forces in Germany, designed to fight heavily armored Soviet divisions, as part of army “transformation.” Other imperialist powers are following suit.

The German military has proven incapable of playing an effective combat role in recent military interventions. In the war in Afghanistan, for example, Berlin was forced to send its troops part of the way by train because it lacked effective

air transport for large-scale military missions abroad. Germany’s rulers have been under increasing pressure from Washington to structure their military to be capable of fighting alongside U.S. troops, taking specialized assignments under U.S. imperialism’s umbrella.

The German military was weakened in 1990 after the fall of the Berlin Wall, when the army had to absorb 175,000 troops from East Germany. This swelled the armed forces of the united Germany temporarily to 500,000 soldiers.

Struck announced that the final details of the troop and base reductions would be announced next summer, following “consultations with our U.S. counterparts.”

Washington has already carried out a sweeping reduction of its forces in Germany over the past decade and a half. In 1989 close to 250,000 of Washington’s 2.1 million troops were based in Germany. Today, of the 1.4 million soldiers in the U.S. military, only 75,000 are stationed in Germany. But that is not the end of the cuts being planned by the Pentagon.

“We are still situated in large part as if little has changed for the last 50 years,” said Donald Rumsfeld, U.S. secretary of defense, in a September 23 presentation to the Senate Armed Services Committee. “As if, for example, Germany is still bracing for a Soviet tank invasion across its northern plain.”

Two heavy divisions, the First Armored Division and the First Infantry Division (mechanized), are slated to be moved from Germany to bases in the United States. Smaller, more agile units will replace what is left of the huge armored force that had been stationed in Germany since the end of World War II.

## Social democrats win Uruguay presidency

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

Tabaré Vázquez, leader of Uruguay’s Frente Amplio (Broad Front) coalition, won the presidency in national elections on October 31. Vázquez, a member of the Socialist Party who has run for president three times, won 50.7 percent of the vote.

Jorge Larrañaga of the conservative National Party gained 34 percent. Guillermo Stirling of the ruling Colorado Party was decisively defeated, received only 10.3 percent.

The National Party and the Colorado Party have alternated in power for more than 100 years.

Vázquez’s victory was the first by a social-democratic politician in Uruguay’s 170-year history. It follows a pattern of electoral successes by similar political forces elsewhere in Latin America—such as social democrats Luiz Inácio “Lula” da Silva in Brazil and Ricardo Lagos in Chile, and Peronist Néstor Kirchner in Argentina. Those politicians were voted into office after promising to improve the living standards of working people, which have been devastated by the economic depression that has engulfed much of South America in the last half-decade.

“I promise to work intensely to bring about the needed changes for this country,” Vázquez told supporters at the Frente Amplio’s headquarters in Montevideo, the nation’s capital. He vowed to lead a “government of changes that would work to improve Uruguayans’ living standards in the not too-distant future,” the *Financial Times* reported.

Uruguay, a country of 3.5 million people, has been recovering from a four-year recession during which unemployment soared to around 20 percent, increasing the impoverishment of layers of the working class. The economic crisis in neighboring countries, especially Argentina and Brazil, spurred Uruguay’s downturn. The country’s gross domestic product (GDP) plunged nearly 20 percent and its foreign debt doubled. In 2002 a financial crisis socked the economy. The GDP shrunk 10 percent when Argentines pulled deposits out of Uruguay’s banks and the currency lost half its value. As the Uruguayan peso fell relative to the U.S. dollar, inflation surged, making it more difficult for working people to purchase needed goods and services.

A mild economic recovery is now under way. The GDP is projected to grow at least 10 percent this year, while inflation has stabilized. Uruguay’s chief exports—which include meat, rice, leather goods, wool, fish, and dairy products—are at record levels. This upturn has raised the expectations of working people.

As in neighboring Argentina, the people of Uruguay have enjoyed a relatively higher standard of living than the populations of other Latin American countries, especially Bolivia or Paraguay. Life expectancy is nearly 76 years of age and infant mortality is 12.3 deaths per 1,000 live births. In

contrast, Bolivia, one of the poorest and least developed countries in the world, has a life expectancy of 65 years and an infant mortality rate of approximately 55 deaths per 1,000 live births.

Uruguay’s current president, Jorge Batlle, came under fire “for pursuing closer ties with the United States in response to the economic collapse that hit Argentina three years ago,” said an article in the November 3 the *International Herald Tribune*.

At the same time, Vázquez has sought to assure Wall Street investors that his administration will pursue “market-friendly policies” similar to those of Lula in Brazil.

“It won’t be a copy of Brazil,” said Senator Danilo Astori, who Vázquez has chosen to be his economy minister. The new government, however, would be “prudent in managing public accounts and maintaining stability in monetary and foreign exchange policy,” Astori told the *New York Times*.

“Everything is normal,” asserted one confident banker in Uruguay. “Nobody is nervous, and money isn’t leaving the country.”

Uruguay’s Broad Front, which will have a majority in both houses of Congress, is a coalition that was founded in 1970. It includes bourgeois formations, particularly two factions that broke from the ruling Colorado and National parties; the traditional Stalinist and social-democratic groups—the Communist Party and the Socialist Party; a handful of prominent intellectuals; and an array of unions and cultural associations. Some of its prominent members are former leaders of the Tupamaros guerrilla group.

The chief architect of the coalition was the Communist Party. It launched the alliance along with the social democrats as part of its “popular front” policy of class collaboration with sectors of the bourgeoisie. It was designed to divert working people from waging struggles independent of the ruling class in Uruguay. The Broad Front’s presidential slates were those candidates deemed acceptable to ruling circles. One example is Gen. Liber Seregni, who ran for president in the 1971 elections on the ticket of the Broad Front.

The Tupamaros, an urban guerrilla group, was formed in 1963 in response to the resistance among working people to worsening social conditions. The organization engaged in kidnappings, bombings, robberies, and shoot-outs with soldiers and cops. This course of action limited its political effectiveness. While the group claimed its armed actions targeted capitalist oppression, the Tupamaros aided the Broad Front’s bourgeois electoral campaigns. During the 1971 presidential election, for example, the Tupamaros halted their guerrilla warfare, “so as not to embarrass the Broad Front,” reported the magazine *Intercontinental Press* in its Dec. 13, 1971, issue.

In 1973 the Uruguayan military seized power and suspended the constitution. The regime launched a crackdown against the

Tupamaros guerrillas. It also banned all left-wing political parties and arrested thousands of their members, as well as hundreds of trade unionists. Torture became widespread. An estimated 400,000 Uruguayans fled the country during the 1970s.

Civilian rule was restored in 1985 after years of mass protests against the dictatorship. In November 1983, for example, about 400,000 people demonstrated in Montevideo. In June of the following year, a general strike to mark the 11th anniversary of the 1973 military coup paralyzed the Uruguayan capital and other cities. The Tupamaros renounced guerrilla struggle and formed an electoral party.

Workers’ history of struggle against military rule and the expectations awakened by the election of the new regime will pose a challenge for the Vázquez government. And given the nation’s rapidly falling living standards, it will be difficult for the new administration “to ignore demands for wage rises,” noted the *Financial Times*. Because the new administration has every intention of upholding the capitalist system, which is marching into a worldwide depression, it will increasingly find itself at odds with the working people and middle-class layers who put it in office.

## Brazil cedes sovereignty, agrees to submit to UN nuclear ‘inspections’

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

The deal between the government of Brazil and the United Nations nuclear agency allowing “inspections” of Brazil’s uranium enrichment plant is nearly sealed. Media reports the first week of November quote diplomats who say the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has tentatively agreed to Brasilia’s proposal that it have access to some parts of the centrifuges, but not the hulls of the equipment.

The Workers Party government had denied the IAEA entry to the Resende enrichment facility 60 miles outside Brasilia earlier this year. In mid-October, however, Brasilia bowed to imperialist pressure to admit the “inspectors” into the plant in a violation of the country’s sovereignty. Under the banner of “nonproliferation” of nuclear weapons, the IAEA has become more and more the tool used by Washington and its imperialist allies in their efforts to pressure Brasilia to curtail its production of nuclear fuel to expand the country’s electrification. The U.S. government and the UN agency have warned Brasilia that blocking IAEA agents would set a precedent that the governments of Iran, north Korea, or others could follow.

Brasilia’s opposition to IAEA entry to Resende had been based on protecting the design to its advanced technology. “They [UN inspectors] have generally approved

the Brazilian proposal, based on the one the IAEA uses to inspect Urenco,” said one unnamed diplomat cited by the Reuters news agency. Urenco is a uranium enrichment consortium with plants in the United Kingdom, Germany, and the Netherlands.

An IAEA spokesperson said the Brazilian government was “being constructive” when it granted the agency access to Resende. He said a final decision on the deal on the arrangements for continued “inspections” would come after the agency reviews the report on the first tour of the plant.

Meanwhile, in a November 5 speech to Stanford University’s Center for International Security and Cooperation, IAEA head Mohamed ElBaradei said more pressure should be brought to bear against signers of the Nuclear NonProliferation Treaty (NPT) who intend to expand electrification of their countries with the use of nuclear power. Although uranium enrichment is currently permitted under the NPT, ElBaradei said these are “latent weapons programs” that can be quickly transformed into factories for making arms-grade material. ElBaradei said the treaty should be renegotiated to give the IAEA the power to prevent governments deemed unreliable from developing the capacity to enrich uranium, according to the Associated Press.

# Atlantic City casino workers make gains, end month-long strike

BY ABBY TILSNER

ATLANTIC CITY, New Jersey—Members of UNITE-HERE Local 54 voted November 3 to accept a contract ending their month-long strike against seven casinos here. They returned to work the following day.

The contract had expired September 15. About 10,000 bartenders, servers, housekeepers, and other service employees walked off the job October 1.

“The casinos didn’t think the union could stay strong and united,” said Mary Jo Cameron, a picket captain at the Hilton, in a phone interview with the *Militant*.

Workers said they won better wages and improved health-care benefits and pensions.

Union officials had been pressing for a three-year contract to coincide with the expiration date of casino contracts in Las Vegas, Detroit, Chicago, and other riverboat gaming cities. The deal they signed in the end, though, lasts five years, which is what the bosses had demanded.

Workers said the new contract also addresses the issue of subcontracting by keeping most of the old agreement in place, promising that no current jobs would be replaced.

The Tropicana and Resorts casinos, however, had already subcontract with a new outlet.

“This just means we will need to fight to recruit the new workers into the union,” said Cameron.

This was the longest casino strike in Atlantic City’s history.

The contract includes protections for immigrant workers, improved leave of absence and promotion language, and a stronger shop steward system, Cameron and other workers said.

Every striker has the right to return to work with continuous seniority. Workers who were on probation when they walked out will be able to count their days on the picket line as part of the probationary period. Strikers also do not lose time for wage raises, vacation, and seniority for the month they stayed on the picket lines. Workers also said that the contract promised no harassment or retaliation against any striker or picket captain.

Donald Sloan, however, a doorman at Tropicana, said that upon returning to work the company had taken away their break

room and redefined their jobs. This resulted in a cut in pay. “We got what we wanted so they are just trying to mess with us,” Sloan said. “But, we will fight through the union and beat this back too.”

According to union officials, about 6 percent of the strikers crossed the picket line. They have been allowed back into Local 54 by signing up as “core members,” which means they work under the contract’s terms but have no voting rights in the union.

## Utah miners press NLRB for union vote

Continued from front page

in Huntington, Utah, to win representation by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA). The Kingstons are the owners of the mine. The miners and their backers are pressing the NLRB to set a date for a union election at Co-Op and to back the UMWA demand that no Kingston family members or supervisory personnel be allowed to vote.

The 75 miners at Co-Op were fired Sept. 22, 2003, for trying to organize with the UMWA and fighting for livable wages and safe working conditions. They turned the lockout into a strike and picketed the mine, operated by C.W. Mining, for months.

After a strike that lasted nearly 10 months and growing solidarity from the labor movement in the United States and beyond, the NLRB upheld the UMWA charge that the workers had been fired illegally. The labor board ordered the company to reinstate all strikers who wanted to return to work.

After a large majority of the workers signed a petition asking for representation by the UMWA, the NLRB also ruled that a union election should be held at Co-Op.

The board held hearings in Price, Utah, in July of this year on who should be eligible to vote in this election. At this hearing, the lawyer representing the Co-Op miners and the UMWA asked that no Kingston family member employed by C.W. Mining be allowed to vote in this election because their loyalty is with the bosses.

