

# THE MILITANT

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 69/NO. 15

APRIL 18, 2005

# Socialist Workers Party: Koppel for N.Y. mayor!

## Socialists offer working-class alternative in 2005 elections

BY PAUL PEDERSON

NEW YORK—Martín Koppel, nominated as Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of New York City at an April 4 party conference here, joined two dozen striking Westchester County bus drivers and mechanics on their picket line the next day. He expressed support for the month-long fight by members of Transport Workers Union Local 100, who are resisting the employer's demand for high penalties for early retirement and increased employee payments for health-care coverage.

"You're setting an example for other working people who face similar assaults by the bosses," Koppel told a group of pickets. "We need to be organized in unions and use union power to beat back these attacks on our job conditions and living standards. That's right at the heart of what the Socialist Workers campaign is about."

Many of the strikers were eager to talk about their struggle with the socialist campaigners and to exchange ideas on a range of issues—from social conditions in the semicolonial world to the fact that they have confronted strikebreaking efforts by the local big-business media, politicians, and police.

"We're presenting a working-class alternative to the Democrats, Republicans, and all other capitalist candidates," Koppel said.

"The problem we face is capitalism. It's not a particular mayor, or a president, or one or another party. The problem is the profit system itself, which is based on the rule of a handful of billionaire families at the expense of workers and farmers, who produce all the wealth, along with

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Martín Koppel (left), just nominated as the Socialist Workers Party candidate for New York City mayor in the November elections, joins April 5 picket line of bus drivers and mechanics on strike against Liberty Lines/Bee-Line in Westchester County, New York.

Militant/Willie Cotton

### Socialist Workers launch campaigns across U.S.

**Atlanta:** James Harris for Mayor

**Boston:** Margaret Trowe for Mayor  
Laura Garza for City Council

**Cleveland:** Romina Green for Mayor

**Detroit:** Ilona Gersh for Mayor

**New Jersey:** Angela Lariscy for Governor\*  
Michael Ortega for State Assembly District 28\*

**New York City:** Martín Koppel for Mayor\*

**Pittsburgh:** Brian Taylor for Mayor\*

**Seattle:** Chris Hoepfner for Mayor\*

**Saint Paul, MN:** Jacob Perasso for Mayor  
Rebecca Williamson for City Council

The SWP will also nominate candidates for local or statewide offices in Craig, CO; Des Moines, IA; Hazleton, PA; Miami; and Omaha, NE.

\*petitioning planned to win ballot status

## Iowa bosses use 'no match' letters to fire immigrant meat packers

BY EDWIN FRUIT AND KEVIN DWIRE

PERRY, Iowa—Working with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the bosses at the Tyson slaughterhouse here fired or forced out some 40 workers during the last week of March. The company claimed that the Social Security numbers of the meat packers—mostly immigrants from Mexico and Central America—could not be verified. Many have worked at the plant for years. Some have children in local schools and own homes in the area. Many also have families in their native countries that depend on the money these workers send home in order to survive.

Militant reporters interviewed a number of meat packers here April 2 who described the company attack.

José Vera, originally from Mexico, has worked in the United States for 10 years, about eight of them at the Perry plant. "Life here has gotten worse, much more difficult in recent years," he said. "The company called me into the office and said, 'Is this you?' referring to the Social

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## Wolfowitz as World Bank head will push 'Bush doctrine'

BY ARGIRIS MALAPANIS

U.S. deputy defense secretary Paul Wolfowitz, one of the spokespeople for U.S. imperialist foreign policy as reshaped by the current administration—often referred to as the "Bush doctrine"—was unanimously confirmed March 31 as the new president of the World Bank.

Wolfowitz will begin his five-year term June 1, in a post that has always been held by a U.S. official since the World Bank was founded after World War II.

The appointment will further weaken "multipolarity" within this imperialist institution, which is based in Washington, D.C., and has been dominated by the U.S. government since its founding. It will also exacerbate conflicts between capitalist powers in Europe and among imperialist powers around the world.

Wolfowitz's ascension to the World Bank "will extend and shore up the Bush Doctrine," said an editorial in the *Investor's Business Daily* on March 17, the day after

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## Miners build New Mexico conference on working women

BY KATHERINE BENNETT AND TERI MOSS

PRICE, Utah—"Most of us think that we are going to have a full house," said Rosie Kellywood about the Changing Woman Conference to be held April 18 at the Civic Center in Farmington, New Mexico.

Kellywood is a member of the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE), which initiated the conference and is cosponsoring it with the University of New Mexico School of Law. "At first we were tailoring this for women miners," Kellywood said, "but I think that a lot of other women workers and women in the community will attend."

According to IUOE officers, this is the first conference of its type and they have accommodations for 100 attendees. Kellywood said that the response at work the first week of April, however, is exceeding organizers' expectations. "We expect about 50 coal miners just from the BHP mines here—both women and men—to attend," she said. "We may need additional space."

Kellywood is a heavy equipment opera-

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# Canada: Air India crash frame-up fails

BY JOE YATES

TORONTO—A frame-up “antiterrorism” campaign by the Canadian government failed March 16 when a judge acquitted Ajaib Singh Bagri and Ripudaman Singh Malik. The two had been accused of killing 329 people in the crash of an Air India plane and two people in a June 23, 1985, explosion at Narita airport in Japan. The media claimed from the beginning that a bomb caused the crash. The claim was never proven.

Bagri and Malik were arrested and charged on Oct. 27, 2000. They were held without bail until their acquittal almost four and a half years later. The trial lasted from April 2003 to December 2004.

The Air India investigation was launched by Ottawa as part of a campaign backed by the Indian government against forces advocating independence for Punjab, a state in northwestern India largely inhabited by Sikhs, a national minority in the country. On June 5, 1984, India’s army waged an assault, killing hundreds at the Golden Temple in Amritsar—the most important Sikh holy site. On October 30 of the same year, India’s prime minister, Indira Gandhi, was assassinated by her Sikh bodyguards. Following the killing, Gandhi’s Congress Party organized a pogrom that led to the slaughter of thousands of Sikhs.

Both Bagri and Malik are Sikh religious leaders. Bagri was a leader of Babbar Khalsa, a group that advocates independence for Punjab. In June 2003, Ottawa banned Babbar Khalsa and the International Sikh World Federation after branding them “terrorist.”

Through the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service (CSIS), Ottawa joined the campaign against “Sikh terrorism.” The police inquiry was the largest and most expensive international investigation Canadian authorities have ever undertaken. In a major assault on democratic rights, thousands of Sikhs were spied upon, wiretapped, interrogated, or held in jail or immigration centers without ever being convicted of any crime.

This campaign whipped up racist attitudes toward Sikhs. In 1998, Nirmal Singh Gill, a caretaker at a Sikh temple in Surrey, near Vancouver, was beaten to death by a group of skinheads. About 1,000 people

rallied to protest the racist murder.

In his ruling for the acquittal of Bagri and Malik, Judge Ian Bruce Josephson said, “Justice is not achieved...if persons are convicted on anything less than the requisite standard of proof beyond a reasonable doubt. The evidence has fallen markedly short of that standard.”

The two defendants spent well over four years behind bars in a case that was based on circumstantial evidence. “The prosecution had no witnesses with firsthand information or any physical evidence that could be tied directly to either Mr. Malik or Mr. Bagri,” the Toronto *Globe and Mail* reported. The judge found that several witnesses who claimed they had heard the defendants admit to the crime lacked credibility.

“I have been accused of horrendous crimes and have been imprisoned for over four years while these charges were before the court,” said Bagri in a statement read by his daughter outside the court after the verdict was announced.

“In 1985, when these terrible events occurred, I was a passionate advocate for an independent homeland for the Sikh people,” Bagri’s statement continued. “But I want to repeat publicly today what I have told the authorities numerous times since 1985: that I had absolutely no involvement in any of these criminal activities.”

“Our dad has been found to be innocent. Our justice system is based on the principle of innocent until proven guilty. Please remember that a verdict of not guilty is a verdict of innocent,” Malik’s children said in a statement. “They had given these families [of those who died in the crash] a false hope of justice by proceeding with a case without merit. The focus must now be on how CSIS, the RCMP and Crown have handled this case, on who is actually responsible for this heinous crime, and on exposing the witnesses who lied in search of attention and money.”

One person charged in the case, Inderjit Singh Reyat, pleaded guilty to manslaughter on Feb. 10, 2003, and was sentenced to five years in jail. However, he was only found guilty of acquiring “materials for the purpose of aiding others in making of explosive devices...he did not arm an explosive device, nor did he place an explosive device



Frame-up victim Ripudaman Singh Malik (center) leaves with supporters March 16 from the British Columbia Supreme Court in Vancouver, Canada, after he was found not guilty of an alleged bombing in the crash of an Air India flight in 1985.

on an airplane, nor does he know who did or did not do so.” Reyat had previously been sentenced to 10 years in prison for manslaughter in the death of the two airport workers in Japan. His conviction was based on circumstantial evidence.

The media coverage after the acquittal continued the effort to use the case to boost the government’s repressive apparatus. “Ill-equipped, ill-prepared and looking for the wrong target,” said an article in the *Toronto Star*. “In 1985, Canada’s fledgling security agency—the Canadian Security Intelligence Service—was preoccupied with sniffing out Soviet spies and rooting out subversion. Probing possible terror attacks was down the list of priorities for CSIS.”

The prosecution has 30 days to appeal. So far the government has rejected a proposal for a public inquiry into the Air India case.

Meanwhile, Ottawa is pursuing its effort to use the “fight against terrorism” to undermine democratic rights, including by toughening immigration laws. In a ruling released March 22, for example, federal judge Eleanor Dawson upheld the

use of a national-security certificate against Mohamed Harkat. This means that he will continue to be held in an Ottawa jail, where he has been detained for two years pending deportation as a “security threat.” The government has accused Harkat of association with al-Qaeda.

“It’s an unjust decision, from what I can see,” said Christian Legeais, a spokesperson for Harkat’s defense committee. “It’s only based on evidence presented in secret.”

Under a national-security certificate Ottawa doesn’t have to give the accused or their lawyers the evidence it claims to possess and may present it secretly to the courts.

On March 23, Justice Minister Irwin Cotler announced that Canadian citizens suspected of “terrorist” ties could also be subjected to “control measures” like house arrest. Such measures are currently being developed for immigrants accused of “terrorist” activity or association. Under a 2001 law, authorities already have the power to arrest and jail citizens, with a judge’s approval, if they claim the detention would prevent an imminent “terrorist” act.

## Changing Woman conference

Continued from front page

tor who has worked at the BHP San Juan surface mine for 13 years. She runs track dozers, motor graders, and 170-ton haul trucks. She said it took a fight on her part to get a coal mining job. “It has been hard for women here to get hired in the mines,” she told the *Militant*. “The companies think that this not the kind of work women can do. And there are some male co-workers who also believe women shouldn’t work here. I always thought of myself as a victim, but I got tired of this.”

Kellywood said the conference is being publicized throughout the Navajo Nation in the *Navajo Times*, and in local Farmington papers and on a local radio station.

A delegation from Utah’s coalfields is coming, she said, which includes several Co-Op miners who have been involved in an 18-month-long battle against C.W. Mining for representation by the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA). A few women miners from Price, Utah, are

inviting other area women to attend who are fighting to get into the mines but have not yet succeeded, Kellywood said.

Wars Peterman, president of IUOE Local 953, said representatives of the Indian Health Service, the Navajo Tribal Council, and UMWA locals on the Navajo Nation will take part. “The issues facing women coal miners are also faced by workers in other places,” he said. “There are several women from a local factory that makes parts for missiles who will be attending.”

The sessions at the conference will include the following topics: discrimination in the workplace, filing an EEOC claim, sexual harassment, and mental health in employment. To register for the conference, mail a check for \$10 payable to Changing Woman Conference and send it to Operating Engineers Local 953, U.S. Highway 64, Kirtland, NM 87417. Include your name, address, phone number, and occupation. For more information, call (505) 598-0418.

THE MILITANT

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The Militant

Vol. 69/No. 15

Closing news date: April 6, 2005

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Published weekly except for one week in January, June, July, and August.  
The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 306 W. 37th Street, 10th floor, New York, NY 10018. Telephone: (212) 244-4899; Fax (212) 244-4947.  
E-mail: TheMilitant@verizon.net  
The Militant website is: 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.  
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# Socialist Workers campaign

**Continued from front page**  
nature. That’s what drives the bosses’ speed-up, lengthening of the working day and week, lowering of real wages, and cut-backs in benefits like health care and pensions. Their wars abroad—in Afghanistan, Iraq, and others they are preparing—are simply the external face of their war on working people at home.”

Socialist Workers candidates have also launched campaigns for local or statewide office in Atlanta, Boston, Cleveland, Detroit, Pittsburgh, Seattle, and St. Paul, Minnesota, as well as in New Jersey. The New York campaign plans to organize a petition drive in July and August to put Koppel on the ballot. Petitioning campaigns are planned in New Jersey, Pittsburgh, and Seattle.

On April 7 Koppel—a *Militant* staff writer and editor of *Perspective Mundial*—and other socialist campaigners are joining a rally by the Service Employees International Union against state budget cuts. They are also drawing up plans to campaign at campuses, factory gates, in working-class neighborhoods, and in industrial areas such as the Manhattan Garment District and the Hunt’s Point meat market.

### ‘We’re an international class’

Speaking with bus workers on the picket line, Koppel pointed to “Our Politics Starts with the World,” the title of the feature article in issue no. 13 of the Marxist magazine *New International*. “To fight effectively, we need to start with a world perspective,” Koppel said. “Workers have a crucial advantage—we are an international class. We have common interests with fellow workers around the world, and a common enemy—the capitalist rulers.”

Some of the strikers studied the back cover photo of *New International* no. 13, which graphically shows the chasm between the most industrialized countries and the semicolonial world in terms of access to electricity and industrial development.

“We support the fight by Third World nations to develop the energy sources they need for development, including nuclear energy,” Koppel said. “And we oppose the drive by the U.S. government and other imperialist powers to block this development under the banner of stopping nuclear proliferation.”

One striker asked whether the United States had gone from being a food exporter

to an importer. “The U.S. is the world’s main exporter of agricultural products,” Koppel replied. “Our campaign opposes the protectionist tariffs that Washington uses against other countries, which devastate the economies of semicolonial countries.”

