

THE MILITANT

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Havana festival marks 160 years
of Chinese presence in Cuba

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Democrats, Bush converge on Iraq, ‘war on terrorism’

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, June 6— Hillary Clinton, a leading contender for the Democratic presidential nomination in 2008, said in a candidates’ debate three days ago that the United States is safer because of Washington’s “war on terror.”

The previous week the Democrats dropped an earlier proposal to set deadlines for redeploying U.S. troops in Iraq, and passed a \$100 billion war appropriations bill that President George Bush signed.

These developments highlight the convergence of Democrats with the White House over Iraq and the broader “war on terrorism.”

Meanwhile, U.S. defense secretary Robert Gates and Lt. Gen. Raymond Odierno, who heads daily operations of U.S. forces in Iraq, backed the White House call to establish a Korea-type force for a protracted stay in Iraq.

These events are demoralizing many in the U.S. peace movement, especially liberals and middle-class radicals who had illusions they could nudge the Democratic Party in an “antiwar” direction.

Cindy Sheehan, for example, a prominent speaker at many antiwar actions since her son was killed in Iraq, announced her departure from the peace movement in a May 31 letter.

During the June 3 debate of Democratic presidential candidates in New Hampshire, Sen. John Edwards said he would do “absolutely everything” to find

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U.S. rulers squeeze Tehran over arrests of four Iranian Americans

Washington still holds
five Iranians in Iraq

BY MA’MUD SHIRVANI

June 3—Tehran accused U.S. president George Bush of interfering in Iran’s internal affairs today after he demanded that the Iranian government release “immediately and unconditionally” four Iranian Americans it detained and charged with spying in May. Meanwhile, U.S. occupation forces in Iraq continue to hold five Iranian officials they seized in January.

The U.S. rulers are using the arrests of the four Iranian Americans to further squeeze and isolate the country. A chorus of politicians, organizations, and well-known figures—including many liberals and left-wing publications—have issued public condemnations focusing their fire on Tehran over the confrontation.

Noam Chomsky, for example, a professor at the Institute of Technology and a self-professed anarchist, issued a statement May 26 “strenuously condemning the persecution and now imprisonment of Haleh Esfandiari” as a “gift to Western hardliners.”

Esfandiari, director of the Middle East Program at a government-financed “think tank” called the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, is the most prominent Iranian American being detained by Tehran. The other three are Parnaz Azima, a reporter for the U.S.-

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Workers outraged at Minnesota raid



Militant

From left: Enrique Tapia, Ramiro Castillo, and Adam, workers in Austin, Minnesota, discuss May 30–31 immigration raid with *Militant* reporter Tom Fiske (speaking).

BY FRANK FORRESTAL
AND TOM FISKE

AUSTIN, Minnesota, June 3—Immigrant workers and their families in this rural meatpacking town of 23,000 are outraged at yet another raid here by *la migrá*.

The May 30–31 sweeps followed immigration raids last December here and in Albert Lea, a meatpacking center 20 miles west of Austin, where a total of 45 immigrants were arrested.

The dragnet here also came on the heels of raids in three Minnesota cities: Willmar, Worthington, and Minneapolis.

Immigration agents raided several

homes and arrested 20 immigrant workers during the two-day sweep. The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) said the raid was part of a nationwide initiative focused on arresting “criminal aliens,” code-named “Operation Secure Streets.” ICE officials said they were particularly after “illegal aliens with drunken driving convictions.”

“We have made arrests; again, this is nothing random,” said ICE official Tim Counts. “This is a targeted enforcement action. We’re looking for specific individuals.”

Counts said the agency was looking for five people, but “came across” about 15

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3,000 rally in Washington: ‘Legalize undocumented now!’

BY SETH DELLINGER

WASHINGTON, June 2—Some 3,000 people, mostly immigrants from Central America, rallied at the U.S. Capitol here today to demand legalization of undocumented workers. Most of the protesters came from here, northern Virginia, and southern Maryland.

The National Capital Immigrant Coalition called the rally. With banners and placards that dotted the crowd, demonstrators focused their fire on a provision of the latest immigration “reform” bill introduced in the Senate May 17.

The measure would require undocumented immigrants to pay nearly \$4,500 in fines and fees per family of four to apply for four-year renewable “Z” visas that would allow them to work in the United States on a probationary basis.

After eight years, applicants could seek permanent resident status after paying an additional \$4,000, showing they can speak English and that they have remained employed, and passing a background check. They would also

have to leave the United States and apply from their country of origin.

“Why are they making this unjust fine?” asked José Cordosa of the Workers and Tenants Committee in Virginia, speaking

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\$105,000 for ‘Militant’ fund

BY OLYMPIA NEWTON

June 6—“Thank you to all the readers of the *Militant* who helped make its eight-week campaign to raise \$100,000 a success,” said *Militant* editor Argiris Malapanis. We went over the top by more than \$5,000, he noted (see chart on page 4).

“Your contributions, and those from workers, farmers, and students like you, are the only way the socialist newsweekly keeps coming out,” Malapanis said.

Donations, ranging from \$5 to \$500 and more, cover everything—from operating expenses like printing, shipping,

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U.S. officials, employers debate new immigration bill

BY RÓGER CALERO

June 6—The U.S. Senate resumed its debate on an immigration reform bill two days ago as opposition among many employers associations, politicians, and organizations on both sides of the issue grows.

Initially presented as a “grand bargain,” the bill was negotiated by a dozen leading senators, including Ted Kennedy, a Democrat from Massachusetts, Jon Kyl, a Republican from Arizona, and the White House.

“No matter how difficult it may seem for some politically, I strongly believe it’s in this nation’s interest for people here in Washington to show courage and resolve and pass a comprehensive immigration reform,” said President George Bush in a June 1 speech urging the Senate to approve the bill.

Bush was responding to critics of the proposal, who have labeled it amnesty for millions of “law breakers.”

“This bill isn’t amnesty,” said Bush. “For those who call it amnesty, they

are just trying to, in my judgment, frighten people about the bill. This bill is one that says we recognize that you are here illegally and there’s a consequence for it.”

Under the proposal, undocumented immigrants who apply for legal status would be required to pay fines and fees of at least \$4,500 in order to obtain a

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terrorists and stop them. In the same breath he called the “global war on terror” a “bumper sticker/political slogan” used to justify the administration’s course.

Hillary Clinton disagreed. “I am a senator from New York. I have lived with the aftermath of 9/11,” she said. “And I believe we are safer than we were. We are not yet safe enough, and I have proposed over the last year a number of policies that I think we should be following.”

Clinton’s supporters in the peace movement have attacked people like Sheehan for staging sit-ins at Clinton’s office to protest her pro-war stance. Sheehan’s resignation letter, which was carried in newspapers across the country, alluded to that. “I was the darling of the so-called left as long as I limited my protests to George W. Bush and the Republican Party,” Sheehan wrote. “However, when I started to hold the Democratic Party to the same standards that I held the Republican Party, support for my cause started to erode and the left started labeling me with the same slurs that the right used. . . . I am going to take whatever I have left and go home.”

Sheehan’s stance is echoed by other liberal forces.

An editorial in the June 18 issue of the *Nation* magazine, headlined “The Honeymoon Is Over,” said, “As Congress left town for its Memorial Day recess, the euphoria cast by the 2006 election victories was gone. . . . The slim Democratic majority in both Houses is not a progressive majority.”