The bosses argued that up to 100 people, who are members of the so-called International Association of United Work-



Militant/Abby Tilsner

Casino workers picket the Hilton Hotel and Casino October 16. The workers won wage increase, other demands through month-long strike against casino owners.

ers Union (IAUWU), most of whom are Kingston family members or relatives, should be allowed to vote. The miners say the IAUWU is a company outfit that has never represented them.

Four months later, the NLRB has not set a date or resolved the question of who can vote. The miners say that evidence continues to mount that the IAUWU is a Kingston-controlled operation.

On November 4, for example, a hearing was held in Salt Lake City involving polygamist John Daniel Kingston—a prominent member of the capitalist family that owns the mine—and one of his 14 wives, Heidi Mattingly Foster. The two face allegations of physical abuse and neglect of their 11 children.

The purpose of the hearing, held at Matheson Courthouse, was to review child support obligations and visitation rights for John Daniel Kingston. At a previous court hearing, the children were ordered separated from Foster because of the abuse allegations.

Co-Op miners who support the UMWA traveled to Salt Lake City on November 4. “We came here today to let people know of our fight for a union against the Kingstons, so that everybody is aware of the kind of people we are dealing with,” UMWA supporter Celso Panduro said in an interview.

As the miners arrived outside the hearing they reported seeing Kingston family members with picket signs in front of the courtroom building supporting Foster and John Daniel Kingston.

According to the Co-Op miners, several of those holding up the signs are employed

by C.W. Mining in Huntington.

The miners also reported seeing Nevin Pratt, the so-called international vice-president of the IAUWU. Heidi Mattingly Foster is the daughter of Ron and Vicki Mattingly, also “international officers” of the IAUWU. This company union has only one local—the one at the Huntington mine—but tries to paint a façade of a legitimate trade union through its structures that include “international” tops, the miners said.

The miners were interviewed by local television stations and the *Salt Lake Tribune*. “The NLRB ordered that a union election take place,” Co-Op miner Bill Estrada told reporters. “It is four months later and we have heard nothing from the NLRB. The fact that officers of the company union and Kingston family members who work at the mine are at this court hearing supporting one of the owners of the mine is why we demand a union election and that no Kingston family member be allowed to vote.”

The IAUWU has also filed, along with the Co-Op mine bosses, a lawsuit in federal court in Utah against the UMWA, 17 of the Co-Op miners, many unions and other groups that have supported the organizing struggle, and numerous newspapers—including the *Militant*, *Salt Lake Tribune*, and *Deseret Morning News*—that have reported on the labor struggle. The suit charges the more than 120 defendants with defamation and unlawful labor practices.

Miners say this is a harassment lawsuit aimed at diverting the miners from their fight to win UMWA representation.

At a hearing for Heidi Mattingly Foster on November 3, Judge Andrew Valdez of the Third District Juvenile Court described to the court concerns for his own safety. The *Deseret Morning News* had reported a man had been spotted at 3:00 a.m. on October 28 installing video surveillance equipment in a courthouse parking lot. The license plate of the individual was traced to someone from Huntington, Utah, where the Co-Op mine is located, the Salt Lake daily reported.

The Co-Op miners attending the hearing said that during their strike the Kingstons regularly videotaped the picket line. “The bosses would come out with their camcorders and video the picket line when visitors would come to support us,” one of the miners reported. “They were trying to intimidate us and our supporters. But this did not back off anyone. In fact, it helped us expand the tremendous support we received that enabled us to win our jobs back.”

Miners said they are asking supporters to continue sending letters to the NLRB demanding it set a date for a union vote and back the UMWA demand that no Kingstons or other managerial personnel at Co-Op be allowed to vote.

Letters should be sent to NLRB Region 27, attention B. Allan Benson, director, 600 17th Street, 7th Floor—North Tower, Denver CO 80202-5433. Tel: (303) 844-3551; Fax (303) 844-6249.

Copies of letters and other messages of solidarity and financial donations can be sent to the Co-Op Miners at: UMWA District 22 at 525 East, 100 South, Price UT 84501. Tel: (435) 637-2037; Fax (435) 637-9456.

## Second UMWA mine reopens in Utah, hiring on rise throughout U.S. coalfields

BY PAT MILLER

PRICE, Utah—Coal companies in the West are now in a heated competition for underground coal miners. Higher prices and increased demand for coal are fueling the rivalry, as they are in the eastern coal regions of the United States. An additional factor shaking things up in this region is the expansion of unionized mines with the reopening of the Consol Emery mine, which is organized by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA). The Energy West Deer Creek mine, the other UMWA operation in this area, is also increasing hiring.

Twice a week half a dozen or more ads offering coal mining jobs appear in the *Price Sun Advocate* and the *Emery County Progress*, the local papers in Utah’s coal-producing Carbon and Emery counties. Not only are the 10 coal mines in this area looking for workers, underground coal mines in Wyoming and New Mexico regularly advertise in the papers here.

According to job service personnel in Utah, hundreds of miners working at nonunion mines are putting in their applications at the union mines, and many are getting hired. Combined with the ongoing struggle to win representation at the Co-Op mine in Huntington, Utah (see front-page article), a significant boost in the union organization of western coal is

under way.

With the expansion of hiring for UMWA-organized jobs, and increased hiring at unorganized mines, coal bosses running nonunion operations are not only scrambling for workers but are also concerned about the effects of union influence spreading. Applicants for job openings at the nonunion Arch Minerals mines report getting long diatribes against unions during their interviews.

Many of the nonunion operations in this area still pay more than the bosses at union-organized mines. Andalex Coal recently upped the pay for all miners at their three facilities by 5 percent to nearly \$23 an hour in order to stem the flow of miners leaving for union jobs. Despite this, however, many miners cite safety conditions, work schedules, health care, and other rights on the job as reasons they are pursuing jobs at the union mines.

Bosses at nonunion mines impose work schedules in an arbitrary way. This sometimes results in 12- and 13-hour days and days off that shift frequently. This is what the miners often cite as major reasons for applying to union mines. Miners at UMWA mines in this area have maintained a basic Monday through Friday eight-hour schedule, with some weekend work.

The year-long fight at the Co-Op mine with the substantial support for the work-

ers there by the United Mine Workers union has also contributed to putting the UMWA in the spotlight in this region as a fighting organization. Miners at nonunion operations in this area follow the developments of the Co-Op fight through the papers and by talking to co-workers who know first-hand about the labor struggle.

Supporters of the union organizing drive at Co-Op who work at other non-union mines, which includes a couple of dozen former Co-Op miners who went through the 10-month strike there, are often asked about the latest developments in the fight.

The U.S. Labor Department and a number of major coal companies say that the demand for coal miners will likely increase even more in the coming years as the industry faces a massive wave of retirements.

“For the last 15 years or so, we’ve been able to reach back into a pool of experienced miners that had been laid off or who had lost jobs through consolidation,” said Tom Hoffman, vice president of investor and public relations at Consol Energy, the nation’s largest underground coal company, according to an October 18 article by the Associated Press. “Those guys are now largely gone, either retired or they got out of the business. We’re facing a very big demographic bubble.”

# Two weeks, 524 ‘Militant’ subs to go; all out to make the goal!

BY PAUL PEDERSON

Two weeks before November 21—the deadline for the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* subscription drive—we need 524 *Militant* and 147 *PM* subs to make the international goal. This means 262 subs for the *Militant* and 74 for *PM* in each of the last two weeks.

This is a challenge. Throughout the first 10 weeks of the campaign, we’ve averaged nearly 180 *Militant* and 40 *PM* subscriptions per week.

A concerted, all-out effort is now needed to meet the goals.

An important factor in the success of the campaign will be sales to fellow workers on the job, at plant gates and picket lines, as well as to other unionists. The “In the Unions” section of the chart shows that there is substantial ground to cover to reach the goals that socialist workers in the mines, meatpacking plants, and garment and textile factories have set for themselves.

“We have two weeks left in the drive. Let’s take advantage of every day to campaign,” wrote Tom Fiske, a meat packer in Minneapolis in a November 9 letter to socialist meat packers. “This is what we said at the beginning of the subscription campaign and this is how we should conclude

it. We should meet and map out plans to take advantage of the opportunities we have. And carry out a real campaign effort for the remaining days of this drive.”

“Discussions with co-workers about the meaning of the U.S. elections can be effective in winning new subscribers,” he continued. “One socialist reported from Des Moines that such a discussion on the job led to a worker at the Tyson plant in Perry, Iowa, subscribing to the *Militant*. I was able to sell two *PM* subs on the job at another plant in Minneapolis through similar discussions.”

Fiske also said that using the coverage in both publications on the Co-Op miners’ union organizing struggle in Utah and the strike by workers at Quality Meat Packers in Toronto, as part of organizing solidarity with these fights, will net new subscribers.

Partisans of the *Militant* in a number of cities are also taking advantage of the momentum from the Socialist Workers Party election campaign to set up campus meetings and reach out to those they met before November 2 as well as new students.

### Follow through from election campaign

“We got a call from a student at Sarah Lawrence College, where Arrin Hawkins spoke, telling us that a number of students were ‘stressed out’ about the election and wanted to hear what the socialists had to say,” said Dan Fein, the director of the New York SWP 2004 campaign. Hawkins, the SWP vice-presidential candidate, addressed students on that campus October 21, along with Martin Koppel, SWP candidate for U.S. Senate in New York.

“Another student, who recently finished school at the state university in Albany, met our candidates during a campaign visit upstate and is planning to come down and join us for street campaigning this weekend,” Fein added. “We have also received invitations to set up tables at the student center at the Borough of Manhattan Community College where Róger Calero, our presidential candidate, spoke during his campaign tour here.”

Fein reported that socialists in New York are joining the debates and discussions coming out of the elections and getting back to those they met during the election campaign. Many signed up for subscriptions during the campaign and follow closely the coverage in the paper on the outcome.

Jim Spaul, a campaigner in London, reported that participants in the effort there have already made their goal of selling 50 *Militant* subscriptions. A highlight of last week’s effort there was a special round of calls to subscribers whose subs had run out a year ago.

“After a year, we drop the names of subscribers whose subs have expired,” Spaul reported. “We had a list of year-old subscribers and decided to call them up before erasing the names from the list. We got four renewals that way.”

Spaul said that the bulk of subscriptions sold in London were off of literature tables in shopping districts and working-class communities. “We also have sold a total of 16 subs to people stopping by the book shop—six in the last week alone,” he said.

Campaigners should send reports to the *Militant* on their activities in the final two weeks of the drive along with any photos that can be used along with this column.



Millie Sánchez (right), Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress in New York’s 8th District, staffs book table at October 31 public meeting, “Before the Vote: The Real Results of the 2004 U.S. Elections.”

## Give to ‘Militant Fighting Fund’

BY SAM MANUEL

The Militant Fighting Fund, launched October 31 to raise \$30,000 to help the socialist newsweekly defend itself against a harassment lawsuit by the owners of the Co-Op mine in Huntington, Utah, is off to a good start. So far, 240 people have contributed or made pledges amounting to \$25,462. That leaves a little less than \$5,000 in additional pledges and donations to meet the goal by the December 15 deadline.

Just over \$9,000 has been collected so far. The fund will cover the initial costs for attorneys, other legal fees, and any public defense efforts that may be necessary. The funds are needed upfront to prepare for any eventuality. Collecting the pledges as early as possible, and raising new contributions to bridge the gap toward the goal, is key now.

The lawsuit, filed by the mine owners on September 24, is aimed at taking the focus off the fight of the miners to win union representation by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA). It is also aimed at harassing unions and other groups that have supported the miners’ union organizing struggle, and media outlets that have covered the fight, as well as discouraging others from doing so.

Defendants in the suit include the *Militant*, its editor, its web administrator, and 20 of its reporters who have written articles on the Co-Op struggle. In all, 120 organizations and individuals—including the UMWA, 17 Co-Op miners, the Catholic church, and the two main dailies in Utah—are named in the 76-page suit, accused of “unlawful labor practices” and “defamation” against the company.

The *Militant* has had a proud record of covering this labor struggle. It has carried articles in 55 of its 58 issues since the union organizing fight began and will build on this record with the same accuracy and making no bones about its support for the miners.