Some of the unionists who are Puerto Rican remarked that U.S. domination of the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico had wreaked havoc with their agriculture and transformed them from rice exporters to importers of rice from the United States.

The TWU members explained that one of their demands is for a lower retirement age. They pointed to the impact that years behind the wheel have on the health of their fellow unionists. “It’s a stressful job. A lot of people develop real health problems and have to retire early. We want to end the company’s 24.6 percent penalty on people retiring at 57 who have 25 years or more on the job,” said picket captain Angel Giboyeaux.

“What you face is part of what millions of workers face today,” Koppel said. “To boost their falling profit rates, the employers need to squeeze a lot more out of us than they have done by driving down our wages and speeding up production, workplace by workplace. Today they are stepping up an offensive against Social Security and other hard-fought extensions of our wages. The moves to raise the retirement age and shift more of health-care costs onto individual workers are part of that. Our campaign calls for a federally funded program of universal, lifetime health care.”

### Controversy over Ferrer statement

The election campaign in New York is in full swing. Incumbent mayor Michael Bloomberg is expected to win the Republican nomination. Of the Democrats in the race, the frontrunners are former Bronx borough president Fernando Ferrer and Manhattan borough president Virginia Fields.

On April 5 the Socialist Workers campaign released a statement by Koppel in response to a controversy over comments by Ferrer. In a March 15 speech to a group of police sergeants whose endorsement he is seeking, the Democrat declared that the 1999 police killing of West African immigrant Amadou Diallo in the Bronx was “not a crime” and that the cops, who were all acquitted, had been “overindicted.” Diallo was gunned down by four cops in a hail of 41 bullets on the doorstep of his apartment building.

## Iraqi Nat’l Assembly chooses new gov’t officials

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Iraqi National Assembly that emerged from the January elections took the first step in putting together a new government with the April 3 selection of the assembly speaker and his two deputies. Three days later, the National Assembly elected Jalal Talabani, a central leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), to be Iraq’s new president and picked two vice-presidents.

At the same time, a figure in the Association of Muslim Scholars, the leading Sunni clerical group, gave qualified encouragement to Sunnis to join the U.S.-trained Iraqi security forces. And U.S. military officials have said that the number and effectiveness of attacks by antigovernment groups on U.S. and other occupying forces has diminished over the last two months.

In a related development registering further steps by U.S. imperialism toward its goal of expanding its influence and domination of the region, the Syrian government indicated in early April that it would withdraw all its troops and intelligence personnel from Lebanon by April 30.

Hajem al-Hassani, a former leader of the Iraqi Islamic Party, was elected speaker of the National Assembly. He had lived in exile since moving to the United States in 1979, returned to Iraq shortly after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, and was appointed to the Iraqi Governing Council, an advisory group to the occupation regime headed by U.S. consul Paul Bremer. Al-Hassani was critical of the U.S.-led assault on Fallujah last November. But he broke with the Iraqi Islamic Party when the group left the government in protest over the U.S. assault on the stronghold of forces loyal to the former Baath Party regime.

Hussein al-Shahrastani, a candidate of the United Iraqi Alliance (UIA) slate in the elections and a Shiite, and Aref Tayfur, a leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP),

were elected as deputy speakers.

The UIA got widespread support among Shiites and won a slim majority in the 275-seat assembly. Lacking the two-thirds majority needed to form a government on its own, the UIA has been locked in talks with the Kurdish slate headed by the KDP and PUK aimed at forming a coalition government. The KDP/PUK-led slate won the second-largest bloc of seats in the assembly.

The impasse was finally broken when Talabani was chosen president April 6—the first time in the country’s history a Kurd holds the post. In addition, Adel Abdel Mahdi, a Shiite and leader of the UIA, and outgoing president Ghazi al-Yawar, a Sunni, were picked as vice-presidents. The three-man presidential council is expected to finish soon the job of filling the new regime’s top posts by appointing Ibrahim al-Jafaari, a Shiite and leader of the UIA, as prime minister.

Parties headed by wealthy Sunnis largely boycotted the January vote. The selection of al-Hassani and al-Yawar, two prominent bourgeois politicians who are Sunni, was aimed at including as many Sunnis as possible in the government being cobbled together under Washington’s tutelage. Wealthy Sunnis were the backbone of support for the Baathist regime and have been the main financial sponsors of groups responsible for bombings and other attacks on U.S. troops and Iraqi government forces.

Meanwhile, Ahmad Abd al-Ghaful al-Sammarai, a leading cleric in the Association of Muslim Scholars (AMS), urged Sunnis to join the Iraqi security forces during a sermon in Baghdad, reported Al-Jazeera TV. Al-Sammarai was among 64 members of AMS issuing the edict, or *fatwa*. He said this was necessary in order to prevent the country’s police and army from falling into “the hands of those who have caused chaos, destruction, and violated the sanctities.” The statement also said that Sunnis should not

## Communist League candidates in UK present working-class platform



Militant

“No matter which party wins the election, the rulers in the United Kingdom will continue to wage imperialist wars, like the ones in Afghanistan and Iraq,” said Peter Clifford, Communist League candidate for parliament from Edinburgh East. Clifford, second from left above, while on a postal workers picket line last year in Scotland, was commenting after the recent decision by British prime minister Anthony Blair to call a general election in the United Kingdom on May 5. “Such wars are an extension of their attacks on working people at home,” Clifford added. “The parties of capitalism—Labour, Liberal Democrats, Conservative, Scottish National Party—may differ on details. But they’re united in seeking to offload the crisis onto the backs of working people.”

“All such parties view workers and exploited farmers as the object of their policies. The Communist League, to the contrary, is presenting a platform that flows out of the struggles of working people themselves. At the center of this platform is the need to organize and strengthen the unions, to use union power to resist the bosses’ attacks; to get UK and all imperialist troops out of Iraq now; to oppose the threats against Iran and north Korea; and to defend the right of semicolonial countries to electrification, which is necessary for industrial development and raising the cultural level of all toilers, by any means, including through nuclear power.”

In the wake of widespread outrage at these remarks, Ferrer’s poll ratings have plunged, but Fields, Bloomberg, and other capitalist candidates have low-keyed the issue.

“The shooting of Amadou Diallo *was* a crime,” Koppel said. “The main defense of the killer cops was that Diallo fit the ‘generic description’ of the criminal they were supposedly looking for. In other words, he was a Black man in a working-class neighborhood. This is how cops approach working

people and oppressed nationalities—as criminals or potential criminals.”

“The Diallo verdict is not an example of how the U.S. judicial system malfunctions. This *is* how the capitalist justice system works. The entire system of police, courts, and prisons is designed to protect the rule and property of the tiny class of billionaire families and keep working people in check.”

The striking bus drivers in Yonkers told Koppel they too have had experience with the police, who have arrested more than 40 pickets for blocking buses used by the company to train replacement drivers.

“This government and this system cannot be made to serve the interests of our class,” Koppel said. “Working people need to organize independently of the bosses’ parties and build a movement that can take political power out of the hands of the billionaires and establish a government of workers and farmers.”

### Getting on the ballot

The New York Socialist Workers campaign will be organizing to collect the necessary signatures to get its slate on the ballot in the November elections. “We urge people to vote for a program that stands for what they are *for*, not to ‘defeat Bloomberg’ or ‘defeat the Bush agenda,’ as some supporters of the Democrats are advocating,” Koppel said. “By getting the socialist ticket on the ballot here and elsewhere in 2005 we will be able to get a broader hearing for this perspective.”

As of now, the SWP is the only socialist organization to field candidates in New York City.

The pro-capitalist Libertarian Party has also announced it will run. Their main mayoral contenders are a smokers rights advocate and the reactionary “subway vigilante” Bernard Goetz.

The New York SWP campaign plans to get at least twice the required 7,500 signatures to get on the ballot for the mayoral race. The petitioning period runs from July 12 to August 23.

In New Jersey, the SWP has nominated Angela Lariscy for governor and Michael Ortega for State Assembly in District 28, and will kick off a ballot drive on May 7 to collect 1,500 signatures, nearly double the requirement of 800. In Seattle, the Socialist Workers campaign will begin a petitioning effort in June to put its mayoral candidate, Chris Hoepfner, on the ballot. (See front page for list of other candidates.)

*Willie Cotton contributed to this article.*

# UMWA presses to dismiss suit by Utah mine bosses

BY PAT MILLER

PRICE, Utah—Attorneys for the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) filed a reply with the U.S. District Court in Utah on March 25 to the C.W. Mining harassment lawsuit against the union. The UMWA brief was prompted by the March 16 legal request of the owners of the Co-Op mine that the union’s motion to dismiss the case be rejected. (See also “Utah mine bosses respond to UMWA brief” in April 4 *Militant*.)

The union’s response concentrates on three points:

1. In suing the UMWA, C.W. Mining is relying on legal precedents designed to regulate unfair labor practices between an employer and a union with an established labor contract. In this case, the only “con-

tract” that exists is between C.W. Mining and the International Association of United Workers Union (IAUWU), which miners say is a company run outfit that has never represented their interests at the mine.

2. Claims of defamation against the union and individual Co-Op miners named in the suit are not valid. C.W. Mining says numerous statements made by the union and individual miners about wages, safety, and other work conditions, as well as actions by management, were “lies.”

C.W. Mining and the IAUWU contend that “because a number of statements attributable to the UMWA were allegedly false, those statements were ‘defamatory,’” says the brief filed by the union’s attorneys. In the context of a labor dispute, “there was nothing exceptional about the words alleg-



Militant/Teri Moss

**Co-Op miners picket C.W. Mining’s Rail Co. Load Out near Huntington, Utah, March 23, demanding reinstatement to their jobs and UMWA representation.**

edly exchanged,” the UMWA reply says, explaining that there are “heightened” requirements to prove defamation in such situations.

3. The dispute between the miners at the Co-Op mine, who are fighting for UMWA representation, and C.W. Mining is an ongoing dispute with issues still being decided by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). The NLRB, for instance, has yet to rule on a number of unfair labor practices by the company, including the wholesale firing of union supporters and whether or not the votes of those miners will be counted in the union representation election that was held December 17. As such, C.W. Mining has no rights to sue the union over questions that are still being decided by the NLRB.

C.W. Mining has asked for and received extra time from the court, until April 15, to respond to several other defendants in the lawsuit who filed motions to dismiss the case. By that date the coal company’s lawyers will have to respond to motions filed by the 17 individual Co-Op miners, the *Militant* newspaper and the Socialist Workers Party, as well as Utah Jobs with Justice, Utah AFL-CIO and its individual officers, the Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy (PACE) union in Salt Lake City, and University of Utah professor Hans Ehrbar. Following these replies by C.W. Mining, each of these defendants will have seven days to make any final written arguments for the court to consider.

## Iowa bosses use ‘no match’ letters for firings

Continued from front page

Security number they had on file for years. If you say ‘Yes,’ they ask for more identity proof such as a birth certificate or driver’s license. If you can’t produce this additional documentation, they say ‘We’re sorry, you are a good worker but you can’t work here anymore.’ They say the government is doing this—not them—because of ‘national security.’ For those with families here this is a real burden. I know of one couple where the company accepted the woman’s I.D. but fired her husband.”

“The company says ‘No papers, no work.’ But the government thought our I.D. was good enough to take out federal and Social Security taxes from us for years,” said Jorge Castillo, another meat packer who had worked at the Tyson plant for four years. “We are in a very hard situation.” Castillo said some of the fired workers would try to get jobs in other packing plants.

“It’s messed up what the company is doing,” said a U.S.-born worker with family in Mexico, who asked that his name not be used. “They do a check when you are hired in and that should be enough.”

“President Bush campaigned on a program for immigrants to have three-year work permits,” said Luis, who is from Central America. “He did this to get Latino votes and now he says ‘No way.’” He also said that because so many workers are missing from the kill floor, the remaining meat packers are being asked to do the work of two people to make up the difference.

United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 1149 organizes workers at the Perry Tyson plant and at the Swift plant in Marshalltown. Immigrant workers make up around 70 percent of the 900 workers at the Perry plant.

“The union position is that once someone is hired by the company, then the union will defend them regardless of who they are or where they are from,” Dave Edwards, Local 1149’s chief shop steward at Tyson told the *Militant*. He said accepting company claims about Social Security card problems would allow it to “just pick out any number of people and call them in as a way of weakening the union or getting rid of people they don’t want in the plant.”

Through accelerated immigration, impelled by grinding economic conditions in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, the working class in the United States and other imperialist countries is becoming more and more internationalized. These changes in composition not only break down national divisions, provincialism, and prejudices that sap the power of the labor movement, but also enrich the political and union experiences of the working class and broaden its historical and cultural horizons.

The ruling class is trying to counter this political trend and the resulting strengthening of the working class and its fighting potential by toughening immigration laws and their enforcement over the last decade. The aim of the bosses and the capitalist government is not to stop the flow of immigration but to keep a large section of the working class in a pariah status, so they can be super exploited, and weaken the ability of immigrant workers to fight as equals with the native born to organize and use union power to defend the working class as a whole.

The Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act, signed into law by President William Clinton in 1996, deepened government attacks on immigrant workers. After the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, the federal government has used the specter of “terrorism” to further undermine democratic rights—including stepped-up factory raids, indefinite incarcerations of immigrants without charges, and deportations. Another 1996 law that undermined the rights of the foreign-born was the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act.

Workers at the Swift plant in Marshalltown told *Militant* reporters during an April 3 visit that similar identity checks and firings took place at the Tyson plant in Waterloo, Iowa. One worker who asked not to be identified said that a friend of hers had called to say 75 workers were dismissed, and that she didn’t make it to first break before she was called into the office and was fired. Rumors

are spreading that identity checks will also be carried out in Marshalltown, she said.

These I.D. checks and firings have been concentrated in Perry and Waterloo. Workers throughout central Iowa, however, say they now fear these practices will spread.

For example, another Marshalltown worker said that after a police car was seen outside the Swift plant word spread on the shop floor that the hated *la migra* was coming into the plant. Scores of workers left the factory, with more calling in sick the next day. So many of the cafeteria staff left, he said, that food could not be served that day. Since that incident most workers have returned on the job, he added, but some are not waiting around for the identity checks and have quit.