Petty-bourgeois radicals are similarly affected. The ANSWER coalition, for example, posted recently on its website their analysis of the state of the peace movement. “It is clear that the anti-war movement is not sufficiently strong at the moment to bring this criminal and despised war to an end,” it says. It lamented that “the size and intensity of the demonstrations, protests and acts of resistance does not at all measure up to the vast magnitude of feelings against the Iraq war.” ANSWER’s leadership includes central leaders of the Party for Socialism and Liberation, a split off from Workers World, a Stalinist party.

Meanwhile, during a visit to the U.S. Pacific Command in Hawaii, in preparation for a security conference in Singapore, Gates said a long-term U.S. military presence in Iraq, like that in Korea, would assure allies and adversaries in the Middle East that Washington is “going to be there for a long time.”

Gates also said that one of the main reasons for U.S. participation in the Singapore meeting is that “while we are fighting wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and

a global war on terror, we have—have no intention of neglecting Asia.”

In Iraq itself, a new crisis is looming at the country’s northern border with Turkey. Ankara has been amassing troops there, threatening to invade Iraqi Kurdistan on the allegation that fighters of the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK), a group fighting for sovereignty of the Kurdish areas of Turkey, are being given safe haven in northern Iraq. Both Baghdad and Iraqi Kurdish groups have protested. A June 4 opinion column in the *New York Post* noted, “The Kurdish area is the most stable and pro-American part of Iraq; neither Washington nor Baghdad can afford to have it become a new item on the ‘problem’ list.”

As this issue goes to press, the Turkish government denied reports that its troops entered northern Iraq today. But Reuters reported that Jabar Yawir, deputy minister for Peshmerga Affairs in Iraqi Kurdistan, which manages the Kurdish Pershmerga army, said 10 Turkish helicopters, with some 150 special forces, landed in a village in

U.S. rulers squeeze Tehran over four arrests

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funded Radio Farda; Kian Tajbakhsh of George Soros’s Open Society Institute; and Ali Shakeri, a businessman who is on the board of the University of California’s Center for Citizen Peacebuilding.

At a recent news briefing, Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Mohammad Ali Hosseini said the detainees are “Iranian nationals, and authorities are reviewing their case. They are in the investigation process.”

At the same time five Iranian officials detained in Iraq in January by U.S. forces during a U.S. raid on the Iranian consulate in the northern city of Irbil remain in U.S. custody, despite demands by the Iraqi government that they be released. The U.S. military claims the men are being held on suspicion of plotting against U.S. and Iraqi forces.

Nervousness and factional divisions within Iran’s ruling class appear to be sharpening as the pressure by imperialism mounts.

The Ministry of Intelligence issued a statement May 21 saying Esfandiari was part of the effort by the U.S. government to use intellectuals and others to bring about a “soft overthrow” of Iran’s government “modeled after their East European” method of regime change.

A few days later, a spokesman for that ministry said a spy network connected with Washington and London



Reuters/Eduardo Muñoz

U.S. troops in firefight in At Tarmiyah, a town 20 miles northwest of Baghdad.

Mazouri, and left two hours later without a confrontation. The village, which is about 2 miles inside the Iraqi border, is a PKK-controlled area, he said.

In the southern part of the country, about 600 pipeline workers walked out June 4, shutting down refined oil and gas deliveries to Baghdad, Kerbala, and Nassiriya. The General Union of Oil

Employees in Basra is demanding better pay, improved job conditions, land for homes, a reduction in national oil prices, and inclusion in drafting a new oil law. The law will decide the form of foreign investments in oil and how revenues will be distributed among Iraqi provinces—which are controlled by competing Shiite, Sunni, and Kurdish capitalists.

had been discovered, which operated on “borderlands to foment dissension among nationalities.” Among the areas he claimed the “spy network” operated were Kurdistan, Azerbaijan, and Khuzistan. These are areas which are home to the three main oppressed nationalities in the country. Khuzistan is a province bordering Iraq and is home to an indigenous Arab nationality.

Hossein Mousavian, a member of Iran’s nuclear negotiating team until 2005 and former ambassador to Germany, was arrested April 30 in Tehran. Fars news agency quoted an unnamed official as saying, “Mousavian was

arrested because of connections and exchange of information with foreign elements.”

Mousavian was considered a close ally of former Iranian president Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, who currently heads the high-level Expediency Council. He was released on bail after six days. The Expediency Council made a statement welcoming his release and saying “those who wanted to sow divisions within the regime for their factional interests did not succeed.” According to reports in Iran’s press Mousavian is still under investigation by the Ministry of Intelligence.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

CALIFORNIA

San Francisco

Capitalism’s Economic Crisis: Wage Cuts, Debt Squeeze, Foreclosures, Cuts in Social Services. What Road Forward for Working People? Speaker: Joel Britton, Socialist Workers Party. Fri., June 15, 7:30 p.m. 3926 Mission St. Tel.: (415) 584-2135.

IOWA

Des Moines

Israel, Lebanon and the Fight for Self-Determination. Fri., June 15. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 3707 Douglas Ave. Tel.: (515) 225-1707.

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis

No to Police Brutality! Fri., June 16. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. 1311 1/2 E Lake St. Tel.: (612) 729-1205.

NEW YORK

New York

U.S. Hands Off Iran! Speaker: Cindy Jaquith, recently returned from Tehran International Book Fair. Sat., June 16. Dinner, 7:00 p.m.; program, 8:00 p.m. Donation: \$5 dinner, \$5 program. 307 W. 36th St. 10th floor (use north elevators). Tel.: (212) 629-6649.

—CALENDAR—

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Immigration Reform & Legalization: Is It Coming? Town hall forum. Speakers: Javier Rodriguez, Padre Luis Angel Nieto, Gloria Saucedo, Evelyn Flores, Berny Motto, Atty. Antonio Rodriguez. Thurs., June 14. 7:00 p.m.–10:00 p.m. La Casa del Mexicano 2900 Calle Pedro Infante at the corner of Euclid Ave. in Boyle Heights. Sponsored by the March 25 Coalition. For more information, call (323) 264-1428.

NEW YORK

New York

Free Puerto Rico: End Colonialism Now! Annual reception and forum for the Puerto Rico Delegation of the United Nations Decolonization Committee hearings. Donation: \$10. Thurs., June 14. Reception, 6:30; program, 7:00 p.m. Hunter College, West Bldg. Rm. 217. Sponsored by ProLibertad Freedom Campaign. For more information, call (718) 601-4751, or visit ProLibertadWeb.com.

Seeking Justice: The Legacy of Agent Orange in Vietnam. Film screening: *The Last Ghost of War*. Speakers: Ramsey Clark, Vinie Burrows, film producers Pham Quoc Thai and Janet Gardner; and others. Mon., June 11, 6:30 p.m. Cantor Film Center, 36 E. 8th St. Sponsored by the International Action Center. For more information and tickets, call (212) 633-6646.

French company presses for bigger share of Africa’s oil

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON, June 1—Competition over control of African oil among the largest oil companies based in the imperialist countries sharpened last month as France’s Total announced plans to raise annual production by 5 percent over the next four years.

That would put the company’s annual worldwide production at 3 million barrels a day. African production is expected to account for two-thirds of that growth and soon replace Europe as Total’s top production source, Jean Privey, president of Total’s exploration and production in Africa, told the *Wall Street Journal*.

Total is the third-largest foreign oil producer in Nigeria, first in Gabon, and second in Cameroon. It holds concessions in Congo-Brazzaville and North African countries, including Libya and Algeria. The company’s annual African oil production in 2006 was 719,000 barrels per day. Last year it was second on the continent after ExxonMobil, which produced 780,000 barrels per day.