While it is important not to be thrown off by the mine bosses’ nuisance suit, it’s something else to take frivolously what may develop. Raising the funds now is necessary for a serious preparation to confront whatever legal and other steps the *Militant* may have to take in coming weeks.

Contributions should be sent to: The Militant, 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, N.Y. 10018. Please write checks or money orders to The Militant and earmark them “Militant Fighting Fund.”

# Meat packers strengthen picket lines

### Continued from front page

including Chinese, Portuguese, Tagalog, Vietnamese, Spanish and French, reflecting the multinational composition of the strikers and their unity.

One of the signs attached to the company fence reads: “Six years you took 40% of my pay; it’s time to pay us back.”

This is the main issue in the strike. Workers say the company’s offer for a small wage increase was an insult given the slashing of wages six years ago after a two-month strike at the time failed to push back the bosses’ concession demands.

Some strikers have started bringing food on the picket line. Two very successful barbecues have taken place so far involving dozens of strikers on the morning shift. Amado Panda, a worker with eight months in the plant, joked by saying, “We’re not going to be any skinnier when we go back in the plant!”

UFCW chief stewards from the Maple Leaf Foods hog cut and kill in Burlington near Toronto, the Maple Lodge poultry processing plant, and the Coca Cola plant in Hamilton have also been walking the picket line.

### Company threats backfire

On November 3 workers received a letter by mail informing them that their prescription and drug coverage was suspended for the duration of the strike

The next day, workers were forced to line up in front of the main entrance of the plant to receive their paycheck. The workers were let in one by one by a security guard. Some had to wait over an hour to get their check.

Along with the paycheck came a unsigned letter from the company saying that the bosses were “very disappointed

that you rejected our contract offer” and the “signing bonus of \$500 per employee conditional on ratification October 28/04—NOW OFF THE TABLE.” The letter also stated that the offer from the company was better than the recently ratified agreement at the Maple Leaf Foods plant in Burlington.

The letter ended by stating, “every day the strike continues, the more difficult it will be to get back your hours and your customers,” and as a result, “WITH THIS STRIKE YOU HAVE PUT YOUR JOBS AT RISK!”

The company’s tactics backfired. Many strikers spontaneously decided to put this letter to good use by throwing it in the fire barrels as fuel. Some said it proved the strike was hurting the bosses because they had admitted they were losing customers.

A meeting between company and union officials, arranged by the Ontario Ministry of Labor, took place November 8. The bosses “reiterated the position contained in the letter to the employees,” Sam Cataeno, the UFCW chairperson in the plant, told strikers on the picket line after the meeting—that is, the same offer minus the \$500 signing bonus. “They said they had no more money and would have less because they would lose customers. The meeting was a waste of my gas money.”

In face of the bosses’ intransigence the mood on the line is determined. Kenny Terrero, a 28-year-old worker who pushes hog carcasses, told the *Militant*: “We want them to treat us as human beings, including on the question of pay. Our job is very hard and we’re not paid what we deserve.”

Natalie Stake-Doucet and John Steele are members of UFCW Local 175 at Quality Meat Packers in Toronto.

Militant/Perspectiva Mundial Fall Subscription Drive Aug. 28–Nov. 21: Week 10 of 12					
Country	Militant			PM	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold
ICELAND	30	27	90%	2	0
SWEDEN	30	29	97%	5	4
UNITED KINGDOM					
London	50	50	100%	12	6
Edinburgh	25	21	84%	2	0
UK total	75	71	95%	14	6
NEW ZEALAND					
Auckland	45	39	87%	1	1
Christchurch	35	20	57%	1	0
N.Z. total	80	59	74%	2	1
AUSTRALIA	55	39	71%	8	4
CANADA					
Montreal	32	25	78%	12	6
Toronto	75	50	67%	18	5
CANADA total	107	75	70%	30	11
UNITED STATES					
Houston	80	78	98%	20	10
Craig, CO	65	57	88%	20	9
Des Moines	65	57	88%	25	25
Newark	90	76	84%	25	18
Detroit	40	33	83%	10	8
Seattle	55	45	82%	12	11
New York	180	146	81%	60	43
Price, UT	50	40	80%	20	14
Birmingham	40	29	73%	8	3
Boston	100	71	71%	40	19
Omaha	55	39	71%	45	17
Tampa	40	27	68%	10	8
Chicago	100	67	67%	40	30
Atlanta	80	53	66%	20	11
Pittsburgh	65	43	66%	4	2
Twin Cities	105	68	65%	40	26
Los Angeles	150	94	63%	50	43
Cleveland	40	25	63%	10	4
Washington	115	71	62%	21	12
Philadelphia	95	53	56%	10	0
San Francisco	125	57	46%	35	15
Miami	100	46	46%	50	6
NE Pennsylvania	55	22	40%	15	12
U.S. total	1890	1297	69%	590	346
14-day campaign*	-	179	-	-	31
Int'l totals	2235	1776	77%	670	403
Goal/Should be	2300	1917	83%	550	457
*14 days of campaigning in New York Aug. 21–Sept. 3 at protests and events leading up to and during the Republican convention					
IN THE UNIONS					
	Militant			PM	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold
AUSTRALIA					
AMIEU	8	5	63%		
UNITED STATES					
UMWA	30	25	83%	12	6
UFCW	135	78	58%	150	87
UNITE	50	28	56%	40	15
Total	215	131	61%	202	108
NEW ZEALAND					
MWU	2	1	50%		
NDU	2	1	50%		
Total	4	2	50%		
SWEDEN					
Livs	2	1	50%	1	0
ICELAND					
Hlíf	2	1	50%		
Efling	2	1	50%		
Total	4	2	50%		
CANADA					
UFCW	6	3	50%	3	2
UNITE	2	0	0%	1	0
Total	8	3	38%	4	2

AMIEU—Australasian Meat Industry Employees’ Union; Livs—Food Workers Union; MWU—Meat Workers Union; NDU—National Distribution Union; UFCW—United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA—United Mine Workers of America; Hlíf—Union of Unskilled Workers in Hafnarfjörður; Efling—Union of Unskilled Workers in Reykjavík.

# Meaning of U.S. elections

**Continued from front page**  
ger and harder and earning less than they did 10 years ago. The problem is that they have never lived through the kind of depression conditions that are developing in the world. Most think they'll be better off managing their own savings than trusting the government to give them a pension some time in the future. And on the second part of that they are correct.

### Failure of liberalism

This reaction has a lot to do with the failure of liberalism, which uses demagoguery to convince working people they are better off with the Democratic Party.

The majority of working people know what happened during the eight years of the Clinton administration. Health care grew more expensive. The number of people without any medical coverage was 40 million by the end of Clinton's second term, 2 million more than when he took office. And that happened during the longest post-World War II upturn of the business cycle. Even though the number of the uninsured increased to 45 million and medical costs continued to rise under Bush's watch, Kerry's promises to improve health care by pointing to the Clinton legacy rang hollow.

Above all, it was Clinton's Democratic administration that took the first real step toward gutting the social wage, something that even Ronald Reagan wouldn't touch in the 1980s: it carried out Clinton's campaign promise to "end welfare as we know it."

Leading the bipartisan assault against half a century of social gains by working people, in 1996 Clinton signed the "welfare reform" bill adopted by Congress. The legislation eliminated federally guaranteed Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and cut off food stamps and Medicaid to many working people. In doing so, Clinton opened the battle by the ruling class to take back concessions codified in the Social Security Act, which was pushed through Congress in 1935 under the pressure of rising labor struggles.

AFDC meant that aid would be given as a right to families with dependent children, that is, to families without parents who were breadwinners. Organizations of widows of miners who had died on the job because of lack of safety resulting from the bosses' profit drive were among those who demanded it. AFDC also came to cover the families of soldiers who went to war and were killed or came back maimed and unable to work.

Working people won the concessions included in the Social Security Act—which encompassed guaranteed pension, disability,

and unemployment benefit floors, as well as AFDC—through hard-fought battles in the 1930s. In the wake of the civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s, these gains were consolidated and extended with the addition of Medicare, Medicaid, food stamps, and cost-of-living protections. Workers fought for such minimal lifetime security to keep their class from being torn apart by the ravages of capitalism. The working class struggled to entrench these measures as universal social rights, with automatic funding not reviewed in annual budgets, and without any degrading "means testing." Far from being the "dole," these entitlements represent a small part of the social wealth that workers and farmers produce through their labor. These benefits are a social wage that, together with the hourly wages paid directly by employers, make up the basic living standards of working people. Very broad sections of the middle classes depend on them as well.

The late senator Patrick Moynihan, a Democrat who voted against the 1996 bill, warned of its consequences at the time of its passage. The law was "the first step in dismantling the social contract that has been in place in the United States since at least the 1930s," Moynihan said. "Do not doubt that Social Security itself, which is to say insured retired benefits, will be next."

This step by the Clinton administration undermined working-class solidarity by reinforcing the dog-eat-dog reality of capitalism and the notion that those without may be taken care of by charity.

Republicans now play on this record of liberalism. Bush is poised to build on the Clinton legacy by pushing for "reform" of Social Security pensions.

### Appeal of 'ownership society'

Prior to and during the Republican national convention in September, Bush promoted his proposals for what he called an "ownership society." He used the specter of "the huge baby boom generation approaching retirement" to push what is now a standard myth concocted in ruling circles that there are too many old people, and their rising numbers threaten Social Security with bankruptcy. He repeated these rationalizations during his first post-election news conference on November 4.

Bush proposed giving workers tax credits as an incentive to open their own individual retirement accounts, where they can save at least a portion of what is now withheld from their paychecks for Social Security retirement pensions. Workers could then invest these funds in the stock market or



**Liberals and social democrats in the United States and abroad reacted to the outcome of the U.S. elections with contempt for workers. Graphic circulating on liberal web sites (left) after November 2 depicts states where Bush won as "Jesusland." Front page of November 4 *Daily Mirror* (right), a London-based tabloid, makes similar point.**

elsewhere and have the security that the government can never take that away from them, Bush argued. He also advocated tax-free "health savings accounts" to provide medical insurance based on individual coverage rather than employer-sponsored plans. Workers would supposedly be able to keep this individual health plan even if they changed jobs. This was a major selling point, because working people who switch employers often lose their insurance or end up with worse coverage.

The president also proposed to make permanent the tax cuts instituted over the last few years, as a way to allow people to save money for the future in these "changing times." He coupled this proposal with a pledge to simplify the federal tax code. Other Republican politicians, like Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert, have proposed abolishing the Internal Revenue Service and replacing it with a flat national sales tax or value added tax.

These proposals by the Republicans are a disaster for the working class as a whole. The number of workers who can pay off mortgages and become net homeowners or owners of capital is very small, or you wouldn't have a hereditary working class, and competition for jobs—and thus capitalism—could not survive for very long.

Any flat tax will affect working people disproportionately. And the offers of tax credits to invest for your own pension and health-care plan are will of the wisp. Many workers don't have the time to do this on their own nor the resources to hire accountants to do it for them. Those who do try will be butchered in a sudden economic plunge, when investments in the stock market can disappear with a blink of an eye and savings can be eaten up quickly by an inflationary burst.

These promises, however, appeal to mil-

lions of workers. The threat of an economic catastrophe make workers feel vulnerable. The more ambitious layers of the working class—who imagine their children getting ahead, or count on their relatives to get ahead—listen more to such proposals by the Republicans. The ethos of "taking care of number one" prevails among large layers of the population, including many working people, as solidarity breaks down further because of the failures of liberalism and in the absence of a generalized labor upsurge.

Many workers don't see how they can defend or fight to expand Social Security today. One of the reasons stems from the refusal of the labor officialdom to fight for entitlements that cover the entire working class—like federally guaranteed health care for all—during the post-World War II capitalist boom. The union tops concentrated instead on getting "fringe benefits" in contracts with individual employers. Recently, however, large companies like United Airlines have moved to abolish all pension plans for employees. Others like the former coal giant Horizon Natural Resources have torn up union contracts and dropped medical coverage for retirees. These facts show millions that the bosses can cut fringe benefits, along with wages, with the stroke of a pen in the absence of a fight by the labor movement.

### Resentment of 'cognitive elite'

The liberal panic over the outcome of November 2 also showed the utter contempt for the working class by middle-class liberals.

An article in the November 4 *New York Times* was one of many shedding light on the attitudes of many liberals toward the results of the election. It was titled, "Blue City (Disconsolate, Even) Bewildered by a Red America." The headline was referring to the colors used to designate areas where the Democrats won (blue), and those where the Republicans prevailed (red). The reporter interviewed New Yorkers he ran into at Manhattan's Lincoln Center, mostly professionals or business people.