*Edwin Fruit is a member of UFCW Local 1149 in Perry, Iowa. Kevin Dwire is a packinghouse worker in Des Moines. Mary Martin contributed to this article.*

## Texas City workers discuss BP refinery blast

BY JACQUIE HENDERSON

TEXAS CITY, Texas—The first thing you notice, walking around the working-class communities in the shadows of the miles of refinery towers that frame this city on the Gulf of Mexico, is the sting in your eyes and the smell in the air that hurts your lungs as you breathe.

We asked residents within a few miles of the site of the explosion that killed 15 work-

### REPORTER’S NOTEBOOK

ers and injured more than 100 at the British Petroleum (BP) refinery here on March 23 if this is how the air has been since that day. While there were a variety of answers to other questions, they all replied the same to this one: “No. This is how it always is.”

The blast took place in the isomerization unit, where octane-boosting gasoline ingredients were made. It had been shut down for maintenance and was in the process of being put back on line. The refinery, BP’s largest in the United States and the third-largest in the country, produces 3 percent of the total gasoline consumed in the United States.

As we talked with workers in their homes with the refinery looming in the background, we learned more about the explosion and the daily hazards the facility creates. We were told of windows being blown out, the ground shaking, and instant cracks in buildings. Some had friends and relatives who worked in the plant and waited for hours to find out if they survived. Others were working at nearby industries when they heard the blasts and felt the shock.

Most of those interviewed expressed concerns about what the air they are breathing since the blast might be doing to their health. BP and government officials have claimed that the explosion had “minimal impact” on air and water quality. The report from BP to the National Response Center just after the blast records the company’s answer as “no”

to the question on whether there was any community impact because of hazardous material release. In collaboration with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), however, the company kept inspectors out of the plant for more than a week after the explosion due to concerns for the inspectors’ safety threatened by a benzene gas leak. A large tank in the refinery containing more than 500,000 gallons of benzene was ruptured by materials from the blast and was leaking until it was covered in foam, seven days later. BP allowed access to the site nine days after the blast.

Workers said they heard reports from co-workers about vehicles near the unit, including one with a diesel engine that revved up uncontrollably just before the explosion, a sign of gasses getting into the truck’s intake valves. One worker described radio messages exchanged in the plant just before the explosion asking tensely if the liquid shooting out of a 100-foot ventilation tower in the isomerization unit was water or chemicals. A worker at a nearby chemical plant also expressed his concern over the growing use of vacuum trucks by BP to deal with the many spills. He said he had long been concerned about the pollution results as the trucks then vent the chemicals in gas form into the air. But he was now thinking of the explosive possibilities as gasses from different cleanups combine in the trucks.

Production continues at the other 29 refinery units, taking full advantage of the skyrocketing prices of oil. BP workers have told local papers they have had to continue to work without respirators, just yards from the barricades that surround the blast zone. The company issued a statement claiming that, “By definition, areas outside the barricaded area are deemed to be safe.”

A retired refinery worker, who worked for 28 years at the plant when Amoco owned it, told us of the unsafe practices he had seen in his years on the job. These included the pressure not to report accidents or other problems that tarnish the company’s record. In fact, at the time of the disaster, BP had just finished throwing a catered lunch near the isomerization unit for contract workers

to celebrate “another week without injuries,” the *Houston Chronicle* reported. Survivors told the media that neither workers who were injured as they ran to escape, nor others meeting in windowless trailers nearby, knew that this unit was about to be restarted after a long period of maintenance as they worked around it.

As we drove by the plant offices April 2 we noticed that BP had not seen any need to change its banner, “BP. Safety First.”

Later, we talked to Jackie Escamilla at his apartment near the BP refinery. He said he had been in class at Texas City’s College of the Mainland when the refinery exploded. He was presenting a paper he had written on the 1947 industrial accident that leveled the city. “After World War II, people came to Texas City, looking for jobs at the plants,” Escamilla’s paper began. “This was the 11th largest shipyard in the world. The population soared to 18,000, with 3,000 employed in the major industries. It was April 16, 1947, at 9 a.m. A small fire was discovered on the ship the *Grandcamp*. It was being filled with ammonium nitrate fertilizer. The fertilizer was under a government program to be shipped to the Midwest from Texas City. There was no safety enforced at the time.”

A full inquiry of the 1947 blast was never completed and serious safety problems over the years have continued, he said.

Escamilla said his presentation was cut short by a loud bang followed by another one. Then all the classes stopped and officials evacuated the school.

BP and government officials have said it may take up to a year to discover the cause of the explosion and have tried to counter reports that speed-up and cutting corners on safety could be the reason. “We do not produce day to day just to make a quick buck,” BP’s chief executive officer Lord John Browne claimed last week.

Some Texas City residents and other workers, however, say they know the cause—the bosses’ drive to increase profits that puts workers’ lives at risk every day.

*Steve Warshell and Brian Williams contributed to this article.*

# Socialists hit the streets to sell ‘Militant’ subs, ‘New International’

BY PAUL PEDERSON

Supporters of the *Militant* began a seven-week subscription drive over the April 2-3 weekend. Socialists in cities around Canada, Iceland, Australia, New Zealand, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States set up street tables, did factory sales, and went door-to-door in workers districts to build the paper’s subscription base and sell the new issues of the Marxist magazine *New International*.

The *Militant* sub drive coincides with the first phase of a five-month campaign to sell issues 12 and 13 of *New International*, which have also been published in Spanish. *NI* no. 12 features “Their Transformation and Ours,” the Socialist Workers Party draft political resolution that is being discussed by SWP branches and organizing committees during a preconvention discussion period leading up to the party’s June 9-11 convention at Oberlin College in Ohio. The resolution is published along with “Capitalism’s Long Hot Winter Has Begun” by SWP national secretary Jack Barnes, the main article in that issue. *NI* no. 13 features “Our Politics Start With the World,” also by Barnes. (See front-page ad.)

Classes to study the contents of the two issues are taking place across the United States and other countries, in conjunction with the sales campaign. Quotas that supporters of the magazine have so far adopted in local areas for the five-month effort total 2,172. Sales of the two issues in the week since the *NI* sales campaign was launched at a March 26 public meeting in New York has reached 362 copies.

As we go to press, the *Militant* has also received a total of 108 subscriptions to the *Militant* and its Spanish-language sister publication *Perspectiva Mundial* that were sold the first weekend of the drive—a good start.

In Des Moines, Iowa, two sales teams visited the nearby towns of Perry and Marshalltown to talk with workers who have recently been fired or felt compelled to quit their jobs after receiving “no-match” letters from the bosses at large slaughterhouses there. These letters are aimed at intimidating foreign-born workers by implying their Social Security numbers are not valid for employment.

The Iowa effort “got off to a modest start by selling three *Militant* subs and one *Nueva*

*Internacional*,” said Joe Swanson from Des Moines. “One sub was sold to a high school student in Perry, Iowa. Another team went to a Latino grocery store in Des Moines and sold two *Militant* subs.”

A special regional sales effort is being hosted in Des Moines for socialists in the region over the April 9-10 weekend. “Next weekend, we will return to those towns and others in the area to talk to workers about the latest attacks on our class and what working people are doing to resist,” Swanson said. “This will be the first of a number of organizing efforts in the Midwest over the next seven weeks leading us to learn about other developments in the class struggle.”

Partisans of the *Militant* in New Zealand got out over the weekend to sell the paper to garment workers, members of the Engineers Union, and university students, Patrick Brown reported from Auckland. “Our team began its work in the early morning outside a factory that makes business suits for men,” Brown said. “On their way into the factory, six workers stopped and bought copies of the *Militant*.”

“From there we went to a stop-work meeting called by the Engineers Union, which organizes a range of factories in the city. The meeting built support for the union’s campaign for a wage increase of 5 percent. Of the thousands of workers who went by us on their way into the meeting, around a dozen bought the paper, handing the money through their car windows as a line of cars built up behind them.”

Along with three subscriptions to the *Militant*, socialists in New Zealand sold 22 copies of the two new issues of *New International*. “Most buyers were long-time readers of the magazine,” Brown said, “but not all fit that category. Among the newer readers were two people who bought a copy as part of a package with introductory subscriptions to the *Militant*.”

Participants at two conferences in the Washington, D.C., area bought 10 subscriptions to the *Militant* over the April 2–3 weekend and 12 copies of the two new issues of *New International*. At the Women of Color and Allies Summit in Arlington, Virginia,



Militant/Sara Lobman

**Young Socialist Tom Baumann (right) campaigns for Socialist Workers Party candidates in New Jersey and sells new issues of *New International* along with *Militant* and Pathfinder books April 5 at Rutgers campus in New Brunswick, New Jersey.**

six participants subscribed to the socialist newsweekly. At the Mid-Atlantic Region Women’s Studies Association Conference in Rockville, Maryland, four *Militant* subscriptions and five copies of the new magazines were purchased.

“I want to learn more about Marxism and socialism,” said Ana Ahuja, a Montgomery College student attending the Maryland conference. Ahuja picked up a subscription to the *Militant* and a copy of both new issues

of *New International*, along with five other books published by Pathfinder Press: *Feminism and the Marxist Movement*, *Cosmetics, Fashions and the Exploitation of Women*, *Abortion is a Woman’s Right*, *Women’s Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle*, and *Malcolm X Talks to Young People*.

The sales efforts are being increasingly combined with campaigning for SWP candidates—from New York to New Jersey and Minnesota (see front page article).

## ‘Militant’ supporters in New Zealand and Minnesota set pace for fund drive

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Supporters of the *Militant* in New Zealand and in St. Paul, Minnesota, are setting the example for what is needed to get the *Militant* spring fund drive on pace to meet the \$90,000 goal by May 22.

“The Cuban Revolution, Culture, and Internationalism” was the title of a special *Militant* Labor Forum held in Auckland, New Zealand, April 2, reports Janet Roth. The featured speaker was Janet Kean, who was part of the international team of *Militant* reporters who went to Cuba in February to cover the Havana International Book Fair and help staff the Pathfinder Press booth there. The previous evening Kean spoke on the same theme at a similar forum in Chirstchurch.

The meetings kicked off the fund in New Zealand and raised more than \$1,600 through pledges, a pre-forum dinner, and a raffle of souvenirs Kean had brought back from Cuba. This was also the first opportunity for many of those present to look at the two new issues of *New International* (see front-page ad). Nine copies of these issues of the Marxist magazine were sold that evening.

Following the two successful events, *Militant* supporters in New Zealand decided to increase their fund quota by more than \$1,000.

Supporters of the *Militant* in St. Paul decided to increase their quota by \$300 after learning that local quotas fall short of the \$90,000 goal. They are still making plans for how to meet their new \$4,800 quota but decided on the higher goal because “that’s what needed and we want to do our part,” as Becky Ellis put it in a phone interview. There are a large number of young people in the Twin Cities area who are organizing to attend the world youth festival in Venezuela in August who appreciate the *Militant*’s coverage of developments in Venezuela and other coverage of world politics, Ellis said.

At the end of the first week of the drive the *Militant* has received \$6581—about half of what is needed weekly, \$12,000, to ensure a regular flow of payments necessary to meet expenses such as paying rent, electricity, and printing and shipping costs.

As the adjacent chart shows, lo-

cal quotas now total \$87,985. That’s about \$2,000 short of the international goal. With a little more work like that carried out in New Zealand and Minnesota last week, quotas can exceed the overall target in a week’s time. Everyone can then concentrate on collecting pledges, as well as seeking new contributors, and sending in the funds each week Money received as of Monday will be counted on the chart.

Please send in weekly accounts of progress that can be reported in this column. Checks or money orders should be made out to The *Militant*, earmarked “Spring Fund Drive,” and sent to the *Militant* at 306 W. 37th St., 10th floor, New York, NY 10018.

‘Militant’ Spring Subscription Drive April 2–May 22	
Country	Goal
AUSTRALIA	30
CANADA	60
ICELAND	20
NEW ZEALAND	
Auckland	20
Christchurch	15
N.Z. total	35
SWEDEN	16
UNITED KINGDOM	
Edinburgh	20
London	40
UK total	60
UNITED STATES	
Atlanta	40
Birmingham	25
Boston	60
Chicago	65
Cleveland	35
Craig, CO	20
Des Moines	50
Detroit	28
Houston	50
Los Angeles	90
Miami	65
NE Pennsylvania	40
New York	115
Newark	55
Omaha	25
Philadelphia	50
Pittsburgh	50
Price, UT	50
San Francisco	25
Seattle	35
Tampa	30
Twin Cities	70
Washington	55
U.S. total	1128
Int’l totals	1349
Int’l goal	1350

New International sales campaign March 26 – August 15			
Country	Goal	Sold	%
NEW ZEALAND			
Auckland	30	22	73%
Christchurch	20	0	0%
N.Z. total	50	22	44%
AUSTRALIA	50	8	22%
UNITED STATES			
NE Pennsylvania	40	20	50%
Miami	60	24	40%
Philadelphia	75	28	37%
Atlanta	50	17	34%
New York	250	65	26%
Detroit	60	14	23%
Price, UT	50	11	22%
Des Moines	80	17	21%
Chicago	100	20	20%
Craig, CO	40	8	20%
Pittsburgh	80	15	19%
Birmingham	50	6	12%
Seattle	60	7	12%
Cleveland	30	3	10%
Twin Cities	105	11	10%
Los Angeles	150	9	6%
San Francisco	175	9	5%
Washington	80	4	5%
Omaha	25	1	4%
Houston	50	0	0%
Tampa	55	0	0%
Newark		10	
U.S. total	1,785	304	17%
UNITED KINGDOM			
Edinburgh	35	0	0%
London	120	19	16%
UK total	155	19	12%
CANADA	60	6	10%
ICELAND	32	0	0%
SWEDEN	40	0	0%
Int’l totals	2,172	362	17%

\$90,000 Militant Fund March 26—May 22: Week 1 of 8			
	Goal	Paid	%
ICELAND	200	20	10%
SWEDEN	800	40	5%
AUSTRALIA	750	10	1%
NEW ZEALAND *	2,550	0	0%
UNITED KINGDOM	500	0	0%
CANADA		100	
UNITED STATES			
Philadelphia	3,000	700	23%
New York	11,000	1,936	18%
Price, UT	4,000	600	15%
Los Angeles	8,000	1,000	13%
Seattle	6,000	700	12%
Boston	3,000	250	8%
Chicago	4,000	320	8%
NE Pennsylvania	1,500	100	7%
Newark	3,750	190	5%
Des Moines	1,100	50	5%
Pittsburgh	2,500	100	4%
San Francisco	9,200	300	3%
Miami	1,400	50	4%
Twin Cities *	4,800	90	2%
Washington	3,000	20	1%
Atlanta	4,300	5	0%
Birmingham	1,300	0	0%
Cleveland	1,000	0	0%
Craig, CO	1,800	0	0%
Detroit	2,500	0	0%
Houston	3,500	0	0%
Omaha	335	0	0%
Tampa	1,500	0	0%
Other	700	0	0%
Totals	87,985	6,581	7%

# American concentration camps

## How Washington imprisoned Japanese-Americans during World War II

The following article is reprinted from the April 1973 issue of the International Socialist Review. It was published under the headline, "American Concentration Camps: Racism and Japanese-Americans During World War II."