Total bolstered its oil presence in Africa with the acquisition in 2000 of Elf Aquitaine, which began oil projects in French colonies in the 1930s. Total also got a boost in the 1980s when it obtained concessions for deep-water offshore fields along Angola’s coast

in the midst of Luanda’s war against an invasion by the apartheid regime in South Africa.

Total’s oil fields in Angola’s Block 3 hold an estimated 1 billion barrels. Dalia, a field in Block 17, is already pumping 240,000 barrels a day. Pazflor, a field in the same Block, is expected to yield 200,000 barrels per day. Another 850,000 barrels per day are expected from the CLOV fields, which should be ready after 2010.

Oil production in Africa is made even more attractive by the signing of production-sharing arrangements in which the company’s investment is totally reimbursed with barrels of oil.

End raids, deportations! Help circulate ‘Militant’!

This column is written and edited by members of the Young Socialists, a revolutionary socialist youth organization. For more information contact the YS at 306 W. 37th St., 10th floor, New York, NY 10018; tel.: (212) 629-6649; e-mail: youngsocialists@mac.com.

YOUNG SOCIALISTS IN ACTION

Young Socialists across the United States are joining and helping build actions demanding an end to raids and deportations and legalization of undocumented immigrants. They are also helping circulate the *Militant* widely among working people of all nationalities, and others, as part of advancing support for these demands. Below are two recent reports on such work.



BY LORETTA VANPELT
AUSTIN, Minnesota, June 3—Young Socialists helped sell the *Militant* outside the Hormel and Quality Pork plants here, as well as in town. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents had conducted raids here earlier in the week, arresting 20 people (see front-page article). We sold 85 copies and 6 subscriptions to the *Militant* at the plant gates yesterday and another 26 copies and 7 subscriptions today. At the plant gates we quickly ran out of the 50 copies we had of the new issue; fortunately we had dozens of back issues with us. Outside the plant gates we held signs that read, “No deportation.” We were met with a charged and mixed reaction, including double takes, honks of support, thumbs up, and opposition. Many, mostly Latino workers, stopped and bought the paper.

A number of people, mostly U.S.-born, slowed down, stared, and then sped off; some yelled comments against “illegals.” One worker on a motorcycle slammed on his breaks, looked at the sign, and said, “Illegals should be deported.” After some discussion, he bought the *Militant* but continued to argue that the undocumented should be deported before speeding off. A man who bought the paper came back on foot to talk. He said he works for the U.S. Department of Agriculture and was woken up by *la migra* at 2 a.m. He said his wife is undocumented and was angry at the ICE agents banging on their door, which they didn’t open. He wanted to know where he could file a complaint and what can be done to stop ICE from violating peoples’ rights. He said he would join any protests planned against the raids. Later he returned again to buy an introductory

subscription to the *Militant*.
❖

BY RYAN SCOTT
PAINESVILLE, Ohio, June 3—ICE agents carried out immigration raids here on May 20 and May 31. Immigrant workers, largely from Latin America, make up 90 percent of the workforce in the \$100 million nursery industry in Lake County where Painesville is located. Workers in the area reported that six workers were arrested at a nursery and two were picked up outside a Latino grocery store during this most recent raid. The Cleveland *Plain Dealer* said a total of 13 Hondurans accused of being in the country illegally were arrested. Two protest actions took place May 27 following the first raid in which 24 people were arrested (see last week’s *Militant*). Ernesto, 21, from Sacramento, California, was visiting family and friends here. He said the situation isn’t hopeless. “These people are not going to leave. Their homes are here; their families are here.”

This town is very polarized. On June 2 some people rallied in the town square opposing immigrant rights with U.S. flags and signs saying, “What part of legal don’t you understand?” Pedro Arredondo, a landscaping worker who drove past the rightist rally, said he estimated it was 30–50 people. He noted that the front-page photo in last week’s *Militant* showed that Blacks and whites, not just Latinos, participated in the May 27 rally for immigrant rights. “That’s important,” he said. While going door-to-door introducing people to the *Militant*, we were invited by a dozen nursery workers to a barbecue in their backyard to have some *chicharrón* stew where we discussed the struggle for legalization, the recent protests, conditions on the job, and how to fight against cop brutality. Three workers there picked up copies of the *Militant*. Many said they get along well with neighbors and coworkers of all different backgrounds and are surprised by the polarization.

Chicago rally: No to parental notification laws

BY LAURA ANDERSON
CHICAGO, May 30—About 40 people rallied here today to oppose implementation of the Parental Notice of Abortion Act and to defend a woman’s right to choose abortion. The Illinois law now being considered by the courts. Young women led the action. Sponsors included Access Living, African American Women Evolving, Chicago Abortion Fund, Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health, Illinois NOW, and Mujeres Latinas en Acción (Latina Women in Action).

The rally was held outside the office of Illinois attorney general Lisa Madigan, who is pushing for enforcement of the law, which has faced legal hurdles since its passage in 1995.

The law requires women under 18 to notify a parent or legal guardian 48 hours before obtaining an abortion. It also allows young women to seek a “judicial bypass”—approval by a court if they are unable to notify parents. Because the state Supreme Court didn’t issue rules on how this bypass would work, the law could not be put into effect for a decade. Last year, however, the Illinois high court issued such rules, and this year Madigan asked a federal court to allow its implementation.

“A few weeks ago I didn’t know about the law that says you need a parent’s consent,” Marcuetta Williams, 19, said at the rally. “I could not believe it. It’s the woman’s life. She’s the one who would be responsible for raising kids.”

Brenda Moreno, 25, is a member of Mujeres Latinas en Acción. “We want to create more access to women’s rights to a safe and legal abortion,” she said.

Neusa Gaytan, the program director of Mujeres Latinas en Acción, said the Mexican press contacted the group when Mexico City decriminalized abortion in April. “The victory in Mexico City is being discussed in Brazil and other countries in Latin America,” she said. “Women should know about it here.”

Forty-four states have passed parental notification or consent laws. State courts have found such measures unconstitutional in 10 states. In all states where such measures are in effect, except Utah, the judicial bypass option is included.

“It’s just not realistic to ask young women to try to successfully navigate the court system for a judicial bypass,” Toni Leonard, president of African



Militant/Rollande Girard

May 30 protest in Chicago against parental notification law for minors seeking abortions

American Women Evolving, said at the rally.

Supporters of these laws argue they help enforce parents’ authority. The Michigan law, for example, is called the Parental Rights Restoration Act.

Protesters here said these laws force young women into dangerous situations. “It hurts the most vulnerable young people seeking reproductive health care,” said Soo Ji Min, executive director of the Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health. “Imagine living in an abusive family, where you know there will be extreme consequences if the parents find out you are sexually active or pregnant.”

“The laws don’t represent the interest of young people and their voices need to be heard!” said Adaku Utah, youth organizer of the Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health, speaking on the bullhorn.

Utah participated in and helped build a 2004 pro-choice march of 1 million in Washington, D.C. “That march was the first time I saw a big contingent of women of color,” she said. “We marched for choice, access, and other women’s health issues. Today we are still fighting for justice.”

“We will continue to educate and take action,” said Gaylon Alcaraz, executive director of the Chicago Abortion Fund, the only source of subsidizing second-trimester abortions in Illinois and surrounding states. An abortion costs between \$500 and \$1,500 in Illinois. Although most of the Fund’s clients

come from the Chicago area, the group says it receives calls from as far away as Missouri, Indiana, and Iowa.