"I am saddened by what I feel is the obtuseness and shortsightedness of a good part of the country—the heartland," Zito Joseph, a 63-year-old retired psychiatrist, told the *Times*. "This kind of redneck shoot-from-the-hip mentality and a very concrete interpretation of religion is prevalent in Bush country."

His fellow dog walker Roberta Kimmel Cohn chimed in that New Yorkers were not as fooled by Bush's statements as other Americans might be. "New Yorkers are savvy," she said. "We have street smarts. Whereas people in the Midwest are more influenced by what their friends say."

"Do you know how I described New York to my European friends?" Beverly Camhe, a film producer, told the *Times*. "New York is an island off the coast of Europe."

On the other side of the Atlantic, liberals and social democrats had similar reactions, showing a hardening of bourgeois anti-Americanism after the U.S. elections. The British tabloid *Daily Mirror*, for example, ran a photo of Bush on the entire front page of its November 4 issue with the headline, "How can 59,054,087 people be so DUMB?"

"Ignorance and bloodlust have a long tradition in the United States, especially in the red states," said novelist Jane Smiley, in a post-election essay. "The history of the last four years shows that red state types...prefer to be ignorant.... They are virtually unteachable."

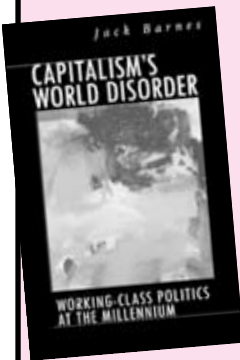
The middle-class left had a similar stance. "Bush won the election by triumphing in

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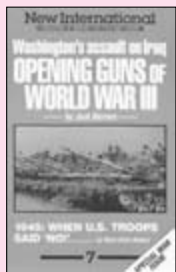
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# SWP vice-presidential candidate speaks in Toronto

BY NATALIE STAKE-DOUCET

TORONTO—“What would you do for me if you were elected vice president?” Kenny Terrero, a striker at Quality Meat Packers, asked Arrin Hawkins November 5. Hawkins, Socialist Workers Party candidate for vice president of the United States, spent almost a full day on the meat packers’ picket line as part of a four-day post-election tour of Canada. She offered her solidarity to the embattled workers and exchanged experiences with them.

The important thing is what we do together, in Canada and in the United States, Hawkins replied to Terrero. “It’ll take a revolutionary movement of millions of workers and farmers to take power out of the hands of the capitalist class,” she said. The SWP candidate took part in a march the strikers had organized that day as well as a barbecue on the picket line (see front-page article).

The next day, Hawkins and backers of her campaign took to the streets of Toronto for some campaigning.

The SWP candidate also spoke at a Militant Labor Forum here November 6. Nearly 30 people attended, including three workers from a nonunion garment factory and a reporter for a community radio station. “Every four years we’re asked to vote for one or another of the capitalist parties to represent us in the political arena,” Hawkins

said. “Workers need political action independent of the bosses.” At the center of the SWP campaign, which goes on 365 days a year, she added, is championing the need of workers to organize unions and use those they have to resist the bosses’ offensive on our wages and working conditions—like the workers striking Quality Meat Packers. Out of these struggles, she said, working people will more clearly see the need to build a labor party based on the unions that fights in the interests of workers and farmers.

Hawkins also explained why the SWP candidates call for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of U.S. troops and other imperialist forces from Iraq and elsewhere. She said that one of the central demands of the socialist campaign is to defend the right of semicolonial countries to develop the sources of energy they need, including nuclear power, for the electrification that’s necessary for economic development.

“How do you measure the success of your campaign?” asked one participant during the discussion. “Is there a third party movement in the U.S.?” another wanted to know. “If so, how did this affect the outcome of the election?”

“Our presidential ticket was on the ballot in 13 states and the District of Columbia,” Hawkins replied. “Many of these are states where important battles are being waged by



Militant/Natalie Stake-Doucet

**SWP vice-presidential candidate Arrin Hawkins (right, front) joins picket line on November 5 of workers on strike against Quality Meat Packers in Toronto.**

workers to build and strengthen unions—from the miners at the Co-Op mine in Utah, to Point Blank garment workers in Florida, to meat packers in the Midwest. Some 70,000 people across the United States signed our petitions to help put the SWP ticket on the ballot. This is very important,

and I thank all those who were part of this effort. This has been a very successful campaign.” Part of its success, she said, were the dozens of students, young workers, and others who became attracted to the SWP platform, many of whom campaigned for the SWP ticket.

## Middle-class contempt for workers fuels liberal panic over elections

Continued from previous page

areas in the South where racism, political reaction and the legacy of slavery are the strongest,” said an article in the November 11 issue of *Workers World*, the weekly newspaper of the Workers World Party. This is a Stalinist group that ran its own feeble presidential campaign, gaining ballot status for its candidates in three states (Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington State). Bush “won the states in the Southwest and Great Plains area dominated by mine owners, millionaire land owners, agribusiness, cattle barons and oil monopolies,” the article said. “But in the large and middle-sized cities...in the Northeast, Midwest, and West Coast—Bush’s reactionary agenda was rejected across the board.”

Most professionals, Hollywood entertainers and producers, newspaper columnists, novelists and other writers, television newscasters, and university professors in the United States today are liberals. These are among the social layers that Kerry appealed to. They include former radicals who three or four decades ago were Maoists, or belonged to the Weather Underground or other groups on the “left.” Many of these people today live in apartment buildings or housing complexes with security guards. As capitalism’s economic crisis marches on, they become more fearful of losing their privileges and their contempt for workers increases. This “Bell Curve” bias of aging radicals and middle-class liberals is resented more and more by working people.

*The Bell Curve* is a book by Charles Murray and Richard Herrnstein that was released in 1994. Its publication caused a scandal in the bourgeoisie. The reason for the scandal? In the debate around the book, both supporters and critics, liberals and conservatives alike, were forced to acknowledge that capitalist society necessitates maintaining a class hierarchy—which is a product of social relations, not a biological fact—that permanently denies equality to the majority of human beings, those who work for living.

The book’s purpose was to provide a rationalization for better-off layers of professionals and the middle class—those the authors call “the cognitive elite”—as to why they deserve to be richer and more comfortable than the great majority of humanity; it’s because they are supposedly smarter. It was aimed at middle-class liberals, in particular. “Quit denying it!” was the message of the authors. “You deserve to be better off. It’s necessary, especially in this computerized and hi-tech world we’re living in.”

The book was also a warning sign that even if layers of workers would be taken in by such ideological rationalizations for a while, deepening social polarization and impoverishment was leading to inevitable class battles. Ultimately *The Bell Curve* sounded the trumpet of these coming class

confrontations, of a future civil war. It was written to give courage to those who are determined to defend their better living standards against those who produce all the wealth, along with nature—the toiling masses of humanity.

It is these attitudes of the “cognitive elite” that a majority of working people resent. Most workers do get the signals right. They know what’s being said when Kerry implies he is smarter than Bush.

### American patriotism

Another factor in the outcome of the election was U.S. imperialism’s successes in the imperialist “war on terror,” which Bush enumerated in his speeches—from Afghanistan, to Libya, Iraq, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia.

While Kerry went out of his way to argue that he would do a more effective job in fighting the war on terrorism, Bush was more convincing by pointing to his solid four-year record in doing just that.

Kerry’s remark on Iraq in his concession speech was a fitting conclusion to his pro-imperialist, pro-war campaign. “America is in need of unity,” Kerry told supporters at Faneuil Hall in Boston, November 3. “Now more than ever, with our soldiers in harm’s way, we must stand together and succeed in Iraq and win the war on terror.”

The entire framework of the election campaign was built around American patriotism. Not only the capitalist parties that ran candidates—Democrats, Republicans, Libertarians, and others—but “socialists” who backed Kerry or the so-called independent ticket of Ralph Nader/Peter Camejo campaigned along these lines.

The Communist Party USA, for example, argued that people should not hold their noses when they vote for Kerry, but campaign energetically for the man. It tried to paint, with even more zeal than in previous elections, the record of one of the twin parties of American imperialism, the Democrats, as “progressive” for working people.

American patriotism, said an article in the January 31 edition of the party’s newspaper, the *People’s Weekly World*, must be adopted by the left, “because millions of Americans believe in it, cutting across all class and color lines.” The author concluded with the following: “If the left wants to unseat George W. Bush from his office, it can only be done by being extremely sensitive to these deep feelings of patriotism, and not allowing the far right to drape themselves in the American flag.”

Ralph Nader, who tried to apply pressure on the Democratic Party from the left, also took pride in being an American patriot, and his campaign was backed by the International Socialist Organization and other “socialist” groups. In his quest for the presidency, Nader courted rightist Patrick Buchanan, among

others. In an interview with Buchanan for the ultrarightist’s *American Conservative* magazine, Nader identified with the “bristling patriotism” of conservatives and called for defending “American jobs” and opposing amnesty for undocumented immigrants. In the end, Nader became even more irrelevant to the bourgeoisie, reaching barely above one-tenth of the vote he scored four years ago.

“Save America! Dump Bush!” said a large banner that the officialdom of the UNITE union hung on the wall of its main office building in New York throughout the election campaign.

This was a framework that Bush could handle well. He played on the fact that no “Islamic” or other “terrorists” from abroad have carried out any other attacks on U.S. soil since Sept. 11, 2001. The only such incidents in the following three years were the anthrax scare in the fall of 2001 and the sniper shootings in the Washington, D.C., area by two men, both African-American, a year later. But these were carried out by pure products of America, not “foreign terrorists.”

So the president was more convincing to millions in the working class and the middle classes than his Democratic opponent when he argued that he would build on his record of taking the fight to “extremists” as far away as possible from U.S. borders.

### Bush: a social reactionary?

Finally, the image of the Bush administration painted by the liberals and the middle-class left as rightist and reactionary on all social questions is false. Bush adopts a very reactionary stance in many of his public speeches: he panders to the rightists on gay rights, abortion, and affirmative action. But in point of fact, this is not reflected in most of his administration’s policies on these issues. His intervention in the Supreme Court cases around such questions have been soft, largely aimed at appeasing the conservative base of the Republicans while assuring the defeat of rightist initiatives.

One example of this course was the June 2003 Supreme Court ruling that upheld affirmative action in higher education as the law of the land. The decision was issued in response to a rightist legal challenge to two affirmative action programs at the University of Michigan. The Bush administration filed a brief asking the Supreme Court to invalidate both of these programs as based on quotas. At the same time it accepted the consideration of race as a factor in college admissions, which angered right-wing groups. And members of the administration, especially National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice and Secretary of State Colin Powell, campaigned openly for affirmative action.

Similarly, Bush’s backing this spring for a constitutional amendment to ban marriage between same-sex couples was grandstand-

ing to consolidate support among conservative-minded voters who constitute an important part of the Republicans’ electoral base. At the same time, the president put forward no timetable and proposed no campaign to speed the progress of the amendment, which died in the Senate in July.

In addition, Bush and Vice President Richard Cheney came out in support of civil unions for same-sex couples. A week before the November elections, Bush said he disagreed with the Republican national platform opposing civil unions for gays and lesbians. “I don’t think we should deny people rights to a civil union, a legal arrangement, if that’s what a state chooses to do,” Bush said in an October 25 interview on the ABC television show “Good Morning America.” He added, “I view the definition of marriage different from legal arrangements that enable people to have rights.”

It seems that this is a majority view across the country. Even though referenda banning gay marriage were approved in 11 states on November 2, a post-election survey by the Pew Research Center said that 60 percent of U.S. residents favor some kind of legal recognition for same-sex couples.

Under the Bush regime, a new Republican party is being shaped, in fact, more to the center of bourgeois politics.

Kerry’s positions on social questions did not differ much from Bush. Kerry, for example, campaigned as a Massachusetts Catholic who would not vote to overturn *Roe vs. Wade*, the 1973 Supreme Court ruling that decriminalized abortion. But he made it clear he is opposed to abortion because of his faith.

All these factors provide cogent reasons for Bush’s reelection.

They also show why workers are not more prone to be attracted to imperialist liberalism than to imperialist conservatism. Either way, working people and the oppressed go to the wall.