The parents of the author, Patti Iiyama, were held at the Japanese internment camp at Topaz, Utah, during the second world war. Iiyama was on the executive committee of the Berkeley Free Speech Movement in 1964; a labor organizer for the National Farmworkers Association in Delano, California, in 1966; and the Socialist Workers Party candidate for Secretary of State of California in 1970. She also ran on the SWP slate for various offices subsequently.

This is the fourth installment of this column, which will appear regularly this year—the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II—to tell the truth about the second worldwide imperialist slaughter.

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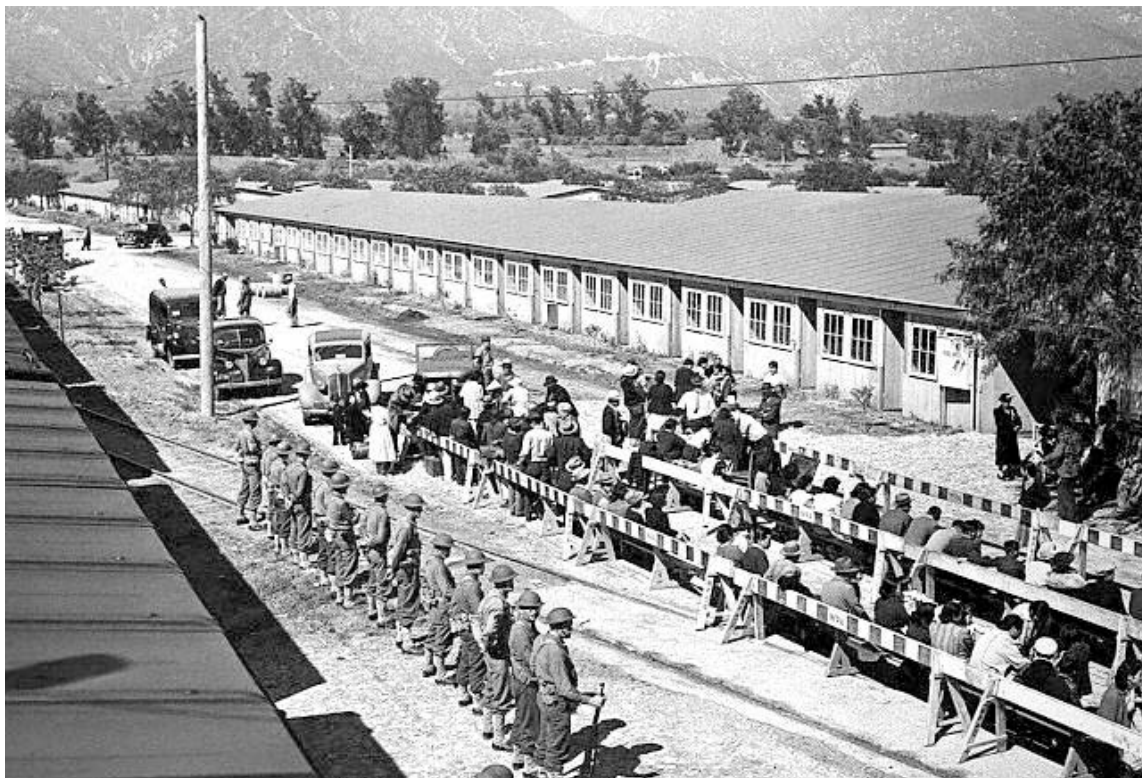
### BY PATTI IIYAMA

Thirty-one years ago, in the summer of 1942, 112,000 people of Japanese descent were evacuated from the West Coast and incarcerated behind barbed wire in concentration camps euphemistically titled "assembly centers." Two-thirds of the evacuees held illegally without trial were citizens of the United States.

This policy was not a mistake or an aberration, as many historians would like us to believe. Rather it was the logical culmination of a consistent policy of racism against Asians in the United States and part of an American tradition including the enslavement of Africans, genocide against the Native Americans, and the conquest of Mexicans.

Racism in America has a firm economic basis; it is a means of justifying and perpetuating inequality and exploitation in this society. This racism has been institutionalized in many ways. Evacuation and imprisonment of a racial minority has occurred before in American history. Native Americans were killed, bought off with token payments, maneuvered from their land, and herded into concentration camps known as "reservations," where most of them are still held today.

Asians were the first large "free" minority group against whom discriminatory legislation was systematically used and developed.



Japanese-Americans waiting for registration in Santa Anita, Los Angeles County, California, April 1942. President Franklin Roosevelt imprisoned 112,000 from western states in concentration camps.

In fact, the means used to institutionalize racism against Asians served as a model for the institutionalization of racism against the freed Black slaves and other nonwhite groups in the U.S.

The Chinese were the first Asians to immigrate to the U.S. When the Chinese began to arrive in this country in large numbers after 1850, the existing white labor force was not numerous enough to meet the needs of rapid urban industrialization in the North and vast railroad construction in the West. The system of slavery stood in the way of the new necessity for a free and mobile but controlled work force.

The Chinese were an ideal solution; they were easily exploitable as cheap labor, but they could also be kept separate from the rest of society. Although they were not slaves, the Chinese were from the moment of their arrival limited in their employment, denied civil rights and liberties, segregated into ghettos, and not allowed to become citizens of the United States.

### Discriminatory laws against Chinese

Discriminatory legislation enforced this new model of labor exploitation. In addition to legal discrimination, Chinese were subject to individual and mob violence.

The periods of greatest agitation against the Chinese corresponded with periods of national economic decline. In 1873–77, and again in 1882–86, the working class bore the brunt of the depression through high unemployment and declining wage rates.

Organized labor, especially the leaders of the American Federation of Labor and its predecessors, often led the anti-Chinese agitation. These trade-union leaders served the interests of the ruling class by leveling their main attacks on another victim of the depression, the Chinese, rather than their real enemy.

"As the ranks of the unemployed grew there was increasing pressure on labor leaders and politicians to give some direction to the discontent of both organized and unorganized workers. Anti-coolieism was their response. Anti-coolieism

meant good politics in 1882 as it had in 1876, not only for the labor politicians but also for the trade union leaders who used the issue to divert pressure on them to make more meaningful or effective challenges to the political and economic order."<sup>1</sup>

The anti-Chinese agitation culminated in the passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act by Congress in 1882. No immigration of Chinese laborers to the United States was

**"Executive Order 9066, directed against the Japanese, authorized the Secretary of War to establish, in the U.S., military areas and exclude 'any or all persons' from them."**

permitted for the next ten years, and Chinese already living in the U.S. were not allowed to become naturalized citizens.

In 1904 the Chinese Exclusion Act was extended indefinitely. It was not repealed until December 17, 1943. Chinese could then become citizens, but the exclusion was still enforced: Congress restricted immigration of Chinese to a grand quota of 105 per year.<sup>2</sup>

The Japanese inherited much of the discrimination that had been directed against the Chinese. The Japanese immigration began as a trickle of 2,000 after the emperor lifted the general ban on emigration in 1885. It increased to 25,000 in the decade of 1891–1900. By 1910, the Japanese population in the U.S. had reached 72,157.

### 'Birds of passage'

Japanese came to Hawaii and the West Coast as "birds of passage" (as they called themselves) to make their fortunes and then return to Japan. Overwhelmingly male, under thirty years of age, and single, they began to take over the lowest-paying jobs as Chinese immigration was halted and Chinese workers moved into other occupations. Most of the Japanese immigrants were literate with the equivalent of an eighth-grade education.

With their increasing visibility in the West Coast, Japanese became targets for wide-ranging discriminatory legislation similar to that used against the Chinese.

Although anti-Japanese agitation existed practically from the minute they landed on American soil (the first anti-Japanese mass

rally took place in San Francisco on May 7, 1900), the agitation was not widespread at first.

In the beginning the Japanese worked in direct competition with the Chinese and therefore were willing to accept much lower wages to obtain employment. However, as Japanese began to concentrate in seasonal agricultural work, they quickly organized to demand higher wages.

### Early strikes

In 1903, 2,000 Japanese and Chinese organized and struck sugar beet farmers in Oxnard, California, for higher wages and for recognition of their Sugar Beet and Farm Laborer's Union of Oxnard. They won after a long strike, but the AFL refused to certify them unless they dropped all Japanese from membership.<sup>3</sup>

"Although the earliest recorded strike of Japanese agricultural laborers occurred in 1891, strikes do not seem to have become a frequent tactic until 1903. A standard device was to wait until the fruit was ripe on the trees and then insist on

renegotiating the contract. The growers protested that this was unethical, since a contract was a contract, and remembered that the Chinese, to their credit, had never done such things. But, as there were no longer enough Chinese to go around, in many instances the Japanese demands had to be met. From about this date, 1903, we begin to hear invidious comparisons of the two races from agriculturalists, almost always to the detriment of the Japanese."<sup>4</sup>

Labor-union officials, who had been in the forefront of the Chinese exclusion movement, took the lead in the anti-Japanese movement for the first two decades of the twentieth century. They accused the Japanese of *preferring* a lower standard of living and accepting lower wages than white workers, thus taking jobs away from whites and lowering wage rates in general.

In 1913, the California State Legislature passed the Webb Alien Land Bill. Aliens ineligible for citizenship (namely the Japanese immigrants) could not buy land for the purpose of agriculture.

Other states began to follow California's example. By 1925 every state where Japanese resided, except for Utah, had passed alien land laws.<sup>5</sup>

After World War I, in the context of the general repression represented by the Palmer raids and the anticommunist hysteria, the scale of anti-Japanese attacks was widened. For the first time, leadership of the agitation was controlled by agricultural interests, notably the California State Farm Bureau Federation and the California State Grange. A broad coalition of organized labor, agricultural groups, patriotic societies, and political organizations (Republican, Democratic, and some sections of the Socialist parties) worked between 1919 and 1924 to achieve the exclusion of Japanese immigration.<sup>6</sup>

In 1924 the Immigration Act was passed, forbidding aliens ineligible for citizenship from being admitted to the U.S. Issei (the Japanese immigrants) were not allowed to become naturalized citizens of the U.S. until 1952 (under the McCarran-Walter Immigration and Naturalization Act). After their objectives were won, the anti-Japanese coalition rapidly disintegrated.

Racist agitation was reactivated with the threat posed to American capitalism by Japan's imperialist aggressions and annexations in the Far East after 1931.

### Ideal targets

The Japanese were ideal targets. Although they numbered 126,948 and were less than 1/10 of one percent of the total U.S. population in 1940, they were concentrated in the three West Coast states: California, Oregon, and Washington. They were even clustered within California, more than one-third of

### For further reading

#### The Socialist Workers Party in World War II

by James P. Cannon

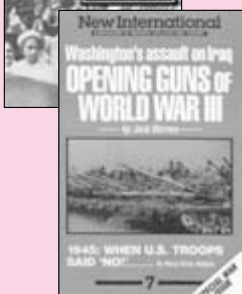
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them in Los Angeles where they were 6 percent of the population.<sup>7</sup> Although they were highly visible, they were kept isolated from the rest of the population in ghettos—"Little Tokyos."

Their geographical concentration was matched by occupational concentration. By 1940 nearly half of the Japanese work force on the West Coast was employed in agriculture, primarily the production of vegetables, fruits, and greenhouse products. In 1940 there were 5,135 Japanese-operated farms in California; most of these farms were small, averaging 42 acres compared to 231 acres for the average West Coast farm. However, due to the restrictions imposed by the Alien Land Bill, only a small percentage (25 percent) actually owned their farms.

Because of the intensive character of Japanese agriculture, Japanese production was a substantial percentage of total production. The Japanese controlled 42 percent of the commercial truck crops in California, valued at \$35,000,000.<sup>8</sup> They held a virtual monopoly in California in 1940 of such crops as snap beans, celery, peppers, and strawberries, and produced at least half of such crops as cauliflower, cucumber, spinach, tomatoes, and garlic.

Their monopoly on the production of certain truck crops was strengthened by their control of wholesale and retail outlets for Japanese produce. The Japanese, however, were limited to specialty produce crops for local West Coast markets; they were successfully excluded from the most profitable aspect of the produce industry, the shipment of California produce to out-of-state markets.<sup>9</sup> They were thus effectively isolated in a marginal, largely noncompetitive niche in the economy.

#### Attack on Pearl Harbor

The attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, set in motion the forces that led to the evacuation of Issei and Nisei (their American-born children) to concentration camps. The FBI moved into action immediately, arresting 2,192 Issei within a few days.<sup>10</sup> Under the alien enemy control program, around 12.5 percent of the Issei in the U.S. were arrested, virtually the entire leadership of church and community organizations. This meant that at least one out of five Issei males was arrested and not released until evacuation procedures had begun.

As early as December 10, 1941, three army officers, panicked by a rumor, drew up a plan overnight (literally) for the immediate evacuation of all Japanese from the San Francisco Bay Area. On the same night there was a meeting between FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover and a key member of Roosevelt's cabinet to discuss a demand for seizure of businesses owned by Issei and Nisei. And at a meeting of law enforcement officers on February 2, 1942, California State Attorney General Earl Warren requested the preparation of maps showing all land owned, occupied, and controlled by people of Japanese descent.<sup>11</sup>

#### Roosevelt's 'New Deal' for Japanese

On February 19, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed his version of the New Deal for Japanese—Executive Order 9066 which authorized the Secretary of War or designated representatives to establish military areas and exclude "any or all persons" from them. On March 2, General John L. DeWitt, commanding general of the Western Defense Command, issued Public Proclamation No. 1, designating portions of the Western states as Military Area No. 1, excluding all persons of Japanese ancestry. On March 18, the War Relocation Authority (WRA) was established to carry out evacuation. Beginning on March 22, the army handled the first phase of evacuation to temporary assembly centers constructed hastily on race tracks and fair grounds.