\$105,000 for ‘Militant’ fund

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and rent, to big budget items like the three international reporting trips to Cuba and Venezuela the *Militant* fielded just during the course of the drive.

“Going over the top is very welcome, because we face extra costs we had not budgeted,” Malapanis said. These include expenses for the hike of second-class postal rates (see article on page 9) and a computer software upgrade.

One of the highlights of the two-month effort was the number of people who donated to the paper for the first time. *Militant* supporters in several cities reported getting contributions from coworkers in packing plants, sewing shops, and elsewhere.

Special fund-raising forums were held during the drive, as well, on topics covered in the *Militant*—from the sharpening class conflict in Venezuela, to Cuba’s revolutionary example in the world today, to the struggle for legalization of undocumented immigrants. At several of these programs, new readers of the paper were part of the platform of speakers explaining why the *Militant* is important to their political work.

All but one of the 27 local areas where supporters of the paper took fund goals made or surpassed their quotas. That’s a victory to build on for the paper’s fall fund drive.

\$100,000 ‘Militant’ Fund Drive March 31–May 27 ♦ Final chart			
Country	Quota	Paid	%
CANADA	3,500	4,728	135%
AUSTRALIA	1,400	1,669	119%
NEW ZEALAND	2,800	3,125	112%
ICELAND	450	497	110%
SWEDEN	500	536	107%
UNITED KINGDOM			
Edinburgh	400	425	106%
London	1,500	1,575	105%
UK total	1,900	2,000	105%
UNITED STATES			
Detroit	65	100	154%
Des Moines	2,000	2,183	109%
Miami*	3,800	4,036	106%
Los Angeles	8,000	8,482	106%
Birmingham, AL	2,500	2,647	106%
Chicago*	5,700	6,005	105%
Twin Cities*	5,500	5,771	105%
Pittsburgh*	3,800	3,980	105%
Seattle	7,000	7,268	104%
Newark, NJ*	3,850	3,970	103%
Philadelphia*	4,300	4,420	103%
San Francisco*	11,000	11,233	102%
New York*	15,000	15,273	102%
Atlanta	6,000	6,095	102%
Houston	3,000	3,030	101%
Washington, D.C.	3,000	3,023	101%
Albany, NY	50	50	100%
Boston	3,800	3,800	100%
San Diego	500	450	90%
Other		600	
U.S. total	88,865	92,416	104%
FRANCE	300	300	100%
Int’l totals	99,415	105,271	105%
Goal/Should be	100,000	100,000	100%
* raised quota			

— ON THE PICKET LINE —

Union painters picket N.Y. hotel for hiring nonunion contractor

NEW YORK, May 30—Members of International Union of Painters and Allied Trades District Council 9 (DC9) have been picketing the New York Hotel here for hiring Infinity Painting, a nonunion construction contractor based in Brooklyn. Next to a 30-foot-tall inflatable rat, about 20 workers carry signs each day, saying “Infinity Painting—Unfair.”

“They have no health benefits and really low pay,” Luis Mejía, a painter and DC9 member, told the *Militant* today. “And they work over eight hours a day.”

Picketer Phil Person said Infinity workers don’t get proper safety equipment, displaying an air filter and mask these workers are not given by the boss.

“We need this picket to go on,” DC9 member David Simmons said. “More pickets means more jobs.”

—Eddie Beck

New Jersey workers sue Wal-Mart for unpaid labor

New Jersey’s Supreme Court authorized a class-action lawsuit by 72,000 current and former Wal-Mart workers May 31. The state high court overturned rulings by two lower courts that had denied class-action status to the suit.

The lawsuit charges that the bosses forced workers to work off the clock through meal and rest breaks and locked them inside the stores after clocking out.

Wal-Mart, the world’s largest retailer, faces 70 lawsuits over wages and hours nationally. Workers in Pennsylvania and California won \$78 million and \$172 million settlements, respectively, though Wal-Mart is appealing both verdicts. Workers in Pennsylvania are seeking an additional \$72 million.

—Eddie Beck



Militant/Eddie Beck

Members of the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades District Council 9 picket New York Hotel May 30 for hiring a nonunion contractor, Infinity Painting.

Pathfinder books well received at Tehran book fair

BY TONY HUNT

TEHRAN, Iran—“I have read this book. It’s very good; you should get it.” This is what a longtime reader of Pathfinder books from north Iran told students browsing the Pathfinder Books stand at the 20th International Book Fair, which took place here May 2–12.

He was talking about *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women*. The students took his advice.

PATHFINDER AROUND THE WORLD

The London distributorship notched up 15 years of participation in this annual fair, among the largest cultural events in the world. Hundreds of thousands of Iranians from around the country packed the fair grounds during its 11 days.

People purchased about 100 books and pamphlets from the Pathfinder stand. The best sellers were *The Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Is Biology Woman’s Destiny?* by Evelyn Reed, *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning: the Fraud of Education Reform under Capitalism* by Jack Barnes, and *The First and Second Declarations of Havana*.

A national radio channel run by Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting interviewed one of the volunteers from the Pathfinder booth at its live show in the center of the fairgrounds.

The event took place at a new venue this year, moving from trade fairgrounds in northern Tehran to the Mossalla Grand Prayer Grounds in the city’s center.

Publishers from 66 countries participated, along with more than 1,800 Iranian publishers and distributors displaying a range of books in Farsi. Titles included novels, poetry, children’s books, and books on scientific and technical subjects. An exhibition of costumes of different nationalities in the country was also held alongside displays of photographs and paintings.

The fair’s new venue is near a Metro underground station and is more accessible by public transportation than the previous location. Large posters around the center of the city advertised the event, which was regularly covered on TV and by newspapers. The exhibi-

tion halls were housed in three imposing buildings in the prayer grounds, which also has a large mosque still under construction.

Overseas publishers exhibited their books in two separate sections of the fair. One displayed first-edition humanities titles published since 2003 and other books on sale to academics, students, librarians, and others at

reduced prices through a government subsidy.

The larger hall, where the Pathfinder stand was located, was unsubsidized and housed books published or printed since 2001. These books were on sale to all book fair visitors at prices set by each publisher.

Several Iranian publishers have produced Farsi translations of Pathfinder’s

titles, which were available at this year’s fair.

One such publisher, Azadmehr, brought out new translations this year of two books by George Novack, *Origins of Materialism and Empiricism and its Evolution*. Other translations recently published include *Art and Revolution* by Leon Trotsky.

A translation of *Teamster Rebellion* by Farrell Dobbs has recently been published by Talayeh Porsoo. This company said they sold 21 copies of that title at the fair out of a total 1,000 copies of Farsi-language translations of Pathfinder titles. Its sales included around 200 copies of *Socialism and Man* by Ernesto Che Guevara and 160 *Feminism and the Marxist Movement* by Mary-Alice Waters.

Golâzin, another publisher, reported high interest in its Farsi translations of Pathfinder books by Evelyn Reed, such as *Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women* and *Problems of Women’s Liberation*. Golâzin’s translation of *Che Guevara Speaks* also had brisk sales and is going into its third printing. Golâzin featured three translations of Pathfinder titles on a promotional bookmark it was distributing at its stand.



Scene from May 2–12 Tehran International Book Fair. The Pathfinder booth sold 100 titles. Other publishers sold hundreds of copies of Farsi translations of Pathfinder books.

— 25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO —



June 18, 1982

MANAGUA—Argentina, itself the victim of an imperialist invasion and economic blockade, has helped set an example internationally by pledging 7,000 tons of wheat to storm-devastated Nicaragua.