In the absence of any mass proletarian leadership, working people seldom vote on the basis of “program.” To the degree workers vote—and the “electorate” under bourgeois democracy is disproportionately weighted toward the middle class and professionals—they look above all for a possible road forward in face of the concrete conditions of daily life under capitalism. In doing so, they’re forced to choose between the twin parties of the exploiting classes, or occasionally a short-lived “third party” that’s an offshoot of one of them. And if “our country” is fighting a war, they have to be very convinced before switching the incumbent “commander in chief.”

This is what the Socialist Workers Party campaign explained, in offering a working-class alternative to the parties of capitalism and saying, “It’s not who you’re against, but what you are for!”

# October Revolution opened politics to workers

Below is an excerpt from *Problems of Everyday Life* by the Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for November. The specific excerpt below is from *Young People Study Politics*, which is based on a speech by Trotsky on the fifth anniversary celebration of the Communist Young Workers' Hostels. The speech was first published in the May-June 1924 *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional* and appeared in English in the January 1966 *Fourth International*. It is one in a series of articles written by Trotsky for the Soviet press in the years immediately following the October 1917 Russian Revolu-

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

tion that are collected together in this book. They cover a wide range of social issues in the struggle to create the foundations for a new society. Copyright © 1973 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.



BY LEON TROTSKY

Comrades, not long ago, we released from the Red Army on indefinite leave the class of 1901. On this occasion we carried out in a number of places an inquiry among



Traveling school for peasant children in Soviet Russia, 1920s. Such programs were essential to raising the cultural level of working people and opening their road to politics.

the men being discharged, questioning them as to what they had learned in the Red Army. From among the answers they gave, one in particular struck my attention, a very brief and expressive answer. I have already quoted it at several meetings. One of the Red Army comrades answered thus: "I have learned about the machine gun and about politics."

Remember that answer, Comrades! It is a very good one; in my opinion the thing could not be better put. As a revolutionary soldier he is obliged to know, as Suvorov said long ago, his military art; he must know his weapon and how to use it, otherwise he will not be a soldier. In this case, evidently, we are dealing with a machine-gunner, whose weapon is the machine gun. "I have learned about the machine gun, and besides that, I have learned about politics," he says. What does it mean when he says that he has learned about politics? It means that he has learned to understand why he was given a machine gun. So long as he only knows about the machine gun, he is just the slave of the weapon, and cannon fodder in somebody else's hands; but when he knows what purpose under certain conditions that machine gun is to fulfill in the Red Army, he is a revolutionary fighter, a conscious citizen.

This applies not only to a soldier in the revolutionary army, but to every kind of ser-

vice in our workers' and peasants' country. "What have you learned?" we must ask the young proletarian when he leaves the factory training school. "I have learned about the hammer, the pincers, the plane, and about politics." And about politics!

You know that in bourgeois countries there is a hypocritical and base notion that the army and the younger generation stand outside politics. This very day, in another connection, I have been looking through Volumes 2 and 3 of Comrade Lenin's works. (This is in general, Comrades, a very useful occupation—whether one has any special reason for doing it or not—for everybody who has the opportunity to undertake it.)

It so happens that my eye fell upon a number of Lenin's plain, extremely sharp and merciless observations regarding this base and hypocritical conception about the younger generation being outside politics. We know that the army is in all countries an instrument of politics, or rather, that it serves political ends. When it is said that the army is outside politics, that means: you, soldier, master your machine gun—politics, however, will be looked after by somebody else on your behalf, i.e., obviously, by the ruling class. The bourgeoisie carries out a division of labor. Politics is in its charge; the workers and peasants in the army are cannon fodder, slaves to the machines of

destruction. And it is exactly the same so far as the younger generation is concerned, the young workers and peasants, that is. Politics fills the air; *it is not possible to live outside of politics, without politics, any more than one can live without air.*

But the bourgeoisie cannot reveal its political face to the young people. It cannot say: there you are, the twelve- or thirteen-year-old son of a worker; you have been born into the world in order that, after serving an apprenticeship to some trade, you may go into a factory and there to the end of your days create with your sweat, blood, and marrow, surplus value for the lords of life, the bourgeoisie, who, from this surplus value, will create its bourgeois culture, its luxury, art, and learning for its children. The bourgeoisie cannot openly expound such politics to the young workers. It puts over its politics by way of circumlocution and allegories, imperceptibly or half-perceptibly, through its schools, its churches, and its press. And this work of the imperceptible bourgeois education of young people, or rather, the education of young workers and peasants in the interests of the bourgeois state, is concealed behind the slogan: "the younger generation is outside politics." And that is why Vladimir Ilyich so relentlessly and implacably fought against this base hypocrisy.

Young people live in society, they are born into definite conditions, they step forward into life's arena in particular historical circumstances, and the sooner these youngsters open their eyes to the world around them, the better and more profoundly they grasp the conditions in which they live, the easier their path through life will prove to be.

You young comrades are living in a workers' and peasants' state. This does not mean that your path through life is a very easy one in the years of your apprenticeship. But I think, nevertheless, that it is already considerably better than it was for the elder generation of the working class in their apprenticeship years... *It is necessary to learn to hate the old order that we have overthrown but that we are still far, far from having got rid of.* It has bequeathed to us monstrous deposits of ignorance, inertness, crudeness, vulgarity; and all this still surrounds us. And it is for you young comrades to sweep away these deposits. That is why it is very important that the work of mastering the hammer, the pincers, and all the other tools and instruments of production must go hand in hand with the mastering of politics.

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The Militant November 23, 2004

**A lengthy, bitter item**—Moises Murillo, 69, awaiting trial for “illegal” U.S. entry from Mexico, was found prostrate on the floor of his



Harry Ring

Immigration cell in downtown Los Angeles. He was taken to a nearby hospital and put on life support.

Meanwhile, his wife came to visit, as she did regularly. Guards could not explain where Murillo was.

His family sought frantically

to find him. Finally, the phone rang. Hospital doctors had consulted with federal marshals and removed Murillo from the life support system. He then died without his family’s consent, or knowledge.

A federal spokesperson told the *Los Angeles Times* that the transfer occurred on the weekend and there was no time to notify the family. On the weekends, he said, the marshals are busy “and our offices are closed.”

Murillo had come from Mexico, undocumented, in 1958 and labored in Central California as a farm worker. He was deported and came back, working for some 20 years as a Los Angeles car washer. This past July, he was picked up and held for trial. Charged with il-

legal reentry. When jailed, prison doctors found he had a blood clot near his heart. A month later, he fell from his bunk and broke three ribs. Then came the heart attack.

The Murillo family is enraged.

**A stench too great**—Sometimes a judge has got to go. Like, ex-judge Henry Bauer of Troy, New York. The state Court of Appeals booted him off the bench for reducing “justice” to a mockery. He set bail for people charged with misdemeanors that would not draw a jail sentence. Or persistently setting stunning bail. For instance, a \$25,000 bail for a man charged with riding a bike on the sidewalk at night, without lights. He did seven days in jail

before scraping up the \$100 fine. Last June, the judge was awarded the Golden Shield by the local police “union.”

**Mom, what’s an infrastructure?**—“Rhode Island—Many of the state’s roads and bridges are in poor or faltering condition, which costs residents easily \$350 annually in vehicle repairs, according to a national transportation research group. According to the report, 24 percent of Rhode Island’s bridges are structurally deficient, 53 percent of state roads are faltering.... The state Department of Transportation did not dispute the findings.”—News item.

**Bonanza for body and fender**—A District of Columbia

report found that drivers spend more than \$2,000 a year on their cars because of poor roads. “The study conducted by the nonprofit Road Information Project warns that the problem will worsen if D.C., Maryland and Virginia don’t invest more in transportation.”—Wire service.

**Pushout pills**—The New Orleans *Times Picayune* reported that a study found that hospital patients undergo rehabilitation for major ailments are deemed to get well fast enough to get home sooner. But in a six-month period, their risk of dying is greater. The shorter stays came when the federal government changed its payment method to encourage shorter stays.

# How Stalin falsified history of Russian Revolution

The following is a review of *The Stalin School of Falsification* by Russian revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky. A new edition of the book, which was first published in English in 1937, was released in July by Pathfinder Press.

BY SUSAN LAMONT

“The lie in politics, as in daily life, serves as a function of the class structure of society. The oppressors erect the lie into a system of befuddling the masses in order to maintain their rule. On the part of the oppressed

## IN REVIEW

the lie is a defensive weapon of weakness. Revolution explodes the social lie. Revolution speaks the truth. Revolution begins by giving things and social relationships their real names.”

This is what the foreword to the Russian edition of *The Stalin School of Falsification* says. And this is what this book, written by Leon Trotsky, does. It’s a political weapon in the struggle of the working class to form its own political party and use it to take state power along with its allies on the land, that is, to storm the heavens and change humanity’s future.

Pathfinder Press has recently reprinted this classic work in an attractive new edition.

In addition to a striking new cover design, the book has been reset in larger, more readable type. The new edition includes all the material in the original, which appeared in 1937 and was produced under Trotsky’s supervision. The editors have also added as an appendix Trotsky’s 1932 article “On the Suppressed Testament of Lenin.”

The back cover of the new edition gives an apt summary of why workers and others in the United States and elsewhere today would find this volume interesting and useful in their practical work.

“As new generations of working people become involved in leading strikes and other proletarian battles, they recognize a need to broaden their scope,” the book’s editors say. “They become more open to ideas of trusted

militants in their ranks who are interested in discussing not only how to win a particular demand or strike but how to secure and extend workers’ gains in the only way possible, through a revolution. Through wresting political power from the capitalist exploiters and oppressors.

“Defense of workers’ most powerful conquest in history, the October 1917 Russian Revolution, is the topic of this book. Under the leadership of V.I. Lenin, Leon Trotsky was a central organizer of the Bolshevik-led revolution, Soviet government and Red Army, and new Communist International. Here Trotsky exposes the ‘theoretical forgeries and historical frame-ups’ cobbled together in the 1920s by a rising bureaucratic caste to rationalize a political counterrevolution in the Soviet Union. In 1929, as he led the fight to continue Lenin’s proletarian internationalist course, Trotsky was deported by Joseph Stalin and spent the next 11 years in exile.

“As one leader of the revolution after another capitulated or fell to Stalin’s murder machine, Trotsky observed in 1935 that no one else was left ‘to carry out the mission of arming a new generation’ with either an accurate understanding of the working-class line of march toward conquering power, or memory of how that communist course was developed.

“‘I need about five more years of uninterrupted work to ensure the succession,’ Trotsky wrote. He eluded Moscow’s assassins long enough to do exactly that.”

The book includes two prefaces, both by Trotsky. They are written at different stages of the fight to maintain the continuity of Marxism against the rise to power of the bureaucratic caste in the Soviet Union whose foremost representative became Joseph Stalin.

The first preface was written in 1931 for the Russian edition. This book “is not at all a volume for the archives,” Trotsky says in this preface. “It is rather a weapon in the political struggle for the theory of Marx, for the policies of Lenin—against the epigones,” that is, the false “followers” of Marx and Lenin.

The preface to the American edition was written six years later, in 1937, during the period of the Moscow purge trials. Through these frame-up trials the majority on the Bolsheviks’ Central Committee in Lenin’s time were found guilty and executed by Stalin’s regime. “It remains an incontestable historical fact that the preparation of the bloody judicial frame-ups had its inception in the ‘minor’ historical distortions and ‘innocent’ falsification of citations,” Trotsky says in this preface, which is the first item in the book. “The bureaucracy found it indispensably necessary to adapt Bolshevism to its own needs. This could not be done otherwise than by corroding the soul of Bolshevism.”

### Unique documents

The book includes a number of unique documents.

The chapter titled “The



V.I. Lenin addressing Red Army troops in Sverdlov Square, May 5, 1920. In photo at left, Leon Trotsky waits to speak; in photo at right, Trotsky is erased from the image.



lost document,” for example, consists of minutes, with an introduction by Trotsky, of the historic session of the Petrograd Committee of the Bolsheviks, held Nov. 14, 1917. This was just a week after the Bolshevik-led insurrection that brought the workers and peasants of Russia to power. The minutes record a debate within the Bolshevik leadership over whether they could retain state power or should enter into a coalition with other parties, the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries, who sought compromise with the capitalist forces in Russia.

The question debated at the meeting was of such importance that Lenin posed the alternatives in the sharpest possible way.