By August 7, the first phase of evacuation was completed; 112,000 people had been arrested, uprooted from their homes and communities, and moved from the West Coast. By November 3, 1942, the prisoners were transferred from the temporary assembly centers to ten permanent "relocation centers" at Manzanar and Tule Lake in California, Poston and Gila River in Arizona, Minidoka in Idaho, Heart Mountain in Wyoming, Granada in Colorado, Topaz in Utah, and Rohwer and Jerome in Arkansas.

The many excuses given for this mass arrest and imprisonment without trial all accused the victim of being the criminal. One reason given to justify internment was military necessity—the danger of sabotage and espionage by the Japanese and the need to remove this potential fifth column from the "war zone." There was some fear on the West Coast of a Japanese attack, since the Japanese were winning in the Pacific. There was never any real danger of a Japanese invasion of the West Coast.

No cases of sabotage or espionage were ever found among the people of Japanese descent living in the U.S. However, this lack of sabotage and espionage was seen as proof of their sneaky disloyalty. As liberal California Attorney General Earl Warren, who later headed the Supreme Court, testified in February 1942: "I am afraid many of our people in other parts of the country are of the opinion that because we have had no sabotage and no fifth column activities in this State since the beginning of the war, that means that none have been planned for us. But I take the view that this is the most ominous sign of our whole situation.... I believe that we are just being lulled into a false sense of security and that the only reason we haven't had disaster in California is because it has been timed for a different date, and that when that time comes if we don't do something about it, it is going to mean disaster both to California and to our nation."

### "The Communist Party's support for internment was an integral part of its policy of subordinating all struggles to the U.S. war effort in compliance with Stalin's wartime alliance with American imperialism."

#### 'They all look alike'

Another argument for mass internment was based on the unsubtle racism of being unable to distinguish loyal from disloyal Japanese (they all look alike). In fact, it was argued, all Japanese are inherently loyal only to Japan.

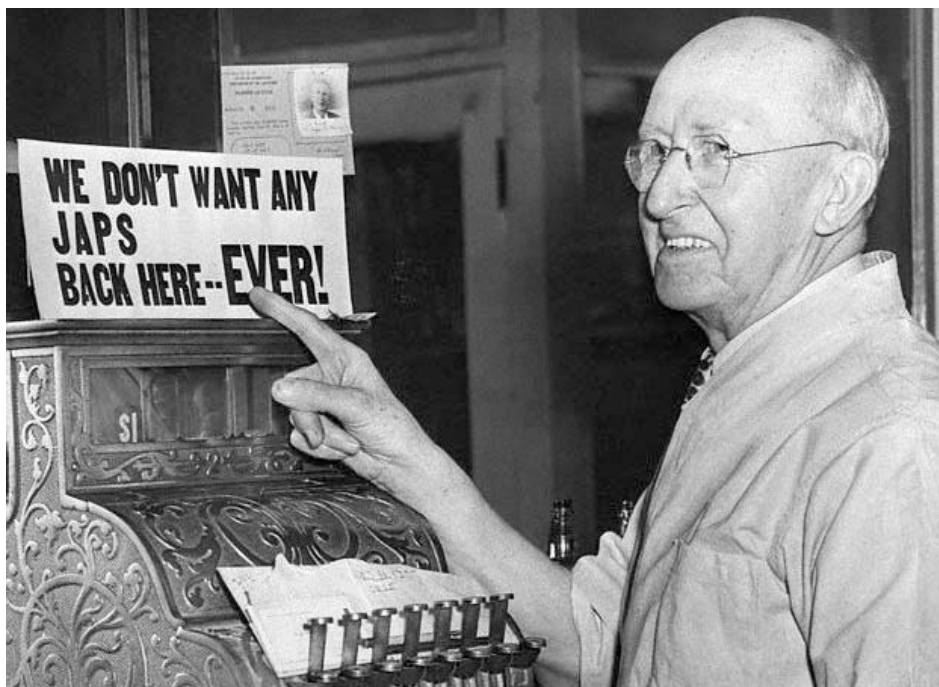
General John L. DeWitt (1943): "A Jap's a Jap. They are a dangerous element.... There is no way to determine their loyalty.... It makes no difference whether he is an American citizen, theoretically he is still Japanese, and you can't change him...by giving him a piece of paper..."

Congressman John Rankin, Mississippi (1942): "This is a race war.... The white man's civilization has come into conflict with Japanese barbarism.... One of them must be destroyed.... I say it is of vital importance that we get rid of every Japanese whether in Hawaii or on the mainland. They violate every sacred promise, every canon of honor and decency.... Damn them! Let's get rid of them now!"

In the process of arguing for evacuation, some groups also reassured the public that evacuation of the Japanese would not be detrimental to the West Coast economy. Although many other groups such as the American Legion and the Native Sons and Daughters of the Golden West were involved, the most active agitators for removal of the Japanese were the growers' organizations—the Western Growers Protective Association, the California Farm Bureau Federation, and the Grower-Shipper Vegetable Association—which would obviously gain from the elimination of Japanese competition.

#### Liberals backed Roosevelt policy

Few organizations and individuals withstood the pressures of this wartime jingoism. The New Deal liberal politicians, from President Roosevelt to state and city officials, aligned with traditionally right-wing forces in sanctioning, if not demanding, the evacuation of all Japanese. California Governor



A barber in Kent, Washington, points proudly to a racist sign in his shop March 1944, after the government had rounded up Japanese-Americans. The Communist Party USA joined the racist campaign, firing an office worker of Japanese descent from its *People's World* newspaper and suspending Japanese-Americans from membership.

Culbert Olson, San Francisco Mayor Angelo J. Rossi, Los Angeles Mayor Fletcher Bowron, Oregon Governor Charles Sprague, Washington Governor Arthur B. Langlie, Washington Attorney General Smith Troy, and California Attorney General Earl Warren were among those politicians advocating evacuation. Only a few of these liberals like Elmer Rice and Archibald MacLeish made feeble efforts to stop or inhibit evacuation in early 1942.<sup>12</sup>

Newspaper columnists who were usually considered liberal New Dealers also joined in the clamor for evacuation. Influential Walter Lippmann wrote a nationally syndicated article on "The Fifth Column on the Coast," published February 12, 1942: "The Pacific Coast is in imminent danger of a combined attack from within and from without.... Since the outbreak of the Japanese war there has been no important sabotage on the Pacific Coast.... It is a sign that the blow is well organized and that it is held back until it can be struck with maximum effect."

Among the intellectuals and union leaders, only a few spoke out for the constitutional rights of the Japanese. The intellectuals who sent letters of protest included John Dewey, Reinhold Niebuhr, Carey McWilliams, Galen Fisher (advisor to the Institute of Pacific Relations), and Robert Gordon Sproul (president of the University of California and founder of the Fair Play for Citizens and Aliens of Japanese Ancestry). Some religious leaders and organizations, mainly the American Friends Service Committee, protested the decision for evacuation and worked with evacuees to improve their conditions in the camps.

Interestingly, the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union was the only union to oppose evacuation. Louis Goldblatt, secretary of the California State CIO, condemned the proposed evacuation as racist and undemocratic. But then he commended the Japanese for cooperating with evacuation, thereby contributing to the war effort!

The National Board of the American Civil Liberties Union approved the president's Executive Order 9066, but attacked most of the army directives issued under its authority. The fact that Roosevelt issued the order significantly altered the protest. These civil libertarians saw Roosevelt as a champion of the underdog and felt that he must have been justified in ordering the evacuation.

The liberals were not the only ones to acquiesce to the mass incar-

ceration of the Japanese.

#### CPUSA aided internment

In fact, one supposedly revolutionary organization, the Communist Party, not only failed to protest the concentration camps but actually supported the internment of Japanese-Americans. The *People's World*, the West Coast daily newspaper reflecting the views of the CP, at first called restrictions upon the liberty of Japanese "unfortunate, but vital." By late February, 1942, the paper hailed General DeWitt's plans as "a sensible program."

As one CP member noted in 1972: "Immediately after Pearl Harbor, the *People's World* dismissed its Nisei (U.S.-born Japanese) woman office worker (thus becoming the first to lose her job because of her ancestry) and the Party suspended all Nisei from membership saying that 'the Party was the best place for any Japanese fifth columnist to hide and we don't want to take any chances....'"<sup>13</sup>

The CP urged its former members to go peacefully and quietly into the concentration camps as their contribution to the war effort. One of the Communist-dominated Nisei organizations, the Japanese-American Committee for Democracy, ironically hailed evacuation as a contribution to victory for the Allies. This support for the internment was an integral part of the CP's policy of subordinating all struggles to the U.S. war effort in compliance with Stalin's wartime alliance with American imperialism.

The Socialist Workers Party's record is a sharp contrast to that of the Communist Party. The *Militant*, the newspaper expressing the views of the SWP, attacked Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066 as "an indiscriminate and brutal witch-hunt...having the character of a racial pogrom."<sup>14</sup> It criticized the evacuation as a violation of the rights of Japanese-Americans, "driving them from their homes, terrorizing them, and in actuality

Continued on Page 10

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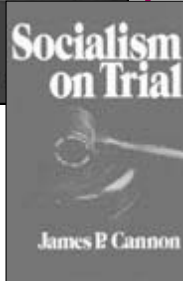
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# ‘Not an American, but victim of Americanism’

Below is an excerpt from *Malcolm X Talks to Young People*, one of Pathfinder’s Books of the Month for April. It is a collection of speeches Malcolm gave to young audiences in Africa, Europe, and the United States. The excerpt below is from a talk he gave May 13, 1964, at the University of Ghana. It was the largest meeting Malcolm addressed during his three-week trip to Africa. Copyright © 1965 by Betty Shabazz and Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.

## BOOKS OF THE MONTH

BY MALCOLM X

I intend for my talk to be very informal, because our position in America is an informal position, [Laughter] and I find that it is very difficult to use formal terms to describe a very informal position. No condition of any people on earth is more deplorable than the condition, or plight, of the twenty-two million Black people in America. And our condition is so deplorable because we are in a country that professes to be a democracy and professes to be striving to give justice and freedom and equality to everyone who is born under its constitution. If we were born in South Africa or in Angola or some part of this earth where they don’t profess to be for freedom, that would be another thing; but when we are born in a country that stands up and represents itself as the leader of the Free World, and you still have to beg and crawl just to get a chance to drink a cup of coffee, then the condition is very deplorable indeed.

So tonight, so that you will understand me and why I speak as I do, it should proba-



Alice Windom

**Malcolm X speaking at the Great Hall of the University of Ghana May 13, 1964. He approached the fight for Black freedom in the United States as a component of the revolutionary struggles in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.**

bly be pointed out at the outset that I am not a politician. I don’t know anything about politics. I’m from America but I’m not an American. I didn’t go there of my own free choice. [Applause] If I were an American there would be no problem, there’d be no need for legislation or civil rights or anything else. So I just try to face the fact as it actually is and come to this meeting as one of the victims of America, one of the victims of Americanism, one of the victims of democracy, one of the victims of a very hypocritical system that is going all over this earth today representing itself as being qualified to tell other people how to run their country when they can’t get the dirty things that are going on in their own country straightened out. [Applause]

So if someone else from America comes to you to speak, they’re probably speaking as Americans, and they speak as people who see America through the eyes of an American. And usually those types of persons refer to America, or that which exists in America, as the American Dream. But for the twenty million of us in America who are of African descent, it is not an American dream; it’s an American nightmare. [Laughter]

I don’t feel that I am a visitor in Ghana or in any part of Africa. I feel that I am at home. I’ve been away for four hundred

years, [Laughter] but not of my own volition, not of my own will. Our people didn’t go to America on the *Queen Mary*, we didn’t go by Pan American, and we didn’t go to America on the *Mayflower*. We went in slave ships, we went in chains. We weren’t immigrants to America, we were cargo for purposes of a system that was bent upon making a profit. So this is the category or level of which I speak. I may not speak it in the language many of you would use, but I think you will understand the meaning of my terms.

When I was in Ibadan [in Nigeria] at the University of Ibadan last Friday night, the students there gave me a new name, which I go for—meaning I like it. [Laughter] “Omowale,” which they say means in Yoruba—if I am pronouncing that correctly, and if I am not pronouncing it correctly it’s because I haven’t had a chance to pronounce it for four hundred years [Laughter]—which means in that dialect, “The child has returned.” It was an honor for me to be referred to as a child who had sense enough to return to the land of his forefathers—to his fatherland and to his motherland. Not sent back here by the State Department, [Laughter] but come back here of my own free will.... [Applause]

Now I am not here to condemn America, I am not here to make America look bad,

but I am here to tell you the truth about the situation that Black people in America find themselves confronted with. And if truth condemns America, then she stands condemned. [Applause]

This is the most beautiful continent that I’ve ever seen; it’s the richest continent I’ve ever seen, and strange as it may seem, I find many white Americans here smiling in the faces of our African brothers like they have been loving them all of the time. [Laughter and applause] The fact is, these same whites who in America spit in our faces, the same whites who in America club us brutally, the same whites who in America sic their dogs upon us, just because we want to be free human beings, the same whites who turn their water hoses upon our women and our babies because we want to integrate with them, are over here in Africa smiling in your face trying to integrate with you. [Laughter]

I had to write a letter back home yesterday and tell some of my friends that if American Negroes want integration, they should come to Africa, because more white people over here—white Americans, that is—look like they are for integration than there is in the entire American country. [Laughter] But actually what it is, they want to integrate with the wealth that they know is here—the untapped natural resources which exceed the wealth of any continent on this earth today.