Cuba, Mexico, and Spain are the three other governments that have acted most quickly in response to Nicaragua’s appeal for international disaster aid.

At the end of May, the worst rain storm in a century caused some \$200 million in damage to Nicaragua—an amount totaling nearly half the country’s yearly income from exports.

Construction workers from Cuba are already at work helping repair and replace major bridges destroyed by the storms.



June 17, 1957

Women comprise one-third of the United States labor force but receive only one-fifth of the national income, and as long as this basic inequality remains, the revolution in women’s employment will not be fully achieved. But the changes that have occurred in the lives of American women in the last sixty to seventy years do have a profoundly revolutionary character, since they strike at the basic causes of women’s inferior status which lead to the exploitation of women in both marriage and employment.

In 1890, only half of the women in this country worked at any time in their lives and their average participation in paid employment was eleven years. Today, 90% of all women work at least part of their lives, and today’s school girl can anticipate about twenty-five years in paid employment.



June 18, 1932

Henry Ford has let the cat out of the bag. Why should an employer of labor on an extensive scale worry about workers who “haven’t got five cents for a head of lettuce?” Yet that is what he is thinking about, according to a recent interview written up in the *New York Times*.

When the interviewer questioned the efficiency of Ford’s plan for each of his workers raising his own lettuce instead of buying it, Ford replied, “I know plenty of workers who haven’t got five cents for a head of lettuce!”

So it happens that Ford of all people is perfectly ready to sap modern principles of efficiency such as mass production, the division of labor, and specialization of work and skill and evolve instead a system of compulsory gardening for each worker.

Havana festival marks 160th anniversary of Chinese presence in Cuba

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL
AND STEPHANIE WILSON

HAVANA, June 3—A festival marking “the 160th anniversary of the Chinese presence in Cuba” concluded here today with a commemorative event at the port of Regla on Havana Bay. On June 3, 1847, the Spanish ship *Oquendo* arrived here with human cargo from China: 206 men brought to work as indentured laborers.

“For the past 160 years,” said Gen. Moisés Sío Wong, “the Chinese have been an integral part of Cuban history and culture.” He pointed to their massive involvement in the independence wars against Spanish colonial rule, their participation in the 1959 revolution, and the development of Chinese Cuban social, cultural, and political organizations throughout the island.

Sío Wong, president of the Cuba-China Friendship Society, addressed the crowd at the site of a former barracks where Chinese indentured workers, as well as African slaves, were confined and held for sale on their arrival in Regla during the mid-1800s.

The 10th Festival of Chinese Overseas, which opened May 30, was part of the ongoing efforts, backed by Cuba’s revolutionary government, to promote knowledge of the real history of Chinese immigration to Cuba and its vital place in this nation’s culture and history of revolutionary struggle.

The festival was sponsored by the House of Chinese Arts and Traditions along with the Chinese Immigrant Studies Program at the University of Havana. Carmen Eng, director of the House of Chinese Arts and Traditions; and María Teresa Montes de Oca Choy, president of the Chinese Immigrant Studies Program, chaired the event. Gen. Gustavo Chui, president of the Organizing Commission of the Chung Wah Association, the main center of the Chinese Cuban community, presided over the events.

The program included cultural events open to the public and a three-day conference. Performances of a Chinese opera, Lion Dances, wushu (Chinese martial arts) demonstrations, an art exhibit, a mahjong contest, samplings of Chinese Cuban dishes, and presentations of Chinese theater and dance were among the featured events.

The conference, devoted to the theme “Chinese Associations in the Overseas Communities,” drew more than 100 people, including members of numerous Chinese associations from Havana and other cities, students and instructors at the Cuban Wushu School in Havana’s Chinatown, and teachers, artists, translators, and others involved in promoting Chinese Cuban culture. Also present were a 12-person delegation from China, four participants from the United States, and one from France.

Delegates of the Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries came from five provinces of China. At a June 2 ceremony held at the headquarters of the Cuban Institute for Friendship with the Peoples, China’s ambassador to Cuba, Zhao Rongxian, and Sío Wong issued a stamp celebrating ties of solidarity between the two countries. Among those attending the ceremony and providing musical entertainment at it were some of the 400 Chinese youth currently studying Spanish at the Santiago Figuerola school in San Antonio de los Baños in Havana province.

An additional 1,200 Chinese students will be coming to Cuba in the fall to learn Spanish, as part of Beijing’s efforts to expand its trade and investment in Latin America.

A Cuban delegation will attend the Forum for Friendship between the Peoples of China and Latin America, to be held September 17–22 in Chongqing in central China.

Part of Cuba’s culture and history

“The impact of the Chinese throughout our country’s history goes much beyond their numerical strength,” said historian Pedro Cosme, touching on a central theme of the festival. Cosme gave conference delegates a tour of the local museum in Regla, which includes a section on the history of Chinese Cubans.

At the opening of the conference, following remarks by Zhang Enxiang, vice president of the legislative assembly in China’s Jilin province, General Chui, who is also a leader of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution, gave the keynote address. He described how 140,000 Chinese were brought to Cuba between 1847 to 1874, mostly to



Militant/Martín Koppel

Opening of conference on Chinese communities in Cuba, May 31. From left: María Teresa Montes de Oca Choy, Carmen Eng, Gustavo Chui, Moisés Sío Wong, and Zhang Enxiang.



Militant/Martín Koppel

Members of Cuban Wushu School perform May 30 at entrance to Havana’s Chinatown during opening of 10th Festival of Chinese Overseas.

work on sugar plantations to replace or supplement the dwindling supply of African slaves. “These were impoverished Chinese who would accept an abusive contract under which they were enslaved for eight years or more, subjected to forced labor and sometimes to punishment as cruel as what was inflicted on African blacks,” he said.

“Chinese Cubans joined the independence war from the very first bugle calls in 1868, and in massive numbers,” he noted, citing the example of revolutionary leaders such as Lt. Pío Cabrera, Capt. José Tolón, Cdr. Sebastián Siam, and Lt. Col. José Bu Tak. Chui pointed to subsequent generations of Chinese Cuban revolutionaries, from José Wong, murdered by the Machado dictatorship in 1930, to the all-Chinese José Wong Brigade of the Revolutionary National Militia, which helped consolidate the revolution in Havana’s Chinatown in the early 1960s.

“Thousands of Chinese Cubans joined the tasks of the revolution in the literacy campaign, the 1961 victory at Playa Girón on the Bay of Pigs, the October [1962 ‘Missile’] Crisis, internationalist missions, in the fields of health, defense, education, agriculture, science and technology,” Chui said.

He also noted that in 1960 revolutionary Cuba became the first Latin American government to establish diplomatic relations with the People’s Republic of China, and that today, in addition to increased trade and cultural exchanges between the two countries, Cuba has medical volunteers in China performing operations to restore eyesight to those suffering from cataracts and other ailments.

Chui also described how, over the decades, Chinese immigrants organized mutual aid societies. These organizations, offshoots of associations founded in China and with branches in the United States, Canada, and other countries around the

world where Chinese settled, are based on family ties or common origins in different regions of China.

Revival of Chinese associations

The role of the associations in the Chinese Cuban community today was the theme of the 2007 conference. At the closing session María Teresa Montes de Oca Choy noted that this year’s festival was marked by greater participation by leaders of associations, several of whom gave talks—often with informative video presentations—on the history and activities of their own organizations.

Conference sessions were held at the headquarters of different associations: Chang Wen Chung Tong, Kow Kong, and Lung Kong, as well as the Chung Wah Association and the House of Chinese Arts and Traditions. These and other associations also provided lunch and refreshments to conference delegates.