“If you want a split, go ahead,” Lenin said, addressing the conciliators. “If you get the majority, take power in the Central Executive Committee and carry on. But we will go to the sailors,” he emphasized, reflecting his confidence that the course he was fighting for had the support of the toilers. Readers will find this exchange of great interest.

The document makes it crystal clear that Lenin and Trotsky fought together for this course. For this reason, Stalin’s regime ordered that these minutes be expunged from the book *The First Legal Petrograd Committee of the Bolsheviks in 1917*, which was published in Moscow in 1927, “in such a manner as would leave no traces behind,” as Trotsky explains. This action preceded the frame-ups and executions of numerous Bolshevik leaders, many of whom were branded “Trotskyists.” The Stalinist bureaucracy used the label and its false claim that Trotsky had carried out a course opposed to Lenin’s during the October revolution to rationalize its purges and murders.

The new appendix, “On the suppressed testament of Lenin,” was written by Trotsky in 1932.

The writings that came to be known as Lenin’s “testament” were written between Dec. 25, 1922, and Jan. 4, 1923, Trotsky explains in the article. Lenin was ill, suffering the effects of a series of strokes. “At the time the party apparatus was semiofficially in the hands of the troika (Zinoviev, Kamenev, Stalin)—as a matter of fact, already in the hands of Stalin,” Trotsky says.

In the testament, Lenin proposes, among

other things, removing Stalin as the general secretary of the party. After Lenin’s death in 1924, these documents were suppressed by the Stalinist regime. During the frame-up purges of the 1930s, the testament was proclaimed a forgery. Many communists were sentenced to long prison terms for having it in their possession.

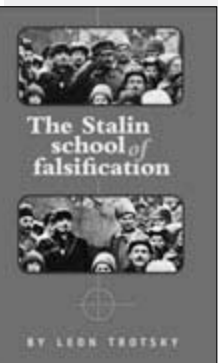
### Impact of Russian Revolution

The 1917 Russian Revolution inspired toilers the world over. Under its impact, as well as the devastation wrought by the imperialist slaughter of World War I, a powerful revolutionary upsurge swept Europe and anticolonial uprisings took place in the colonial world. Tens of millions looked to the Bolshevik party and the experience of the Russian workers for leadership. As this revolutionary wave ebbed and the young Soviet state remained isolated, Stalin and his followers grew in strength.

Because of the enormous prestige of the Bolshevik leaders, the only way Stalin and his supporters could consolidate their position was by presenting themselves as the continuators of Lenin’s policies. To do so, Stalin and his hacks had to reinvent and rewrite the history of the revolution and the Bolshevik party. Opponents were slandered, demoted, forced to make false “confessions,” put through frame-up trials, exiled, and eventually murdered. Marxist theory and communist program were turned into their opposites to justify Stalin’s course. All this was done in the name of “communism,” serving to miseducate and demoralize millions of workers worldwide. Trotsky, who led the fight for communist continuity after Lenin’s death, was himself murdered by a Stalinist agent in 1940 while living in Mexico.

Those interested in learning about the Russian Revolution, its worldwide impact, and its evolution will find this book fascinating. They may also want to look for related titles. These include *The History of the Russian Revolution* and *The Revolution Betrayed* by Trotsky; *Lenin’s Final Fight* by Lenin; *Their Trotsky and Ours* by Jack Barnes; and *Revolutionary Continuity*, vols. 1 and 2 by Farrell Dobbs (see [www.pathfinderpress.com](http://www.pathfinderpress.com) or the book centers listed on page 8.)

## The Stalin School of Falsification



A central leader of the October 1917 Revolution explains why that revolution is workers’ most powerful conquest in history. Trotsky exposes the “theoretical forgeries and historical frame-ups” by a rising bureaucratic caste to rationalize a political counterrevolution against the proletarian internationalist course of V.I. Lenin and the Bolsheviks. The book helps

arm new generations with an understanding of the working-class line of march toward conquering power from the capitalist class. **\$21.00**

**WWW.PATHFINDERPRESS.COM**

# U.S. troops out of Iraq now!

Thousands of U.S. troops and Iraqi forces are well on their way to retaking Fallujah, after a brutal three-week campaign of air raids and artillery fire on antigovernment militias in the city and a ground offensive aimed at asserting control block by block and house to house. In nearby Ramadi, operations by thousands of U.S.-led forces are making progress toward consolidating control of the city by the U.S.-installed Iraqi interim regime. Washington and its allies in Baghdad have promised similar operations throughout the “Sunni Triangle.”

The goal of U.S. imperialism in this offensive is not to recolonize Iraq and occupy the country for the long haul. Washington aims to do the job it left unfinished from its 2003 invasion: smash the pro-Baathist forces and other militias that have had their strongest base in the so-called Sunni Triangle—the stronghold of the Saddam Hussein regime.

A parallel, and essential, objective of the U.S. military is to bloody the Iraqi National Guard. Only on the battlefield can a domestic army be trained, an army that will serve and protect the interests of Washington’s client regime in Iraq. If the U.S. forces and their allies in Iraq succeed, and the odds are on their side, they may be able to stabilize the country enough to make sure elections are held as close as possible to the January 31 deadline they’ve picked and begin scaling back their military presence down the road.

The U.S.-led assault on Iraq was from the beginning an imperialist war of plunder, fueled to a large degree by competition between Washington and its imperialist allies—particularly Paris and Berlin. The same rivalry over dividing the world’s markets and resources and safeguarding the strategic influence of each imperialist power in various parts of the globe is at the center of the bloody assault by French imperialism in the Ivory Coast.

# French troops kill many in Ivory Coast

**Continued from front page**

former French possessions. Washington has expanded intervention in West Africa and its coastal regions, eyeing oil deposits in the Gulf of Guinea.

The deployment of 5,000 French troops to Ivory Coast is Paris’s largest military intervention today. The French government has more than 33,000 troops stationed in at least 20 countries around the world—most of them former or current French colonial possessions. More than one-third of those forces are stationed in 11 African countries.

Ivory Coast is the largest producer of cocoa beans—some 40 percent of the world’s crop. French imperialism’s domination of the country is based on in its control of key sectors of its economy and infrastructure, including electricity, water, and telecommunications. According to the French embassy in Abidjan, 60 percent of the country’s tax revenue comes from French-owned companies.

A year-long cease-fire was broken November 4 when the Gbagbo government ordered bombing raids against Bouaké and Korhogo, northern towns under the control of the New Forces opposition group. Two days later Ivorian war planes carried out an air raid against a French army camp near Bouaké, killing nine French soldiers and one U.S. citizen. Ivory Coast officials later said this had been done by mistake.

French president Jacques Chirac jumped on the bombing of its military center as a pretext to order French fighter planes to destroy most of Ivory Coast’s military aircraft. They destroyed two jets and at least three helicopters on the ground. While announcing, “France is the friend of Ivory Coast,” Chirac also increased the French military presence there to 5,000 troops.

In addition, the United Nations has 6,240 so-called peacekeepers in Ivory Coast to help Paris enforce its will. On November 6 the UN Security Council met in emergency session and condemned the bombing of the French military camp. It opposed the Ivorian government’s air strikes against opposition forces as violations of the cease-fire, and said the “peacekeepers” and French military “are authorized to use all necessary means to carry out fully” their mandates from the Security Council. A day earlier UN forces had moved to block two convoys of government troops moving north against rebel positions, the BBC reported. The African Union also condemned Ivorian government’s raids on the north.

The French ambassador to the United Nations said after the emergency session that Paris “thinks that the time has come now to adopt an arms embargo in Ivory Coast.”

At the center of the conflict is Washington’s push to gain greater influence in the region. U.S. corporations have been among the heaviest investors in the growing African oil industry. U.S. president George Bush’s “AIDS initiative” announced in his January 2003 State of the Union address was aimed at increasing Washington’s influence among African countries.

At the beginning of 2003, large demonstrations took place in Ivory Coast opposing intervention by Paris and asking Washington to send in troops to help expel the French.

A failed coup attempt against the Ivorian government by soldiers from the north of the country in September 2002 touched off a civil war that has killed thousands and driven more than 1 million people from their homes. At the time, Paris expanded its military presence there to 2,500 soldiers to shore up the government, and Washington sent in 200 Special Forces troops.

Washington and its allies were easily able to invade Iraq last year because of the incapacity of the Saddam Hussein regime to defend Iraq’s sovereignty and the stranglehold that his party-police state had imposed on the country’s toilers. Likewise, the U.S. rulers are making progress toward “pacifying” Iraq now because of the political character of the forces involved in opposing the authority of the Allawi regime and the U.S. occupation.

There is no revolutionary resistance in Iraq today. That’s why the U.S. and Iraqi forces are likely to roll through Fallujah and other cities in the area. Unlike bourgeois-led militias like Tawhid and Jihad that use reactionary methods such as beheading hostages and killing children—methods despised by most Iraqis—a revolutionary movement against imperialist domination would offer a clear presentation of what it’s fighting for. None of these militias has ever uttered a word that would serve the interests of working people in Iraq. Nor is there any bourgeois regime in the Mideast willing to risk organizing resistance to the imperialist occupation.

Because the imperialists can’t solve the crisis bred by their own system that generates permanent instability, however, working people in Iraq and the surrounding region will be able to make use of the political space they have to find ways to advance their struggles and eventually develop a revolutionary leadership.

To do that, they need time and the Yankee boot off their neck. Working people in the United States and other imperialist countries should focus our fire on the ruling class in each of the countries where we live and demand: U.S. and all allied foreign troops out of Iraq now! Likewise, we should demand that the French army and its UN sidekicks get out of the Ivory Coast immediately.

The anti-government forces, which have recently named themselves the New Forces, accuse the Gbagbo government of repression and discrimination against Muslims and immigrants in the north. In the face of the regime’s inability to put down the revolt and establish conditions for stable exploitation of Ivory Coast’s resources, Paris shifted its stance and has tried to broker a power-sharing arrangement.

After a government crackdown on a rally in March in Abidjan left 120 protesters dead, opposition parties withdrew from the “government of national unity” that had been formed.

A January 2003 accord required the government to introduce electoral reforms demanded by New Forces. These included the repeal of a law requiring presidential candidates to be born in Ivory Coast, and for their parents also to be natives of the country. The government had used this law to bar opposition leader Alassane Ouattara, a northern Muslim, from running for president in the 2000 election. The parliament failed to revoke this and other discriminatory laws by September 29, as the accord demanded. In response, anti-government forces ignored an October 15 deadline for disarming their militias.

Gbagbo used the passing of the October 15 deadline to justify his order to bomb opposition forces three weeks later. In a November 7 television address, the Ivory Coast president said “the political leaders of the rebellion decided to quit the disarmament process, thus compromising any hope of a negotiated peace.”

To shore up its support the Gbagbo government has tapped into workers’ and peasants’ hatred of French colonial rule and mobilized anti-French protests. As French armored vehicles patrolled Abidjan, national television broadcasts called mass protests to prevent the occupiers from removing Gbagbo from office. The BBC reported “tens of thousands...heeded the call” November 6, “flooding towards the international airport which had been seized by the French.”

Although in his speech the next day Gbagbo asked “all demonstrators to go back home,” on November 8 thousands more protesters turned out to form a “human shield” around his house, the *New York Times* reported. One demonstrator said of the French forces, “they are trying to stage a coup d’etat against Ivory Coast. We are opposed. We are all going to the head of state’s residence to form a barricade.”

French troops fired into a rally in Abidjan November 9, killing 7 protesters, according to an AP dispatch. This brings the death toll to 27 over the initial days of the conflict. The Red Cross estimates at least 1,000 have been injured.

Meanwhile, Paris has begun the evacuation of thousands of the 14,000 French citizens in Ivory Coast. The governments of Belgium, Canada, Italy, Spain, and the United States have also begun evacuating their citizens.

While pro-government protesters rally in the south of Ivory Coast against French military moves, opposition forces in the north are also a thorn in the side of Paris. In the northwestern Ivorian town of Man, around 1,000 protesters hurled Molotov cocktails at French forces, angered by the failure of French troops to block the government’s air raids on opposition-held cities, according to the Reuters news agency. In October, 1,000 protesters tried to storm a UN military base in the north after reports that UN forces would try to forcibly disarm anti-government militias.

# Assault in Fallujah

**Continued from front page**

im government has suspended all members of the Fallujah police and security forces indefinitely, and has closed all roads into that city as well as Ramadi.