When I was coming from Lagos to Accra Sunday, I was riding on an airplane with a white man who represented some of the interests, you know, that are interested in Africa. And he admitted—at least it was his impression—that our people in Africa didn’t know how to measure wealth, that they worship wealth in terms of gold and silver, not in terms of the natural resources that are in the earth, and that as long as the Americans or other imperialists or twentieth-century colonialists could continue to make the Africans measure wealth in terms of gold and silver, they never would have an opportunity to really measure the value of the wealth that is in the soil, and would continue to think that it is *they* who need the Western powers instead of thinking that it is the Western powers who need the people and the continent that is known as Africa. The thing is, I hope I don’t mess up anybody’s politics or anybody’s plots or plans or schemes, but then I think that it can be well proved and backed up.

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**World politics (I)**—The United Nations reports that 1.1 billion people lack safe water and 2.2 billion have no access to sanitation.



Harry Ring

**World politics (II)**—“The longer hours, faster pace and insecurity typical of many new jobs is taking a toll on workers’ hearts....

Studies in Europe, Japan and the United States have linked increases in cardiovascular risks and disease to a global push for greater productivity. Researchers say the damage is cumulative.”—News item.

**Grim need for solidarity**—Five hundred enraged workers in a garment plant in Bahrain rioted March 26 for several hours after a co-worker committed suicide. The company said Madhu Babu, 28, had been put in an “isolation” room because he had chicken pox. Workers called it a “torture room” where they were sent as punishment for failing to meet production goals. There Babu hung himself.

The plant, MRS Fashions, makes trousers for JC Penney. The work force is mainly from India, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh. Babu was from India. Workers said they had a 12-hour day and work conditions were extremely harsh. They charged there had been two previous suicides. The plant manager told the English-language Arab News, “We are one of the model factories here in Bahrain.”

**Tough situation, eh boss?**—The Pentagon reports that despite the lure of increased recruitment bonuses, the number of Black males signing up has dropped by a third over the past five years. Fe-

male Black enlistments dropped by 13 percent and continues to drop this year. The study concludes: “More African Americans identify having to fight for a cause they don’t support.”

**Take that!**—Harry Stonecipher, former top dog at Boeing aircraft, was booted out for having an affair with a female company executive. Mercifully, he departed with \$2.1 million to top off his \$1.4 million wages for last year. He was given \$375,000 for the first quarter of this year; with permission, use of the company plane; and personal financial counseling. Meanwhile, the exec allegedly involved with

Stonecipher is still under investigation.

**Just take off on week days**—With a chain of 55 libraries, Philadelphia has left only 10 open on Saturdays, down from 32 last spring.

**Cultural note**—Over the years, the New York City library system has had its share of budget cuts. But somehow the main library found the means to create a major web site. It has posted a collection of 250,00 images, including maps, Civil War photos, illuminated medieval manuscripts, and a promise of more archives to come.

# ‘We don’t want a gov’t that acts as Syria’s doormen’

Printed below is the first of two parts of a reporter’s notebook on the recent mobilizations in Lebanon. The first installment is based on first-hand accounts from the massive March 14 rally in Beirut demanding withdrawal of Syrian troops and interviews at the protest camp at Martyrs’ Square.

BY GEORGES MEHRABIAN

BEIRUT, Lebanon—More than 800,000 people turned out March 14 for a rally demanding the withdrawal of Syrian troops and internal security forces from Lebanon. This marked the one-month anniversary of the assassination of former prime minister Rafik Hariri. The rally was held at Martyrs’ Square, the central front line during the

## REPORTER’S NOTEBOOK

1975–1990 civil war in Lebanon.

The rally was called for 3:00 p.m. As early as 10:00 a.m. youth were gathering in the Arab University neighborhood in predominantly Muslim West Beirut. Music was blaring in the streets as people gathered at street corners to form contingents.

“I want the Syrian forces to withdraw,” said Hussein, a teacher in Beirut who is from a Shiite village. “But I also don’t want the French and American intervention.”

Contingents of Druze villagers wore their traditional clothes. Some carried portraits of Kamal Joumlatt, former leader of the Progressive Socialist Party. His assassination in 1977 is suspected to have been at the hands of Syrian forces because of his opposition to their intervention in Lebanon. A sticker on the picture said, “The truth!”

“Truth, freedom, independence!” was the most popular chant as tens of thousands marched under the pedestrian overpass where this reporter was standing.

At Martyrs’ Square the vast expanse had been filled to capacity and all the adjoining streets and squares were overflowing. Very few banners were carried but the area was a vast sea of red and white Lebanese flags. A contingent of 10 middle school girls was chanting, “We don’t want a parliament that acts as Syria’s doormen! We want national unity!” When I asked what they meant by national unity, they answered, “Well, national union means Muslims and Christians are together. And, we are together in not wanting a republic under the Syrian boot.”

From the mainly Christian East Beirut side of town, a similar sea of people was pouring into the square carrying Lebanese flags. “Truth, freedom, national unity!” chanted one contingent after another. Some marchers also made chauvinist anti-Syrian jokes. Hundreds of thousands of Syrian migrant workers labor in Lebanon as a superexploited section of the working class.

“I am very excited by this massive outpouring of people today. People from all sectors, from all religions are here united with a common goal,” said Georges Haddad, a young lawyer from Christian East Beirut. Asked about the role of the French and U.S. governments, Haddad said, “There are many that feel that they are a big help. But these hands have been extended to us before only to have created problems for us later.”

A few contingents chanted, “France, please come in!” Paris is the former co-

lonial master over Lebanon and has been pushing for the implementation of UN Resolution 1559, which calls for the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon.

“I was in the northern highway coming into the square. Traffic is backed up for maybe 10 kilometers as people are trying to get to the demonstration. Most people are carrying signs and chanting ‘Truth, freedom, national unity!’” explained Mirna, a young oil technician. “However some are carrying photos of Phalangist militia leader Bashir Gemayel and singing Phalangist songs.” During the time of the civil war the Phalange was a fascist-like militia based among the privileged Maronite Christian minority. During the civil war they carried out brutal assaults against the revolutionary nationalist forces fighting for equal representation for Muslims in the government, as well as against Palestinians living in Lebanon.



An impromptu vigil is being held at Martyrs’ Square, where Hariri is buried, Which I visited March 12. About 2,000 people passed by in an hour. Outside the area set aside for the visitation of Hariri’s grave, music is blasting and many youth are gathered. Here about 40 tents have been set up around the statue dedicated to the martyrs executed by Ottoman forces during the Arab struggle against the Ottoman Empire. It is 11:30 p.m. and about 500 young people are there.

Waleed, a student at Orthodox University of Balamand in northern Lebanon, explains that each tent is set up by a different organization. The Progressive Socialist Party, the Future Movement (Hariri’s political organization), the Lebanese Forces and the Aounists, the Democratic Left (a faction that split from the Lebanese Communist Party), and so on all have tents—rightists and leftists, Muslims and Christians, all sorts of people. A steering committee that includes representatives of the main opposition organizations runs the camp.

Waleed described the careful efforts of the organizers to keep banners with anti-imperialist and constitutional slogans out of the marches and protest camp. “I belong to a group of about 30 students on my campus. We are a kind of leftist union,” he said. “We decided to also set up a tent. We were at first welcomed by the steering committee. But, when they found out that we were going to have a banner with two demands, ‘For Syrian withdrawal and no to UN Resolution 1559,’ then they prevented us, saying we had to stick to the unified demands of the opposition. I think that in such a mass movement all opinions should be heard and reflected. We decided not to set up the tent under those conditions.”

Palestinian filmmaker Mai Masri provided another example. “I have a colleague that put out a call to other colleagues and friends to go down to Martyrs’ Square together and show their support to the young people camped there,” said Masri. “They discussed what to raise and agreed on a banner that said ‘For a democratic secular Lebanon!’ About 10 of them showed up and marched towards the tent city. They were told in no uncertain terms that the banner had to come down because the time for such slogans was not now.” The slogan harkens back to the revolutionary nationalist struggles in Lebanon against the system through which the privileged Maronite Christian minority has ruled. At the center of the Lebanese civil war were the demands for



Militant/Georges Mehrabian

One section of the crowd at March 14 rally of 800,000 in Beirut calling for the withdrawal of Syrian troops from Lebanon.

equal political representation for Muslims, and an end to the special privileges granted the Christian minority.

The March 14 *Daily Star*, a Beirut daily, reports that demonstrations by parents of disappeared and prisoners continue. They are demanding the release of their children from Syrian jails or an accounting of those who had disappeared. The report quotes Ghazi Aad from the group of families as saying the leadership of the opposition had told them the issue could not be raised in order to maintain the focus on troop withdrawal.

What is going on as a result of the assassination and the resulting mass protests is an opening up of minds. People want to

know what has happened to them in the past, in the civil war; they are searching for answers. “I want to give you an example that surprised me and put me on to what is going on,” said Lebanese film director Jean Chamoun. “A couple of days ago I was invited to show my motion picture in the southern city of Tyre. The movie deals with an aspect of the civil war. It was full of young people. After the film these youth were asking me to please tell them about the war, what were the issues, what happened, what was its history? You must realize that the rulers have imposed a collective amnesia on this question. There is not even a mention in school books.”

## — 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —



April 18, 1980

SAN JOSE—One thousand Chicanas and Latinas from throughout the United States and Mexico attended the National Hispanic Feminist Conference held here March 28–31.

Support for the May 10 march and rally in Chicago for the Equal Rights Amendment, called by the National Organization for Women, was a major theme of the proceedings.

Eleanor Smeal, president of NOW, gave greetings to the conference and urged everyone to come to Chicago on May 10. Several ERA workshops featured NOW leaders such as Jane Wells-Schooley, vice-president, and other panelists who spoke on ERA and the Chicago action.

A resolution in support of ERA ratification was overwhelmingly passed, and the ERA appeared in Spanish and English in the front of the conference brochure.

Equally significant was the conference vote to go on record in opposition to the draft for both women and men.

The participants voiced support to the very struggles that the U.S. government wants to use young men and women as troops to crush. Loud applause greeted passage of a resolution calling for a halt to all U.S. military aid to the Salvadoran junta and for granting aid to Nicaragua with no strings attached.



April 18, 1955

On April 11 the U.S. Supreme Court finally began to hear arguments on how and when its school desegregation ruling of almost a year ago should be put into effect. Lawyers for Negro children and their parents urged the court to make a ruling that would start desegregation rolling in the South at the beginning of next year’s school term or at the latest the school year after next.

Lawyers for the border states—those Southern states which were not boycotting the hearings—presented a line of argument which would make the Supreme Court’s May 17, 1954 ruling a dead letter as far as compulsory desegregation was concerned.

The announced purpose of these hearings—the implementation installment of the Court’s decision—was to decide ways, means and time limits of enforcing the earlier decision that school segregation was unconstitutional. Yet the attorneys-general and legal representatives of the Jim Crow school states didn’t argue about how or when desegregation should begin but tried to prove that desegregation was impractical, unhealthy, undesirable, impossible and dangerous.

EDITORIAL

Job safety: a union question

The deadly explosion at the British Petroleum refinery in Texas City, Texas, that killed 15 workers and injured 100 underscores what’s at stake in the battle for safe job conditions.

In 2003 alone—the last year for which federal statistics are available—more than 5,500 workers died from injuries on the job in the United States. More than 4.3 million were injured or made sick at work—and many more such injuries and illnesses go unreported. This is the brutal reality that workers face in oil refineries, packinghouses, mines, construction sites, and other industries, as well as in the fields.

Bosses cover up their responsibility for unsafe working conditions, usually blaming workers themselves for “accidents.” But disasters like the Texas City explosion are *not accidents*. They are the inevitable result of cold-blooded calculations by employers.

It’s the bosses’ cutthroat drive to boost their profits that is responsible for the increasingly unsafe conditions in the workplace. Faced with inexorable competition for market share as profit rates continue to decline, the owners of capital are forced to increase the rate of exploitation. That translates into inhuman speedup, longer hours, cutting corners on safety equipment, training, and equipment maintenance—and a rising toll in workers’ lives and limbs. For example, the managers of the Texas refinery had not shut that part of the plant down for maintenance in about two years.

The BP bosses have hired many workers through contractors, both to pay them less and especially to foster divisions among the workforce and undercut

solidarity. They try to pit “company” and “contract” workers against each other, while laughing all the way to the bank.

In the U.S. coal industry, bosses have been cranking up production to record levels. In western coal especially, 12-hour shifts and seven-day weeks are common, and keeping the mines nonunion is key to the employers’ profit scheme. This will inevitably lead to more methane gas explosions, roof falls, and other incidents where miners’ lives are sacrificed on the altar of coal profits.

At the Co-Op mine in central Utah, miners have taken action to change those conditions by fighting for recognition of their union, the United Mine Workers of America. In so doing they have begun the organization of the western coalfields.

Workers can’t rely on the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) or other government agencies to protect them. The capitalist government and its agencies serve the interests of the bosses, not working people. Any safety standards or their enforcement by OSHA or other such boards, however minimal, are the result of one thing alone: struggle by working people.

The only road to gain more control over safety and health conditions is to fight to organize unions and use union power, so that working people can bring our collective strength to bear. That means fighting in defense of all workers—whether full-time, temporary, or contracted, with or without documents. Millions can then see that job safety is a union question.

Wolfowitz president of World Bank

Continued from front page

U.S. president George Bush nominated the defense department official for the post.

“To many on the left and throughout the media, Wolfowitz is an evil genius, a darker force even than Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, who led us into a disastrous war in Iraq,” the editorial said sarcastically.

“With hard-liner John Bolton posted at the U.N. and Wolfowitz at the World Bank, the Bush Doctrine stands astride the world,” it concluded.

In January, barely two months before his nomination, Wolfowitz was dispatched to Indonesia. He toured the area for three days after the Pentagon had deployed about 16,000 troops—as well as an aircraft carrier, a Marine amphibious group, and 100 aircraft—to transport aid to the victims of the Indian Ocean tsunami.

This was part of a political operation by Washington to present the imperialist military forces as benevolent and humanitarian. “Nothing is more gratifying than being able to help people in need—as I experienced when I witnessed the tsunami relief operations in Indonesia and Sri Lanka,” Wolfowitz told the *Washington Post* at the time.

The operation, and the defense official’s tour, were also aimed at reestablishing or strengthening operational ties between the U.S. military and local armies, especially Indonesia’s armed forces; testing equipment and rapid response deployments in the field; and carrying out intelligence operations.