Graciela Lau Quan, vice president of the Lung Kong society, remarked, “There is a difference between the associations in Cuba and those in the United States, England, and Canada in how the leadership is chosen. In those places, they measure how much wealth the individuals have. In Cuba you have to work for the welfare of the community, you have to be a revolutionary.”

Members of various associations in Havana and delegates from Ciego de Avila, Holguín, Bayamo, and Camagüey explained how the societies provide vital services to the elderly members who were born in China: daily meals and other necessities, as well as visits to the gym, trips to the beach, and other recreational activities.

Rosario Chang, president of Chang Wen Chung Tong, explained how her association was shut down in 1967. The closing of most Chinese associations in Cuba, along with Arab and other similar associations and many churches and

Continued on page 8

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D.C. rally for legalization

Continued from front page

ing at the rally. “We are workers. We clean, we build, we drive the trucks and pay our taxes. Those are not crimes for us to have to pay fines,” he said, arousing applause and chants of *¡Sí se puede!* (Yes we can!).

Aníbal Orellana, 34, a construction worker originally from Guatemala, told the *Militant* the fines would be difficult to pay. “In my case, there’s my wife, my son, and me. That would be \$15,000.”

Alicia Hernández, 12, from Alexandria, Virginia, carried a hand-made sign that read, “When will my father come home?”

“A lot of families are just like ours,”

said Alicia’s mother, Luz Hernández, a 32-year-old house cleaner. “My daughter was born here. I have papers, but her father does not. We need immigration reform that allows us to be together.”

Rosa Muñoz, a restaurant worker here, was among a group carrying five-foot letters that spelled out “Legalization Now!”

Organizers said the rally had been timed to coincide with the return of Congress from its Memorial Day recess. They appealed to protesters to lobby members of Congress.

Smaller numbers of immigrants from Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean also attended.



Militant/Tim Mailhot

June 2 rally in Washington, D.C., for legalization of undocumented immigrants.

Abdul Moussa from Senegal said he doubted that those who voluntarily leave the country will be able to return. “It has been 20 years since I applied to bring my brother here,” he said. “He

was supposed to receive priority consideration. How will those people who leave ever get back?”

Sam Manuel contributed to this article.

Nebraska meat packers walk out over prayer breaks

BY KEVIN DWIRE
AND JOE SWANSON

DES MOINES, Iowa—More than 100 workers originally from Somalia, including members of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 22, walked out May 14 at the Swift & Company beef packing plant in Grand Island, Nebraska, to protest company denial of prayer breaks.

About 70 of these workers returned to work May 25 after company and union officials “met with workers and the head of a Somali community group to discuss the conflict between Muslim prayer and workplace rules,” reported the Associated Press May 26. “The company agreed to accommodate the workers as much as it could within the contract.”

The Grand Island plant has a workforce of 2,900. About 200 workers are Muslims originally from Somalia. Other workers hail from other African countries and Latin America, or are U.S.-born.

Like many meatpacking plants, Swift’s contract with the UFCW calls for two breaks during an eight-hour shift—a 15-minute break and a half-hour lunch. During the breaks workers have to take off their equipment, get to the break room, then return and put on their gear. In reality this means workers get a much shorter break.

According to an article in the May 16

Omaha *World-Herald*, “Union officials said the workers had been offered employment at an undisclosed meatpacking plant in Kansas that would accommodate their Muslim belief in regular prayer breaks.”

The May 14 walkout was the largest single-day loss of workers to the plant since the Dec. 12, 2006, Immigration and Customs Enforcement raids on Swift plants in six states. At that time, 261 workers were arrested at the

Grand Island plant. Nearly 1,300 workers were taken in simultaneous raids at five other company facilities—in Greeley, Colorado; Marshalltown, Iowa; Worthington, Minnesota; Cactus, Texas; and Hyrum, Utah.

This is not the first walkout by UFCW workers over prayer breaks. In September 2005, some 300 members of UFCW Local 271 walked out at the Tyson Beef plant in Norfolk, Nebraska. That walkout began after the company

fired 10 workers for “unauthorized breaks” and a supervisor followed a Somali woman to the bathroom.

Union members at Norfolk later approved a five-year contract that included the right to 10-minute prayer breaks for workers who are Muslim. In addition, the company offered reinstatement to 10 workers who were fired. Tyson closed both the Norfolk processing plant and the slaughterhouse in neighboring West Point in February 2006.

Workers outraged at raid in Minnesota

Continued from front page

others while carrying out the raid.

Interviews with workers on the receiving end of the raids show a different picture. Here’s a description of what happened at the home of Ramiro Castillo, a Hormel worker, who has lived in this country for 20 years.

“They knocked on the door,” Castillo said, referring to the ICE agents. “I barely opened the door when they forced their way in. They twisted my arm and kept pushing me, telling me to put my hands over my head.

“They demanded to know why I tried to shut the door. I told them, ‘I don’t know you.’ They demanded to see my papers. Then they handcuffed two people in the apartment, a father and his son who had

been asleep in the living room. I insisted that they not be taken away without their shoes and I was able to put their shoes on. They did not let me give them their shirts or their wallets.

“They prevented me from giving them my telephone number, and they prevented them from giving me the number of their mother. At no time did the cops say they were looking for someone specific.

“While all this is going on one of them was watching everything with his hand on his gun,” said Castillo. Two of the cops were wearing plain clothes, and the cop with the gun wore a uniform, he noted.

The raids have opened a discussion in the Latino community on what to do in response. “We have to organize ourselves to stop this,” said Adam, a meat packer

who asked that his last name not be used for fear of persecution by the government. “They grab whomever they come across.” Adam was also critical of the new immigration bill being debated in the Senate and beyond (see front-page article). “There are too many requirements to get a green card,” he said. “Most of us will never have all the things that are needed.”

Referring to the May Day marches and other protests demanding legalization of the undocumented over the past year and a half, Castillo said, “Doing the marches was a good thing. Now we have to do it even more and right here in Austin. If we want to be in this country we have to fight, we don’t have

Continued on page 8

Immigration cops sweep through rural Washington town

BY EDWIN FRUIT
AND CECELIA MORIARITY

SHELTON, Washington, June 3—Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents raided apartment buildings here May 31 and took at least 16 people into federal custody.

According to Lorie Dankers, a spokeswoman for ICE in Washington, Oregon, and Alaska, the raid targeted three “immigration fugitives” and one “criminal immigration fugitive.”

Patricia Vasquez, a representative of United Immigrants of Shelton, said, however, that at a May 24 public meeting before the Washington Human Rights Commission, residents of one of the raided apartment complexes complained of mistreatment by the landlord’s resident manager. ICE said the raid was not prompted by this hearing.

Shelton is a town of 8,700 people about 30 miles west of the state capital Olympia, on the eastern fringe of the Olympic National Forest.

These reporters talked with residents of one of the raided apartment buildings here. Most were young workers of Guatemalan origin who asked that their last names not be used for fear of persecution by the government and employers.

Around 4:00 a.m. on May 31, they said, ICE agents rattled their windows and beat on their doors. The first floor of the building is now deserted because the cops grabbed the people who lived there—13 men and 3 women. ICE said they were taken to the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, Washington.

Juan, a worker who lives in the building, said none of the family members of those arrested knew of their relatives’ whereabouts, had not been able to reach them by phone, and did not know how to go about getting them released. ICE’s claim it was just targeting “fugitives” is a lie, Juan said. “My cousin doesn’t drive, doesn’t drink, isn’t married, and didn’t rape anybody,

but they took him away anyway.”