Iraqi troops are playing a significant role in the attack on Fallujah as they did in October in retaking Samarra and Najaf. In both cities the Iraqi troops were credited with routing militia forces who had taken sanctuary in Muslim mosques. Washington and Baghdad have drawn lessons from the challenges they faced in putting down risings by anti-government militias in Fallujah, Ramadi, and Najaf in April. The battle in Fallujah will give Washington and Baghdad a chance to further train and bloody a new Iraqi army.

A combined force of U.S. Marines and Iraqi troops seized two bridges leading into the Fallujah and the city’s main hospital November 7. They kicked in doors at the hospital in and ordered patients and hospital employees to sit or lie on the floor while troops tied their hands behind their backs. An hour later the cuffs were removed from most patients and doctors had returned to treating the most seriously ill, reported the *New York Times*.

U.S. commanders justified the seizure of the hospital with the claim it was the source of “promilitia propaganda” that inflated the numbers of civilian deaths during an assault on the city in April. At the time, the Allawi regime reportedly called off the attack in part because of reports of high civilian deaths by this hospital.

Days before the assault, U.S. troops made appeals over loudspeakers and handed out leaflets urging residents of Fallujah to leave, the November 5 London *Telegraph* reports. According to the U.S. military, at least 70 percent of the city’s population of 300,000 has fled.

Three members of London’s Black Watch regiment were killed just two days after their redeployment to reinforce positions near Baghdad held by U.S. and Iraq troops that were freed up for the assault on Fallujah and Ramadi. A fourth died November 8. Most of the 8,500 British troops have been deployed in the relatively calm areas around Basra. The deaths bring the total British combat casualties in Iraq to 74.

Britain’s prime minister, Anthony Blair, and Defense Secretary Geoff Hoon defended the redeployment of the regiment against criticisms from parliamentary opponents who charged it had been placed in unnecessary danger. Blair took the occasion to stoke patriotic feelings for the war, extending condolences to the families of the dead soldiers and also thanking the regiment for a “heroic job.” Holding successful elections in January is “the single most important element of bringing stability to Iraq and therefore stability to the wider Middle East,” Blair added.

“While we mourn a lost colleague, the whole battle group has just been made more determined by this to complete our important mission,” said Cpt. Stuart Macaulay, spokesperson for the Black Watch regiment, after the death of the fourth British soldier, according to the London *Independent*.

The interim regime and U.S. commanders have been preparing for weeks to attack the two cities, which they claim are a refuge for Tiwhad and Jihad, a “terrorist” group led by Jordanian Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. The November 7 offensive was launched after former Baathists and other political leaders in Fallujah and Ramadi refused to turn over leaders of this group and other militias entrenched there. Tawhid and Jihad has taken responsibility for a number of beheadings of hostages and bombing attacks on military and civilian targets, at least one of which resulted in the killing of dozens of Iraqi children.

Fallujah and Ramadi are part of the “Sunni Triangle,” which was the strongest base of support for the Baathist regime of Saddam Hussein. Leading Sunni clerics had threatened to issue a *fatwa* (a religious decree) ordering Muslims to conduct street protests and civil disobedience if the government carried out the assault on Fallujah. Others have threatened to boycott the elections.

At a November 5-6 European Union (EU) summit Blair joined Allawi in appealing to governments in the EU, especially Paris and Berlin, to step up support for the Allawi regime, according to the Bloomberg news agency. Asserting that there is a “new reality,” Blair said it’s “important to work with the Americans and with the Iraqi government.”

French president Jacques Chirac countered that “the affirmation of a strong American policy naturally leads to the necessity to reinforce Europe politically and economically.” German chancellor Gerhard Schröder, however, said he had spoken with U.S. president George Bush and agreed that it’s “time to look into the future or we will get stuck in discussions about the past.”

A day before the EU meeting, during a visit to Rome, Allawi criticized the lack of support his government has received from Paris and Berlin, calling the two governments “spectators” in the effort to stabilize Iraq.

Chirac did not attend the session in which Allawi was to address the EU summit, claiming he needed to leave in order to attend the funeral of the president of the United Arab Emirates. Chirac denied snubbing Allawi, but diplomats attending the meeting said the French delegation had managed to get a phrase explicitly welcoming Allawi deleted from the draft summit statement, according to ABC News.

Schröder called Allawi’s remark a “slip of the tongue,” reminding the Iraqi prime minister that Berlin was training Iraqi police and military in the United Arab Emirates and had offered to write off a substantial amount of Iraq’s foreign debt to Germany.

At the end of the two-day summit, the EU leaders announced a \$41 million aid package for the Allawi regime to train police and election workers, and to finance a special UN security force.

# Chicago bakery workers strike to defend seniority, benefits

BY ERNEST MAILHOT

CHICAGO—“We want to be treated with dignity and respect,” said Jacqueline Spivery, one of 155 workers on strike against Schulze and Burch Biscuit Company on Chicago’s South Side. Schulze and Burch produces toaster pastries and other oven baked products and is a supplier for Wal-Mart.

Pickets said the “management’s rights” clause the company is demanding would be used as a tool to gut seniority and other union protections. The big majority of these workers have been at the company more than 12 years, some for as many as 20 to 50 years. “If we accept this they’ll get rid of who they want when we go back,” said Spivery.

The workers, members of Local 1 of the Bakery, Confectionary, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union (BCTGM), have been on the picket line since September 16. The majority of workers are African-American or Latino, and women make up 65 percent of the workforce. Strikers on the picket line at the 35th Street plant explain that the company has not backed off its contract demands.

A union statement said that in addition to the management’s rights clause, company

demands include: hiring temporary workers with no benefits or union rights; increasing an already long probationary period for new hires; eliminating overtime pay for Saturday work; eliminating sick, personal, and maternity leaves; freezing the defined benefit pension plan for all current workers, and putting new workers on a 401(k) plan that would tie their pensions to the fluctuations of the stock market; requiring workers to make co-payments for their health care, which for a family would come to more than \$3,100 a year; and establishing the company’s right to lay off workers out of seniority.

Striker Valeria Eberhardt said another company demand would penalize workers who miss days due to illness or for personal reasons. “They want us to pay \$17 a day when we’re off sick. You lose both ways. No pay that day and when your vacation comes they deduct the \$17.”

In a union press release, Local 1 president Jethro Head described the company’s offer as “contract gutting and union busting.” The press release said when the company’s demands were placed before the union membership in early September, the workers voted unanimously both to reject the



Militant/Ernest Mailhot

**Workers on strike against Schulze and Burch Biscuit Company on Chicago’s South Side at October 30 picket line outside the plant.**

concessions and to go on strike.

The owners are trying to continue production with management personnel and scabs. The company has also beefed up its “security” and is filming the strikers in order to intimidate them.

In face of this the strikers remain firm. On the day this reporter visited the picket line,

one of the windier and colder days so far, some of the strikers unloaded a truckload of wood for their burn barrel and others put up two large banners they had painted with messages asking for support. Pickets report that not one member of the union has crossed the picket line in the course of the six-week strike.

## Debate on women’s right to choose reopens in Australia

**Continued from back page**

sensation of demonstrations to defend and extend abortion rights in New South Wales (NSW) from the 1970s to the 1980s. Abortion is still covered by the NSW Crimes Act, but the 1971 Levine ruling has in practice decriminalized the procedure. (The Levine ruling in NSW is comparable to the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision in the United States.) WAAC was formed in 1972 to fight to repeal all laws that restricted abortion and allowed forced sterilization.

Stefania Siedlecky, a doctor who was an advisor to the federal government on women’s health during the 1970s and 1980s, spoke about her experiences as a general practitioner in public hospitals prior to the liberalization of abortion laws.

In the 1950s, she said, she worked at Crown St. Hospital in Sydney, where 10 women a day were admitted for “incomplete miscarriage” or botched abortions. “The complications from illegal abortions were terrible,” she said. “It was the highest cause of maternal death until the end of the 1960s when the laws were changed. We will never go back to the old days of illegal abortion.”

Siedlecky also said that Abbott is targeting young women with his proposal to deny privacy of medical records to teenagers younger than 16.

“The Medicare rebate doesn’t come anywhere close to covering the cost for an abortion, now,” she continued. As a result, abortion providers have introduced up-front fees, which have increased over this year, she added.

Margaret Kirkby, a long-standing member of WAAC, spoke on behalf of the Bessie Smyth Foundation. Bessie Smyth was set up in 1977 to provide abortions in Sydney. In 2002, the foundation sold the clinic due to a financial crisis. It now provides information and counseling, with a special emphasis on the needs of low-income women seeking abortion.

Kirkby said 19 abortion clinics operate across New South Wales today—although some are only open one day per week and the majority do not provide counseling. There is no government funding to run abortion services and counseling costs are greater.

Clinics charge fees—parts of which are refundable—with rates going up to A\$2,500

(US\$1,900) for terminations at 20 weeks. She described two typical cases of a late-term abortion—young women under the age of 16 who are in denial, who “hope it will go away,” and women in the menopause age group, who are not aware of their pregnancy until it is far advanced. “Being judged over a late-term abortion is a big fear,” Kirkby said. “Both Abbott and Black ignored the stories of these women.”

There is a possibility of “sneaky attacks” on the right to choose under the current administration, Kirkby said. “But the government knows politically that if they carry out an open attack on abortion rights, men and women in Australia, whatever their politics, will react.” Instead the government will keep chipping away at these rights, she said, concentrating on restricting access and funding.

A number of young women at the meeting expressed interest in getting involved in WAAC activities. WAAC and other organizations around Australia are planning to draw pro-choice supporters into a campaign to oppose any restrictions on abortion rights and to demonstrate public support for a woman’s right to choose.

—**MILITANT LABOR FORUMS**—

**AUSTRALIA**  
**Sydney**  
**Utah miners fight for a union: the class background hidden by the U.S. elections.**  
Speaker: Ron Poulson, Communist League. Fri., Nov. 19, 7 p.m. 69 3/281-7 Beamish St. Campsie (upstairs in arcade near Evaline). Donation \$5. Tel. (02) 9718 9698.

**NEW ZEALAND**  
**Christchurch**  
**Free Ahmed Zaoui!** Speaker: Baskaran Appu, Communist League. Fri., Nov. 19, 7 p.m. The Gloucester Arcade, (near Theatre Royal), 129-131 Gloucester St. Tel. 03 365 6055.

**NEW YORK**  
**Manhattan**  
**Oppose French/UN imperialist intervention in Ivory Coast** Fri., Nov. 19. Dinner 7 p.m., Program 8 p.m. 307 West 36 St., 10th fl. (north elevators). Tel: (212) 629-6649.

## LETTERS

### Why I vote SWP

Who would’ve thought it!  
I just found the *Militant* website tonight, and I will be mailing my check in tomorrow. I know you probably get a lot of e-mails, but I had to send this.

I was struggling for over a month now, seriously wondering if there was a candidate who deserved my vote. There was none to be found, until I came across Calero/Hawkins. I was raised in a Catholic/conservative house, and swore to myself to never vote for a pro-choice candidate, but your party’s platform seems to be enough to make me do just that. That probably doesn’t mean too much to you guys, but it means the world to me. Tuesday I will vote in the first election for which I was eligible, and I will write in (if I have to—I’m in California, so I’m not sure if they will be on the ballot) Calero/Hawkins.

I’m not gonna lie. I come from a middle to upper-middle class family, so I haven’t experienced all the hardships that you all speak of, but I have seen some of them, and it truly pains me. I know what I want and think will truly work for this country, and that is a full-scale assault on the current political powers-that-be, and this vote is the first step.

I will compromise what was once my most important issue to this ideal, because I feel it truly is

the right thing to do, and I want to do whatever I can to progress this revolution, if it can be called that yet. Even if you only read part of this e-mail and realize you have one more supporter, I won’t regret sending it.