Wolfowitz was the right man for the job. He had served as the U.S. ambassador to Indonesia under the Reagan administration, when Washington was backing the Suharto dictatorship there, and as secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific Affairs prior to that. By any measure, the tsunami relief operations were a success for Washington. This was reflected, in part, in the warm welcome Jakarta extended to Wolfowitz’s appointment at the helm of the World Bank. “As a former ambassador to Indonesia, he has a lot of friends here, and knows the country well,” Yuri Thamrin, a spokesman for Indonesia’s foreign ministry, told the Antara news agency April 1. “We hope he will remain our friend.”

To appease concerns that he will use his new post to push for deeper unilateral actions by Washington, Wolfowitz said the words the World Bank’s 24 directors wanted to hear. According to the April 1 *New York Times*, Wolfowitz said “he respected the multilateral nature of the institution and its overall goal of eradicating world poverty through loans, aid and advice.”

His nomination was a shoo-in. None of the governments in what Rumsfeld has described as “Old Europe,” including Paris and Berlin, which have clashed with Washington over competing investment interests in the Middle East and elsewhere, opposed the nomination or proposed another candidate.

As an editorial in the March 17 *Wall Street Journal* put it, however, there is little indication that the new man at the top of the World Bank will mean less antagonism between Washington and its rivals in Europe. “The World Bank is a dysfunctional bureaucracy that requires deep reform,” the editorial said. “If anyone can stand up to the Robert Mugabes of the world,” the *Journal* editors concluded, referring to the president of Zimbabwe, “it must be the man who stood up to Saddam Hussein.” Washington and its allies have been

waging a campaign to force Mugabe to step down.

Wolfowitz has spoken out recently for imposing what the U.S. rulers describe as “democracy” in the Middle East. He has argued that “peace would come to the Middle East after, not before, Arabs could enjoy self-governance,” said the March 17 *Investor’s Business Daily* editorial. He has advocated “freedom,” not the “balance of power,” and “liberation,” not “stabilization,” like other top Bush administration officials. These terms register not just a shift in watchwords but a historic shift in world political strategy under the second Bush administration, compared to Clinton and his predecessors.

The “Bush doctrine” is the administration’s post-9/11 transformation in combat of the U.S. armed forces, which are being reorganized into smaller, more lethal and mobile brigades capable of being deployed quickly any place around the world where Washington’s domination is threatened. These changes register the reversal of what broad layers in the U.S. ruling class in both imperialist parties—the Democrats and Republicans—now agree was 25 years of politically and militarily inadequate responses to “terrorist” attacks on U.S. targets and belated action against states deemed capable of developing weapons and delivery systems endangering Washington’s imperial interests.

As he did in the Department of Defense, Wolfowitz can be expected to accelerate similar changes from his new position atop the World Bank.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

IOWA  
Des Moines

**Capitalism’s Long Hot Winter Has Begun—The Working Class Road to Power.** Sat. April 9. Dinner 6:30 p.m, program 7:30 p.m. Donation \$5 dinner, \$5 program. 3707 Douglas Ave. (515) 255-1707.

NEW YORK  
Manhattan

**The Killing of Amadou Diallo by N.Y. Cops Was a Crime: Response to Democratic and Republican Candidates for Mayor.** Speakers include: Martin Koppel, SWP candidate for New York mayor. Fri. April 14. Dinner 7 p.m., program 8 p.m. Donation \$5 dinner, \$5 program. 307 W. 36th St. 10 fl. (north elevators) (212) 629-6649.

PENNSYLVANIA  
Pittsburgh

**How Terri Schiavo Case Has Been Used to Undermine the Right to Privacy and Abortion Rights.** Speaker: Cindy Jaquith, Socialist Workers Party. Fri. April 15, 7:30p.m. Donation: \$4. 5907 Penn Ave. (412) 365-1090.

NEW ZEALAND  
Auckland

**Catholic Church’s Grip Weakens.** Fri. April 15, 7 p.m. Donation: \$3. 7 Mason Ave. (upstairs, above laundromat) (09) 276-8885.

Japanese-Americans

Continued from Page 7

encouraging the racial discrimination that is being fanned on the West Coast.”

The *Militant* also printed articles analyzing the basic reason behind the “campaign of racial terrorism” on the West Coast: the greed of the corporate agriculturalists for the land developed by the Japanese-Americans.

“And so the story of the Japanese-American evacuations stands today—a repressive measure, based purely on racial discrimination and motivated chiefly by the desire of Big Business for additional profits, which is presented as a necessary part of the ‘war for democracy.’”<sup>15</sup>

Lack of leadership among Japanese

Among the Japanese themselves, there was a lack of leadership, since virtually the entire Issei leadership had been arrested by the FBI. The Nisei by default had to provide leadership; their most important political organization was the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL).

Because of its cooperation with government agencies in the investigation and apprehension of suspected “subversives,” the JACL was soon recognized by the government as the official liaison group with the Japanese community. A cleavage with the parent generation of Issei resulted; the JACL members became known as inu (informers, literally “dogs”) who betrayed their community. They cooperated with the army and other federal government branches to “turn the tragedy of evacuation into a display of loyalty.”

“Therefore, with no one to turn to, with their structures and institutions dismantled, with little political or economic power, with cultural norms and values emphasizing conformity and non-conflictual behavior, with a lack of feasible alternatives and facing the awesome might and power of the United States government, the Japanese marched into camp. Could they really have done otherwise?”<sup>16</sup>

Life in the camps and dissent

The American concentration camps were not brutal like Auschwitz or Buchenwald; there were no torture chambers, gas ovens, or firing squads. They were essentially prison camps, much more like the traditional Indian reservations. In fact, two of the ten centers were actually located on Native American reservation lands in Arizona. Each of the ten camps was relatively isolated on land where no one else chose to live. Physically, the camps were quite similar in terms of the ruggedness and barrenness of the terrain and the confinement of the inmates within a small area enclosed by barbed wire and guarded by military police. The evacuees themselves maintained the upkeep of the camps under the supervision of white personnel. They received token compensation for their prison labor.

Although the evacuees initially cooperated with the authorities with unprotesting acceptance, once they were in the camps they were in conflict constantly with each other and the administration. There were no attempts to escape or any violent resistance, and there was rarely any mass, sustained civil disobedience.

Most of the evacuees were resigned to their fate, but resistance, both active and passive, did occur more frequently and significantly than is generally known. Protest rallies, demonstrations, work stoppages, and even general strikes of evacuees took place at all camps around the issues of living conditions, especially food and housing, the availability of employment, wages, and working conditions. Due to lack of leadership, most of this resistance was not politically directed.

The policy of cooperation with the authorities was led by the JACL. Much of the effective opposition to this policy was led by the Kibei, American-born Japanese who had been educated or employed in Japan. They were quite militant in organizing the discontent against the policy of collaboration, although many of them organized from the right-wing position of nationalist support to imperialist Japan.

Polarization around loyalty oath

Dissension in the camps became polarized around the loyalty oath, which all evacuees over the age of seventeen were asked to sign, beginning on February 10, 1943. The most serious controversy arose over questions 27 and 28:

“No. 27. Are you willing to serve in the armed forces of the United States on combat duty, wherever ordered?”

“No. 28. Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America and faithfully defend the United States from any or all attack by foreign or domestic forces, and forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese emperor, to any other foreign government, power or organization?”

The registration created a crisis at each concentration camp. The JACL leadership urged people to give a “yes-yes” answer and to volunteer for the army if male to prove their questioned loyalty. A substantial group refused to sign in protest against evacuation and incarceration in the camps and as a demand for equal status.

Issei faced a particularly acute dilemma with question 28. By law, they were not allowed to become U.S. citizens because of their race. Yet, they were being asked to voluntarily relinquish their Japanese citizenship and assume stateless status. Eventually the question was rewritten so that many Issei could answer affirmatively: “Will you swear to abide by the laws of the United States and to take no action which would in any way interfere with the war effort of the United States?”

Out of the nearly 78,000 evacuees who were eligible to register, almost 75,000 eventually filled out the questionnaires and the overwhelming majority answered “yes” to question 28. Nearly 6,700 answered “no,” while another 2,000 qualified their answers and were thereby branded “disloyal” by the government. The questionnaires were then used as the basis for separating the “loyal” from the “disloyal” and shipping the disloyal to Tule Lake.

Eventually over a third of the Tule Lake inmates applied for repatriation to Japan. In all the Justice Department approved the applications of 5,589 people—5,461 of whom were from Tule Lake—to give up their citizenship. A total of some 8,000 persons of

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# American concentration camps

Continued from Page 10

Japanese descent left the United States as repatriates or ex-patriates for Japan between V-J Day and mid-1946. In 1959 citizenship was restored to 4,978 of 5,409 renunciants who had requested restoration of their U. S. citizenship on the grounds that renunciation of their citizenship was the result of duress and coercion.

## The most political protests

Not all of the dissent was from the right-wing perspective of Japanese nationalism. The most political protests took place at Heart Mountain, Wyoming, where there had been protests, demonstrations, and organized resistance from the beginning. When Nisei were again made eligible for the draft on January 20, 1944, the Fair Play Committee led by Nisei evacuees at Heart Mountain began advising Nisei of their rights and counseling draft resistance. By the end of March 1944, 54 of the 315 evacuees ordered to report for induction failed to do so.

When the Fair Play Committee began to agitate for a general strike at Heart Mountain, the WRA arrested the key leaders, shipped them off to Tule Lake and then arrested all 54 evacuees who had refused induction. In a series of court cases, the backbone of the resistance was broken. The draft resisters, whose numbers had swelled to 63, were tried in June 1944 in the largest mass trial for draft resistance in U. S. history. They were found guilty by the judge and sentenced to three years in jail; their appeal was denied by the Supreme Court.

The JACL urged Nisei men to volunteer for the segregated 442nd Infantry Combat Team Battalion, which was led by white officers. They justified the segregation on the grounds that “we were inconspicuous scattered throughout the Army.... Individual records wouldn’t prove much. The Army had said that Nisei protestations of loyalty were so much hogwash. We had to have a demonstration in blood.”

However, Nisei evacuees were on the whole unwilling to fight for a country that had incarcerated them without trial solely because of their race. Between January 1944, when the draft was reinstituted for Nisei, and November 1946, about 300 eligible Nisei men refused to report for induction.

Altogether 33,000 Japanese-Americans, more than half from the mainland and the rest from Hawaii, served in the U.S. army during World War II. The most famous formation, the all-Nisei 442nd Combat Team, was the most decorated unit in the U.S. army during World War II.

In the racist tradition of the U.S. army, however, the 442nd was consistently used as the first wave of assault troops whose bodies paved the way for the white troops following them into battle. They suffered 9,486 casualties, 314 percent of the unit’s original strength.

The U.S. military was able to use the 442nd as shock troops by exploiting the Nisei’s desire to prove their loyalty. Washington felt confident that there would be no protest from troops who believed that only their blood could win freedom for the Japanese still interned at home.

## Returning evacuees

In the summer of 1943, in response to the critical labor shortage caused by the war, the WRA began a program encouraging permanent relocation outside the camps. On December 17, 1944, the War Department announced that West Coast exclusion orders against persons of Japanese descent would be terminated as of January 2, 1945. On March 20, 1946, Tule Lake Segregation Center was the last camp to be officially closed.

The relocated evacuees faced little hostility on the East Coast or in the Midwest. However, those who returned to the West Coast had to cope with a campaign that was more vicious, organized, and vigorous than that urging evacuation in 1942. This campaign reached its peak in February, March, and April, 1945, in an attempt to frighten away the first evacuees who returned.

Although there was no mass vigilantism, there were enough incidents of harassment and violence to discourage evacuees from returning to the West Coast. Most occurred only in certain agricultural centers like Hood River, Oregon; and Salinas and Fresno, California. Of a total of seventy incidents

of terrorism and nineteen shootings in California in the first six months of 1945, over 90 percent took place in the Central Valley.

The farm growers’ organizations, like the California State Grange, the Farm Bureau Federation, and the Associated Farmers, were in the leadership of the exclusion movement to protect their interests. In Southern California alone, these produce and floral industries had profited by at least \$26 million in the absence of their rivals.

Trade unionists, as well as farmers, saw the returning evacuees as competition. Japanese workers were still largely excluded from AFL unions. Various CIO unions accepted Japanese as members, such as the International Longshoremen’s and Warehousemen’s Union, which suspended one local to get it to work with Nisei. The leadership of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, though, conducted a violently reactionary campaign against Japanese-Americans.

In spite of this support, the West Coast anti-Japanese campaign of 1945–46 was relatively ineffective; many evacuees returned to the West Coast after a brief stop in the East.

## Theft of land, other resources

The returning evacuees were burdened by enormous financial losses suffered during the hasty evacuation. The Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco conservatively estimated in 1942 that the total loss to evacuees, not including lost interest, wages, income, and appreciation, was \$400 million. In 1948 the government began to adjudicate claims for losses due to evacuation. The payments

## “The ruling class appealed to racist prejudice against the Japanese to justify the war and disguise its true nature.”

were stingy—an average of 10 cents per dollar at 1941 values. The average award per claim in one year was \$40 while it cost the government \$1,500 simply to process a single claim.

In contrast to these token reparations grudgingly given to the interned Japanese-Americans, the government awarded \$213 million, tax-free, to U. S. companies whose property abroad was damaged during World War II—an average of 75 cents on the dollar as compared to the 10 cents given to the Japanese-Americans.

While the federal government gave virtually no compensation to its victims, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the legality of the policy of evacuation and internment. In three cases, *Hirabayashi*, *Korematsu*, and *Endo*, the court majority consistently evaded the central issue of the constitutionality of evacuation and the camps and failed to limit the broad war powers of the federal government in the interest of civil liberties, especially for nonwhites. The court decisions served to uphold the war-powers doctrine that “pressing public necessity” frees the military from constitutional limitations, whether or not the actions taken by the military are in any way connected with the prosecution of the war.

The victims of this sanctioned policy never regained the position they had formerly held in the West Coast economy. By 1951, Japanese-American farm holdings were one-fourth of what they were before the war. Even if they were able to grow produce, little of the crop was handled by Japanese-American wholesale and retail produce dealers.