Even though they were running out of food and were pooling diapers for their children, many people interviewed said they were afraid to leave their apartments because they may get picked up at the grocery store. Four young men were picked up at traffic checkpoints and at an AMPM convenience store, workers reported.

Kathy Reyes, who runs a Mexican store across the street from the raided apartment complex, said people have stopped patronizing her business. It’s common for landlords and building managers to call *la migra* when they want to get rid of immigrants, she said.

“We are not criminals, we come to do honorable work, not to beg or rob,” said Pedro, a shellfish factory worker originally from Mexico.

Most Guatemalan immigrants here work in *la brocha* (the brush), picking shrubs and other ornamental plants used in flower arrangements, workers said.

The floral industry, now dominated by immigrants, is heavily dependent on brush known as salal, harvested in the Pacific Northwest and southwestern Canada.

An estimated 3,000–5,000 brush workers are employed in this state, according to the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries. Most are mestizo and indigenous from Mexico and Guatemala, for whom Spanish is their second language. Many have a limited knowledge of either Spanish or English. Salal harvesting is done by hand with people working six- or seven-day weeks.

Community to Community, an immigrant rights group based in Bellingham, Washington, organizes monthly protest vigils outside the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, where those grabbed by *la migra* in Shelton and across the Northwest are being held.

Carmen Maymi-O’Reilly contributed to this article.

Chinese Cuban festival

Continued from page 6

religious centers, coincided with what at the time was called the “Revolutionary Offensive,” the 1968 nationalization of most small businesses in Cuba. While many Chinese Cuban merchants and craftsmen continued to work as state employees, others emigrated to the United States and other countries.

Chang and others explained that the Chinese associations were reopened in the mid-1990s in response to the economic crisis known here as the Special Period, when Cuba abruptly lost most of its trade with the Soviet bloc countries. The associations were authorized to operate restaurants selling in hard currency, which allowed them to cover the costs of providing for the needs of the elderly Chinese at a time of shortages of many essential items. It was also part of the revival of Chinatown as a center of tourism to help bring in hard currency in order to buy food, medicine, and other necessities on the world market.

Today, Lau said, some 120 elderly residents of Chinatown go to Lung Kong’s *Casa del Abuelo* (senior citizens center) for free meals and other services, and another 80 who are less mobile are cared for at home.

The associations have also recruited new members, to expand beyond the decreasing numbers of those born in China to the much larger numbers of second, third, or fourth-generation Chi-

nese Cubans, many of whom have found renewed pride in their Chinese roots and are taking classes in Mandarin, Chinese crafts, and martial arts.

Presentations were also given by professors, researchers, and university students on various aspects of history, including documentary videos such as *Entre bambúes y palmeras* (Between bamboo and palm trees), the first chapter of what will be a TV docudrama on the Chinese in Cuba.

Kathleen López, a professor at Lehman College in New York, and Mitzi Espinosa, a Havana librarian, gave a presentation on the little-known history of discrimination against traditional Chinese theater companies in Havana, San Francisco, and Honolulu in earlier decades. In Havana, Espinosa explained, local authorities would often force Chinese theaters to close by selectively enforcing safety regulations against them.

Isabelle Lausent-Herrera, a researcher from France, spoke about the history of Chinese in Peru, from early discrimination against the Chinese to the current wave of new immigration.

Asians in U.S. interested in Cuba

Mary-Alice Waters, president of Pathfinder Press and editor of *Our History Is Still Being Written: The Story of Three Chinese-Cuban Generals in the Cuban Revolution*, gave a presentation on that book. Citing the numerous meetings on the book across the United States, Canada, and other countries, she said it has generated unusually broad interest, touching a special chord among many people of Asian descent, who are proud when they learn about the real history of struggle of their ancestors.

This interest registers the impact of the ongoing struggles by immigrant workers across the United States who are fighting for the legalization of their status, Waters said. The book shows the attractive power of the example of Cuba’s socialist revolution, its “striking contrast with the discrimination that Chinese face elsewhere throughout the Americas and the world.”

Speaking after Waters, General Sío Wong noted the fact that some of the U.S.



Militant/Martín Koppel

Final session of conference on Chinese Cubans, held June 2 at Lung Kong association in Havana’s Chinatown. At table is María Teresa Montes de Oca Choy, conference cochair. At microphone is Guillermo Chiu, a leader of Lung Kong, as well as a founding leader of the José Wong Brigade in the early years of the Cuban Revolution.

meetings on *Our History Is Still Being Written* required translation to Cantonese and Mandarin, and pointed to the importance of the book’s Chinese-language edition that is being prepared. “Pathfinder Press is playing an important role inside the belly of the beast by telling the truth about the Cuban Revolution,” he said.

General Chui, who joined Waters and Sío Wong on the platform, noted, “There are not only three Chinese Cuban generals in our Revolutionary Armed Forces. We also have many Chinese Cuban

colonels, captains, and other officials and cadres. And many more are in the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution, who are active in defense of our socialist revolution.”

After the presentation, conference participants bought some 50 copies of the book.

At the end of the festival, it was announced that next year’s event will be held here May 30–June 3, focusing on the theme of traditional medicine in Chinese Cuban culture.

ICE raid in Austin, Minnesota

Continued from page 7

to let them humiliate us.”

In another interview outside the local Mexican bakery, Arturo, a farm worker who also asked that his last name not be used, was angry over the earlier raid in December in which a friend of his was arrested. “*La migra* came to my friend’s house,” he said. “They broke a window next to the door, unlatched the door, and entered the house. They beat him and arrested him. I still don’t know where he is.” At another home, immigration cops said they were the local police and had a search warrant. “But this was a lie,” he said.

A few of the workers reported that

many did not report to work after the raids. This was particularly true of Quality Pork Processors, the slaughterhouse adjacent to Hormel Foods, where almost all workers are Latino.

The number of individuals under ICE custody has rapidly expanded from about 18,000 last year at this time to more than 29,000 today, according to an April 20 speech by ICE assistant secretary Julie Myers to the American Immigration Lawyers Association. These workers are being held in some 200 detention centers and jails across the country.

Seth Galinsky contributed to this article.

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U.S. hands off Iran! Lift sanctions

Washington's demand for the unconditional release of four Iranian Americans Tehran detained and charged with spying is another example of imperialist arrogance and hypocrisy. It is also part of the U.S.-led imperialist campaign to punish the toilers of Iran for toppling the U.S.-backed regime of the shah in 1979.

The U.S. military in Iraq has held five Iranian officials since January. The five were arrested after U.S. troops stormed an Iranian liaison office in northern Iraq. Washington claims they have links to Iran's Revolutionary Guards. But nearly four months later no charges have been filed against them, and the U.S. government has turned a deaf ear to Tehran's repeated demands for their release.

Washington is using last month's highly publicized talks with Iranian officials on stabilizing Iraq to accuse Tehran of fomenting violence. Washington claims that the Iranian government is providing training and weapons to Shiite militias in Iraq. But it is the U.S. rulers who are the number one perpe-

trator of violence and war. During the talks, held in Baghdad, the U.S. naval fleet in the Arab-Persian Gulf—including two nuclear-powered aircraft carriers—conducted war games near Iranian waters. And Washington announced it would push for tighter sanctions against Iran in the United Nations Security Council.

The U.S. rulers and their imperialist allies have kept up a steady campaign to deny Iran access to nuclear technology and development of nuclear energy. They charge that Tehran seeks to build a nuclear weapon, while Washington has nuclear weapons poised around the world on land, in air, and at sea.