Good luck, you have my vote, and maybe that of anyone who will listen to me within these next two days, because I will be talking. Who knows, maybe I’ll convince one person, and they’ll convince one person.... and so on. Thanks for giving hope. Hope for a true egalitarian society, for peace, for the common good. Thanks for giving me a reason to go to the polls on Tuesday.  
*Joshua Moser*  
*by e-mail*

### On with SWP campaign

I was very glad when I read the first *Militant* (no. 42) after the election, when you wrote that even though the election is over the SWP’s campaign is not. This is the best decision you could have made, and the only thing that makes any sense. Socialist agitators need to be out there, everywhere, all the time, talking to the workers of the world. The socialist campaign doesn’t end after November 2. There was no defeat. And the revolution will not be on any election day. And while the Democrats and other bourgeois parties fade away for the next four years until next election, the SWP

will not. Good work.  
*Per Leander*  
*Stockholm, Sweden*

### Disdain for workers

All the post-election rationales that I’ve read seem to contain a strong disdain for workers and farmers. Are the media and pollsters as well as politicians becoming even more open in their disdain for us? Why now? Did this play a roll in the defeat of the Democrats? Please comment.  
*David Salner*  
*Frederick, Maryland*

### ‘Terrorism’

I would appreciate it if the *Militant* would explain its use of quotation marks around the word terrorism. Does this usage mean the *Militant* does not consider attacks on civilians to be terrorism? Also, does this usage mean that the *Militant* considers terrorist attacks a justified, “by any means necessary” form of retaliation for Western imperialism?

Also, regardless of whether Pat Buchanan is an incipient fascist, isn’t it true that the actions of the State of Israel are largely the fuel behind Muslim hatred of and attacks on U.S. targets? From what the Muslim terrorists themselves say, U.S. support for Israel does seem to be a key reason for Muslim hatred.

Please comment. I believe it’s essential to know where the *Militant* stands on these issues.  
*Judy Cuttler*  
*by e-mail*

### Democratic rights

You mention in the November 9 issue that the opening of the firebombed SWP headquarters in Pennsylvania represents a big victory for political rights. This is absolutely correct.

However, you have mentioned nothing about the widespread attempts of primarily Republican Party supporters to prevent registered voters—primarily from poor and African-American communities in the “swing” states—from voting.

Also, the Democratic Party has definitely been involved in the attempts, many successful, to prevent the Nader/Camejo ticket from appearing on the ballot in a number of states.

Today the Democratic Party and Nader/Camejo are under attack. Tomorrow, a labor party based on the unions or the SWP and other Socialist Parties.

While I am totally opposed to supporting candidates from the twin capitalist parties, I believe that socialists should fight to support the democratic right to vote. This is a right fought for in blood since the “founding fathers” disenfranchised Blacks, propertyless

men, and women.

I see the need to fight for this right just as fighters for the working class must oppose the Patriot Act, which is attempting to roll back democratic rights codified in the Bill of Rights, which also came after a struggle.

It is not an accident that the Democratic Party refused to intervene after the 2000 election when it was clear that so many Black voters had been disenfranchised in Florida.

Socialists must be visible and in the forefront of these struggles. They—and not the capitalist parties—are the only ones that will defend working people.

It may be necessary some day for workers and their allies to organize at polling places to ensure the right to vote, just as we have stood at abortion clinics to defend the law against right-wing mobs that want to deny women the right to choose.

*Jeanne Corvan*  
*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.**

# Argentina: 20,000 at abortion rights conference

BY ROMINA GREEN

CLEVELAND—About 20,000 women took part in the 19th Women's Conference held October 9–11 in Mendoza, Argentina. The first such gathering took place 19 years ago in Buenos Aires, the country's capital, with 1,000 participants. Last year's conference in the city of Rosario drew 10,000 people.

The main question debated was the decriminalization of abortion. Delegates at this year's event also discussed a range of other questions from unemployment, to prostitution, police violence, and whether "left-wing" governments—from Salvador Allende's in Chile in the 1970s to that of Hugo Chávez in Venezuela today—have helped the struggle for women's equality.

On the opening day of the conference, women rallied at Independence Plaza in downtown Mendoza. They were met by hundreds of opponents of a woman's right to choose organized by Archbishop José María Arancibia, who had urged participants at a Friday Mass before the women's gathering to turn out to protest.

The conference workshops took place in various schools in the city. The Catholic church in Mendoza had organized to place placards at these schools with pictures of children saying "This is our future," referring to abortion, and others that said "No to abortion" or "Murderers."

During the three-day meeting, discussion focused largely on a woman's right to choose, according to conference organizers, including during a workshop on "Human Rights." The term human rights is often used in Argentina in reference to the



March during October 9-11 National Conference of Women in Mendoza, Argentina. "Abortion free and on demand now!" says banner in front.

fight to bring to justice those responsible for murders and "disappearances" of more than 30,000 trade unionists, revolutionists, and others during the U.S.-supported military dictatorship in the 1970s and '80s.

"We will continue to insist that the decriminalization of abortion is a question of human rights that is urgent to confront because it is the poor women who die," said Nora Cortiñas, according to the Argentine

newspaper *Página 12*. The paper said that Cortiñas wore a white handkerchief on her head and a green one around her hand—the white meaning one of her family members perished during the dictatorship and the green indicating support for a woman's right to choose.

At a workshop on "Police Brutality and Rights," participants debated the role of cops in society. According to reports in the

Argentine press, participants expressed a variety of opinions, reflecting the fact that women from a range of social classes take part in these meetings.

A large number of delegates came from organizations of the unemployed. Florencia Costilla, a young woman from the province of Tucumán, said, "In Tucumán we suffer from police persecution. The police patrols stop young men whether they have documents or not, drunk or not, minors or not." She concluded by saying, "This is what we should debate and not whether police are good or bad because they respond to the interests of the rich."

Erica De Ibarreta, who teaches journalism in Buenos Aires, disagreed. "The discussion about the police as an institution is off," she said. "This workshop is off."

In the same workshop in a debate over the question of jobs and insecurity, Costilla reportedly said, "Yes, it's true that insecurity comes from unemployment, but it is the fault of the state."

De Ibarreta disagreed, saying the state is not to blame and that individuals themselves are often responsible for staying out of work.

Despite differences on these questions, delegates resolved to continue pressing the fight to decriminalize abortion. Over the last year, this campaign has included more frequent demonstrations and other public actions to expand support for the right to choose.

One of the slogans conference participants agreed to push coming out of this meeting is "Contraceptives to minimize the need for abortion; Legalize abortion so we won't die!"

In Argentina, 27.4 percent of maternal deaths are due to complications of abortion. In the province of Mendoza this figure reaches 35 percent. Throughout Latin America and the Caribbean botched abortions are a major cause of maternal death today. Abortion is legal only in Cuba and Guyana. In Puerto Rico, abortion is not a crime because U.S. laws and court decisions are enforced in that U.S. colony. In other countries abortion is considered a crime except under very limited circumstances. Complications from abortion account for 21 percent of maternal deaths in Latin America as a whole, and up to 50 percent in some countries.

No politicians have introduced any bills in the Argentine Congress so far to decriminalize abortion. Senator Vilma Ibarra of the Frente Grande, a coalition of liberal parties and groups of the middle-class left, recently submitted a bill that would allow abortion only in the case of rape.

## Debate on right to choose reopens in Australia

BY LINDA HARRIS

SYDNEY, Australia—A debate on whether to restrict access to abortion has opened up among Liberal and National Party members of parliament here. It follows soon after the re-election of the Liberal-National coalition government led by Prime Minister John Howard, which increased its majority in the House of Representatives in the October 9 federal elections. The governing coalition also gained a majority in the Senate for the first time in almost two decades.

In a November 1 interview with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) radio, Federal Health Minister Anthony Abbott of the Liberal Party said he is concerned about an "abortion epidemic."

His comments prompted statements from other politicians in the governing coalition defending existing laws that have decriminalized abortion in a number of states and court rulings that basically treat the procedure as legal throughout the country.

"I certainly share the concerns that many people have about the number of abortions that are taking place in Australia today," Abbott said. "We have something like 100,000 abortions a year, 25 percent of all pregnancies end in abortion."

The ABC interviewer corrected the minister, pointing out that the real figure is 75,000 abortions per year.

"But certainly the Government has no plans to change existing policy," Abbott added.

When the interviewer asked the minister whether he could guarantee the current government program would not be changed, Abbott responded, "You can never absolutely guarantee anything."

Other conservative politicians are pushing more openly for restricting federal funding for abortion or banning certain procedures such as late-term abortions.

Barnaby Joyce, for example, a National Party senator from Queensland, told the *Australian* that "his support for government policy depended on crucial issues such as restricted Medicare-funded abortions."

New parliamentary secretary of health Christopher Pyne called for a ban on abortions beyond the first 21 weeks of pregnancy. Abbott has expressed agreement with Pyne's

stance and left open the possibility of raising the proposal with state health ministers.

A number of governing coalition members have opposed these proposals. Aged Care Minister Julie Bishop and parliamentary secretary for finance and administration Sharman Stone, for example, told the *Australian* they would resist any anti-abortion push in their party.

"The banning of terminations would be a very retrograde step," Bishop said. "We don't want to return to pre-regulation days."

Stone said the issue of abortion has already been resolved. "It's a private issue between a woman and her doctor," she said. "Our current system is both compassionate and medically sound."

While maintaining the stance that it is unlikely the government will change

existing policy, Abbott has been part of a campaign by bourgeois politicians aimed at undermining access to abortion. In a speech at Adelaide University in March, for example, Abbott called the rate of abortions performed in Australia a "national tragedy." He was booed by students, who chanted "Get your morals off our bodies!" Abbott also used the showing in August here of the movie *My Foetus* by British filmmaker Julia Black to keep up the propaganda offensive against the right to choose.

In response to this debate, a public meeting was held here October 20, attended by about 30 people. It was called by the Women's Abortion Action Campaign (WAAC) and the University of Technology Student Association Womyn's Collective.

The event started with a slide show pre-

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## Creditors balk at new Argentine proposal to write off debt

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

In early November, the government of Argentina made a slightly higher offer than earlier to creditors who hold \$103 billion in debt on which Buenos Aires defaulted three years ago. Wealthy bondholders largely in the European Union—especially in Germany and Italy, who hold the majority of the debt—are resisting Argentina's latest demand to write off some 70 percent of its foreign debt, an offer about 5 percent lower than Argentina's previous proposal. The U.S. Security and Exchange Commission, and its counterparts in other imperialist centers, must first approve the deal, in what could be the largest debt restructuring in history.

Argentine economy minister Roberto Lavagna announced November 1 that the his government offered its creditors three new bonds in a debt swap he valued at \$41.8 billion. He said the plan did not include \$20 billion in interest that has built up since Buenos Aires defaulted on the debt. As a sweetener to the deal, the government of President Néstor Kirchner will place the issue date for the new bonds at December 2003, providing for \$475 million in immediate interest payments. The government also promised "interest bonuses" if growth in the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

exceeds 3 percent.

After a financial meltdown that reached its low point in 2002, Argentina's GDP rose 8.4 percent last year and exports increased sharply. Inflation, which had reached double digits, has decreased substantially. The official unemployment rate is now at 14.4 percent, down from more than 20 percent in 2002.

In December 2001, the Radical Party government of President Fernando de la Rúa resigned after Buenos Aires defaulted on its debt in face of an economic crash, setting off a financial collapse and an eruption of working-class and middle-class protests. De la Rúa was replaced by Eduardo Duhalde of the Peronist party, a capitalist party that has the backing of the labor officialdom.

Duhalde's government broke the decade-long linkage of the Argentine peso to the U.S. dollar, precipitating a 70 percent devaluation of the national currency. At the end of October, the country's supreme court upheld the government's decision in February of 2002 to convert dollar-denominated deposits into devalued pesos. The move had a devastating effect on the accounts of many in the middle classes and layers of workers with savings in dollars.

Buenos Aires did not make an estimate of

the net present value of its offer. A proposal bondholders rejected last June had been valued at 25 cents to the dollar on the defaulted debt. Spokespeople for imperialist creditors estimate the Argentine government's latest proposal is worth a maximum of 31 cents on the dollar. "I think in general there is a sense of disappointment that there is no real improvement at all," said Hans Humes, for the Global Committee of Argentine Bondholders, which holds \$38 billion of the debt. "Bondholders are very frustrated and, after this announcement, I think they will be even more frustrated."

Some imperialist investors have hopes of squeezing more out of Argentine working people through pressure from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). "Argentina probably will improve its offer further to increase participation and avoid forgoing its relationship with the IMF, which withheld financing in its second-quarter review," said a November 3 article by the Bloomberg News service. Daniel Tiltotson of Wachovia Securities in New York told the news agency that Buenos Aires needed 90 percent of its creditors to approve the deal in order for the IMF to loosen its purse strings. "If Argentina doesn't understand that, they have a problem," Tiltotson said.