Discrimination against Japanese still exists. Japanese-Americans in California today have a significantly higher level of educational attainment than the general population (11 percent more Japanese male college graduates than white males), but their income is not commensurate with their education. A Japanese male earns only \$43 for every \$51 earned by a white male.<sup>17</sup>

Although Japanese-Americans are now able to find employment as professionals, they are not able to obtain upward mobility to administrative positions where they

would supervise, hire, and fire white people.

## Why internment?

The mass incarceration of Japanese-Americans was consistent with the history of racist outrages suffered by Asians throughout the history of the United States. In order to understand why the specific policy of evacuation and internment was implemented at the time, it is necessary to put the treatment of the Japanese-Americans in the context of the international situation.

The East Asian theater of World War II was essentially an interimperialist conflict between two capitalist powers, Japan and the United States, for control of markets and natural resources in the Far East. The ruling class appealed to racist prejudice against the Japanese to justify the war and disguise its true nature. The creation of racist hysteria against the “sneaky, dishonest, sly Japanese” was necessary for the ruling class to ensure that the American people would fight.

The racist dismissal of the Japanese as less than fully human by Washington’s war makers was summed up in the unleashing of atomic bombs that totally destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. Although President Truman claimed that it was necessary to make the Japanese surrender, the Japanese government had already requested to surrender unconditionally before the bombs were dropped. In reality, Japanese lives were sacrificed to symbolize to the world the dawning of the “New American Century” and the emergence of the United States as top imperialist power.

It was inevitable that the racist hysteria whipped up against the Japanese would be extended to those persons of Japanese descent living in the United States. The policy of mass evacuation and internment in concentration camps was also part of a wider national policy initiated by the ruling class—a policy of stifling opposition from the labor movement and the struggles of oppressed minorities, under the slogan of wartime unity. The labor unions were told by industrialists and financiers to accept “Equality of Sacrifice.” The employers, through President Roosevelt, instituted a wage freeze and obtained commitments from labor leaders for a “no-strike” pledge for the duration of the war and compulsory arbitration of all labor-management disputes through the War Labor Board. The “war against fascism” was also a war against American labor’s right to strike for unionization, higher wages, and better working conditions.

Black people were told that their struggle for jobs and equal treatment in industry was secondary to the struggle against fascism and was sabotaging the war effort.

## Roosevelt curtailed civil rights

President Roosevelt initiated an entire program curtailing civil rights and liberties in the U.S. He imposed censorship on the media, suspended the right of habeas corpus, and arrested and imprisoned leaders of socialist organizations under the Smith Act. Eighteen leaders of the Socialist Workers Party and of the Minneapolis Teamsters Union were the first to be convicted of “conspiracy to overthrow the government by force and violence” and were sentenced on December 8, 1941.

Racism has traditionally been used by the ruling class to divide the working class and thereby to consolidate its rule. The Japanese residing in the U.S. were, because of their race, singled out as a focus to divert and channel opposition to rising prices and profits, lowering of real wages due to inflation, and the general attack on civil rights and liberties. But their evacuation and internment was only the most blatant and vicious aspect of a general policy of repression excused by the needs of war.

The ruling class and its able representative, Franklin D. Roosevelt, succeeded in winning support for its “war for democracy.” This support was used to divert growing domestic unrest with the continuing depression, a widespread radicalization of the working class, and civil rights agitation among Black people. The ruling class, with the aid of the Communist Party and liberal



Japanese-Americans at Manzanar concentration camp in California prepare to do farm work the morning after their arrival March 26, 1942.

leaders of the mass movements, was able to deflect these movements for social change into patriotic channels.

But the “New American Century” that was supposed to be constructed after World War II never really dawned. American international hegemony and monopoly was challenged by colonial revolts and the anti-capitalist overthrows in the Eastern European countries, China, North Korea, North Vietnam, and Cuba. The American people began to see the legitimacy of these struggles and began to recognize the real role of the U.S. government as a reactionary force preventing national liberation and supporting military dictatorships around the world.

The war in Vietnam especially exposed the reactionary role of the U.S. government and its manipulation of the American people. The ruling class tried to revive racist prejudices against Asians to justify the war. They tried to convince the American people that the National Liberation Front forces were barbarous, fanatic “gooks,” “opium-crazed Viet Cong.” But this racist campaign did not work.

In fact, many Americans began to identify with the Vietnamese and to admire their heroic struggle against the strongest military power in the world. The antiwar movement mobilized increasing numbers of people to demonstrate against a war being fought in the name of “democracy.” Increasingly few people are now gullible enough to believe the patriotic and racist mythology with which the ruling class seeks to disguise its imperialist aspirations.

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# Stockholm refits army for wider interventions

BY ANITA ÖSTLING

STOCKHOLM, Sweden—At the end of last year parliament here adopted guidelines for substantial changes of Sweden's military over the next three years. "The political security and defense work of today demands defense forces used primarily for international deployment on short notice," read the proposal adopted by the legislature. With this restructuring, the Swedish government is trying to follow the pattern of a much more drastic transformation by Washington of the U.S. military, which has been underway for several years.

By 2008 Swedish imperialism aims to have finished the scrapping of the old "defense system against invasion" in favor of a "defense system for deployment."

The conservative daily *Svenska Dagbladet* ran a series of articles, titled "The future of the defense forces," prior to parliament's decision. "Up until the mid-90s," said one of the articles, "Sweden was right between the two alliances, the Warsaw Pact and NATO. We had a strong defense for neutrality and were in reality the superpower of the Nordic area. The fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 and our entry into the EU in 1995 changed the political map. This year [2004] our EU brothers Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland also became members of NATO—and a protection in the east."

The conclusion of the ruling class is that Sweden's borders are no longer threatened and so there is no need for a military organized to repel an invasion. Substantial shifts have taken place over the last decades. In 1975, the Swedish military could mobilize 730,000 troops—active and reserves. By 2007 the figure will be down to 31,500, according to *Svenska Dagbladet*.

The number of military regiments in 1970 was 71. This figure dropped down to 23 in the year 2000. It is projected to fall to 17 by the end of 2007.

Sweden has a conscript army. All males are summoned to a test at the age of 19 and signed up for military service. Women can volunteer, but fewer and fewer actually serve in the military. In 1975 the total number of conscripts was 45,000. By 2003 it was down to 15,000, of whom 450 were women, a 40 percent increase over the previous year. The military's high command has stated it intends to make service more and more voluntary. In 2007, it is estimated that only 10,000 will actually be called into service through conscription.

Six regiments will receive special combat training to serve on international missions. Today Swedish imperialism has 770 soldiers in 16 countries. The largest units are in Kosova under NATO command (320), Liberia under United Nations command (235), Afghanistan under NATO command (89), and Bosnia under EU command (79). The Swedish government is increasing its presence in Afghanistan. Recruitment is going on now for a new airborne division—which includes 20 aircraft—for operations in Afghanistan, from a base in Uzbekistan. The military claims the reason for the new deployment is to monitor upcoming parliamentary elections there.

A new "Nordic Battle Group" is being set up as a "rapid deployment force" for international missions. The government aims to increase its forces trained for such missions to 2,000 troops by 2007. "Sweden assumed the coordinating responsibility in the European Union for one of its rapid deployment forces now being set up," says the Swedish Armed Forces website. "We have undertaken creating by Jan. 1, 2008 a rapid deployment force of 1,500 troops together with Norway, Finland, and Estonia. Sweden will contribute 1,100 soldiers, Finland 200, and Norway 150. Estonia has yet to define its commitment.... If all plans are finalized, the EU will have 12 such deployment forces. Two of them will always be on active duty.... When the first one starts operating in 2008, recruitment will start for



Reuters

**Swedish troops under NATO command face off Serbs who are demonstrating in a village outside Pristina, Kosova, Nov. 11, 2000. Today the Swedish soldiers in Kosova are the country's largest military force abroad, numbering 320.**

the next one, which is to be all Swedish and ready for action by 2011."

Urban Ahlin, the chairperson of parliament's foreign relations commission and a social democrat, has pushed for greater involvement by Sweden in imperialist interventions abroad. "If there is a crisis and the EU must deploy troops, all will be called upon," he told the press last November. "Any nation that doesn't have its hand in the air will be seen as a lightweight on other political questions as well." Last year, Swedish units participated in 14 international training exercises, including in Hungary, Poland, Norway, and Singapore.

Military training inside Sweden is also changing in character, including a greater emphasis on use of the military to quell "riots" or confront "terrorism" at home. At the beginning of March, the army held war games in southern Sweden. Articles posted on the military's web site describing the exercises included headlines such as: "Military police stop riots," and "Rebellion in western Götaland." Götaland is the southern part of Sweden. The articles described how the army was training to handle disturbances in which groups from different nationalities clashed or to impose order in other unstable situations.

Meanwhile, the Swedish police have

developed a 60-member national paramilitary unit called the "anti-terrorist group." Its commander is pushing to increase the unit's size to 75. The minister of justice says an increase is being discussed, but "this will also depend on what the military can do to support the deployment unit. There are things it cannot do, regardless if it's 50 or 200. It's a question of weapons."

Despite drastic cuts in personnel and the number of regiments, total military spending has gone down only marginally since 1985. The military says this is due to the increase in international missions, which are much more expensive than maintaining military matériel depots and regiments inside the country—the backbone of the old "defense system against invasion." The government has ordered the commander in chief to cut 4 billion Swedish krona (7.1 Swedish krona = 1 U.S. dollar) from the defense budget by 2007. Military spending today is 40 billion krona.

The vote in parliament for the military restructuring was 167-138 in favor. The parties outside the governing coalition, which is led by the social democrats, are not opposed to the restructuring, but said they wanted to postpone the decision to see if they could keep one of the regiments slated to be dissolved.

The strongest opposition has come from army officers. In a number of articles in various national dailies, military officers have argued against cutting down their ranks. The reductions are being made by seniority—the last hired is first fired. This leaves the armed forces with an officer corps with a rising average age and which is trained in the defense system of the Cold War period. Many in the ruling class are arguing that this doesn't fit the objectives of the restructuring.

## New Zealand: Maori college fights cuts

BY JANET ROTH

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—The Labour government has seized financial control of Te Wananga o Aotearoa (TWOA), a Maori-based educational institution, and signaled it intends to slash its size and future funding.

On March 2, Minister of Education Trevor Mallard appointed a representative to manage TWOA's funds. The school administration acquiesced because of the financial pressure the government was applying, including cutting off its access to overdraft and borrowing facilities.

This follows the government threatening last year that it would review educational scholarships for Maori and other affirmative action gains won through past struggles. In another attack, parliament has passed controversial legislation denying Maori proprietorship over coastal lands.

The government moved against the TWOA following a series of headline-grabbing allegations made in parliament by Kenneth Shirley, of the Act Party, who accused TWOA's management of misusing government funds to enrich themselves and their families. Shirley made his claims under parliamentary privilege, through which politicians can make sweeping assertions without fear of legal challenge.

Shirley targeted a literacy course for adults that TWOA is developing in conjunction with an educational institute in Cuba. Shirley claimed the course was sold to TWOA for "an extraordinary seven-figure sum" by Marcia Krawll, the fiancée of TWOA chief executive Rongo Wetere.

Wetere replied in an advertisement that "no purchase price was ever paid to anyone" for this course, and that the Cuban Ministry of Education pays the salaries of the nine literacy experts in this country assisting with the "Greenlight" program.

TWOA representatives have also forcefully answered the other allegations.

Along with Maori-language kindergartens and schools, TWOA and two other wananga were established in the wake of a rise in Maori struggles in the 1970s and 1980s. Those protests targeted institutional racism, the alienation of Maori lands, and the suppression of Maori language and culture.

Rongo Wetere and others set up the wananga in 1983. "Back then just 1 to 1.5 percent of all tertiary students were Maori, despite making up more than 20 percent of school-leavers," Wetere told the *New Zealand Herald* on February 19.

In 1998 Wetere lodged a claim with the Waitangi Tribunal on behalf of TWOA and the other two wananga. The complaint resulted in a \$NZ40 million settlement and ongoing government funding (\$US1 = NZ0.72). The tribunal hears claims from Maori for land and other stolen resources.

Since that settlement, Te Wananga o Aotearoa has become the country's largest tertiary (university level) institution, with over 66,000 students. It teaches a range of subjects. Courses on Maori language and culture, literacy, and computer skills are among the most popular. Many of its students study at home by correspondence.

In 2003, more than half of all Maori students participating in tertiary education were enrolled at TWOA. A *Herald* article noted "the wananga has almost single-handedly lifted Maori participation in tertiary education from below average to an extraordinary 23 percent of Maori aged 15 and over."

The average age of students is 33 and most are women. Its courses attract working people who are not Maori as well. Nearly 52 percent of students enrolled at the wananga last year were non-Maori. Unlike other tertiary institutions, TWOA provides free courses for the majority of its students.

The expansion of TWOA has come as the government follows its predecessors in seeking to cut back the provision of publicly

funded education. Tertiary institutions now compete more fiercely with each other. They each seek to recruit greater numbers of students and thereby qualify for more of the limited government funding. Because of its size, TWOA receives a larger portion of state funding than almost all tertiary institutions.

Education minister Mallard and others claim that TWOA is not a "real university" and that its certificates and diplomas should be downgraded. As he appointed a manager to take over control of TWOA's finances, Mallard announced a review of courses in the tertiary sector that don't lead to a degree qualification, which the *Herald* reported is "expected to lead to funding shifts" next year. Most of TWOA's courses fall into this category. Mallard also said he wanted TWOA scaled back to concentrate on teaching Maori language and customs to Maori. It should look more like the other two wananga, he said.

According to the *Herald*, Wetere "said enrollments at other wananga were as low as 2,500 and his would not accept being culled to that size... Students were entitled to choice and the government had no right to restrict the courses being offered, including those to non-Maori."

These probes against TWOA are not new. "We had had six audits in the past 18 months," said Wetere. "We are the most audited organization in the country." The auditor-general's office is currently conducting another audit, which will include looking into Shirley's allegations.

Unable at this stage to get any of the mud slinging to stick, the government has begun to negotiate with TWOA on how long the manager will be in financial control and on the number and racial mix of its students. In return, Wetere has said the wananga will no longer call itself a university. Following the attacks on TWOA, the institution has suffered a 30 percent drop in enrollments.