In February, the U.S. State Department unveiled a \$75 million program to support "the democratic aspirations of the Iranian people"—a thinly veiled call for the removal of the Iranian government.

Working people around the world should join with fellow toilers in Iran in demanding: U.S. hands off Iran! Free the five Iranians U.S. forces hold in Iraq!

U.S. rulers debate new immigration bill

Continued from front page

renewable "Z" visa. After eight years, those with Z visas could apply for permanent resident status after they pay an additional \$4,000 fine, show they speak English, remain employed, and pass a background check. Applicants would also have to leave the United States and apply from their home country. The application would be judged on a "merit" point system heavily weighted on skills, formal education levels, and job experience, instead of family ties.

The bill has also found opposition among many employers concerned that the proposed "merit-based" system will hamper the flow of labor.

"A merit-based system for allocating green cards may sound good for business," said Robert Hoffman, co-chairman of Compete America, a conglomerate of high-tech companies. "But after reviewing the proposal, we have concluded that it is the wrong approach and will not solve the talent crisis facing many U.S. businesses." Under the point system, "an individual would get points for special skills, but those skills may not match the demand," said Hoffman.

Some bosses, especially in construction, meatpacking, and landscaping, back a guest worker pro-

gram in order to maintain a pool of superexploited labor.

The White House and spokespeople for business associations have expressed opposition to the Senate's decision to cut in half the number of "guest workers" allowed annually in the country from the 400,000 included in the original proposal.

"It's a travesty," said R. Craig Silvertooth, director of federal affairs at the National Roofing Contractors Association, referring to this provision. "It eviscerates the temporary worker program, which was one of the central reasons for the business community to be involved in the immigration debate."

U.S. Secretary of Commerce Carlos Gutierrez said 200,000 "is not enough." He also opposed the Senate's decision to ax a provision that would allow increasing the number of guest worker visas to up to 600,000 based on the bosses' labor needs.

A May 21 *New York Times* article reported on the collaboration by business executives, trade union officials, and immigrant advocacy groups, like the National Council of La Raza, in seeking an immigration bill they find acceptable. "These alliances were on display last week at a dinner celebrating the 25th anni-

versary of the National Immigration Forum," said the article. Sponsors of the dinner included Wal-Mart, Service Employees International Union, the United States Chamber of Commerce, Marriott, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, and the National Restaurant Association, reported the *Times*.

"We do not have enough workers to support a growing economy," Randel Johnson, a vice president of the Chamber of Commerce, said at that dinner.

Senator Kyl has warned that if "killer amendments" that allow for immigration based on family ties pass, it would prompt him to "do everything I could to get [the bill] defeated," reported the June 4 *Washington Post*.

How U.S. Post Office tried to shut down 'Militant', Black papers in World War II

BY PAUL PEDERSON

"Since December 7, 1941, this publication has openly discouraged participation in the war by the masses of the people. It is permeated with the thesis that the war is being fought solely for the benefit of the ruling groups and will serve merely to continue the enslavement of the working classes."

This was how U.S. attorney general Francis Biddle defended the Post Office Department's decision in 1943, during World War II, to revoke the *Militant's* second-class mailing rights.

The extortionate second-class rate increase the Postal Service is set to impose on small publications (see article above) is a new chapter in a long history of measures the U.S. government has taken to aid big-business newspapers and stifle the working-class press and other publications opposing government policies.

During World War II, Washington attacked publications that challenged the Roosevelt administration's war policies or denounced its support for Jim Crow segregation. Thousands of newspapers and magazines were inspected for "subversive speech." Between May 1942 and May 1943, some 70 periodicals were deprived of second-class mailing rights.

In November 1942, without notice, the Post Office began to withhold issues of the *Militant* from delivery. Some were destroyed,

others delayed for weeks. In March 1943 the government revoked the paper's second-class mailing rights. After waging a broad campaign the *Militant* won their restoration a year later.

The government also argued that the *Militant* stimulated "race issues" by exposing the brutality of the Jim Crow system and describing the rising struggle to overturn it. Calvin Hassell, assistant to the solicitor of the Post Office Department, said "at the present moment," that is, in wartime, it was subversive "to urge Negroes to fight for their rights."

Black newspapers were also a key target of this campaign. In mid-1942 Biddle summoned the editors of several Black weeklies to Justice Department headquarters in Washington. He told them they should stop covering the clashes between Black and white soldiers in the then-segregated armed forces, threatening to "shut them all up" if they didn't comply.

Seven government agencies including the FBI, the Justice Department, the Post Office Department, the Office of Facts and Figures, the Office of War Information, the Office of Censorship, and the Army were involved in investigating Black newspapers.

More on the subject can be found in the book *Fighting Racism in World War II*, and the article "Washington's 50-year Domestic Contra Operation" in issue 4 of the *New Internationalist* magazine—both available at www.pathfinderpress.com.

Postal hike burdens small publications

BY PAUL PEDERSON

The U.S. Postal Service plans to impose new second-class postage rates that force small- and medium-circulation publications to pay 20 percent more, or higher, for postage, while giving discounts to the big-business press.

"This affects disproportionately small publications, especially working-class papers like the *Militant*. To remain in print, we depend on contributions from our readers, who are mostly working people, rather than advertising revenue or wealthy corporate patrons," said *Militant* editor Argiris Malapanis. "In effect, it's a class-biased attack on freedom of the press."

On March 19, the Postal Board of Governors adopted a modified version of a plan prepared by Time Warner—the largest magazine publisher in the world. They allowed the public just eight working days to review the 758-page proposal.

Until now, second-class rates have been determined by the number of pieces and their weight. That changes July 15. Under the new rate plan big publishers will get discounts for mailing in bulk and trucking mail to post offices near the final destination. Publications without the resources to do that face a steep jump in mailing costs.

A study by the publisher McGraw Hill revealed that 5,700 publications will face a rate increase of over 20 percent with hundreds facing cost hikes exceeding 30 percent. Meanwhile the 1,260 largest publications will see mailing costs reduced.

The Postal Board of Governors admitted in its March 19 ruling that it has "some reservation about the wide variations in rate changes (from large increases to decreases) that different publications face." It noted that "some publications face substantial rate increases even though they have limited options to become more efficient or to mitigate the increase."

Scores of publications and organizations have joined in calling on the U.S. Congress to reverse the rate hike. Protests have been going on for months.

"This will affect dozens of small publications that are owned and operated by women," reads a statement by the National Organization for Women, urging its supporters to write letters of protest against the rate hike. "The Postal Service should not be forced to use its monopoly power to favor the largest publishers at the expense of the smaller ones."

LETTERS

Prison revolt

A riot erupted at the New Castle Correctional Facility in Indiana this April. This is a run-for-profit private prison owned by GEO of Florida, formerly known as Wackenhut. GEO earns millions to run 58 prisons, most of them in the United States.

Arizona gave GEO \$6.1 million to house 1,260 of its convicts. Two hundred recent arrivals didn't like the long bus ride in chains, the freezing cold for which no jackets were provided due to the impact properly clothing them might have on GEO profits, and that their families in Arizona could no longer visit them.

The new arrivals became "defiant" leaving the chow hall, hooked up with part of the 400 Arizona convicts

already there, and the disturbance quickly spread. Guards used concussion grenades and tear gas to regain control. Seven prisoners and two guards were hospitalized.

Arizona prisoners are given no notice of these transfers. They are simply awakened in the middle of the night and herded onto buses.

Richard Geffken
A prisoner
Mayo, Florida

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.