

THE MILITANT

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U.S. forces take Baghdad, plan occupation regime

Invaders kill thousands of Iraqi soldiers in capital and Basra

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

U.S. invasion forces have rapidly moved to take control of Baghdad. They entered the outskirts of the Iraqi capital April 4 as battered Republican Guard units crumbled. The U.S. troops then encircled the city and hit key targets to weaken government forces. Over the next three days, U.S. Army and Marine units drove dozens of tanks into the heart of Baghdad repeatedly and began asserting control of the city. As the *Militant* went to press, U.S. troops had seized the main presidential palace in Baghdad.

The same weekend, British forces took control of Basra, Iraq's second-largest city, which they had placed under partial siege for three weeks. The U.S. and British armies have killed thousands of Iraqi troops in these assaults.

At the same time, Washington accelerated preparations to install a military-run occupation regime in Iraq. Paris, Berlin, and other imperialist rivals of Washington, while belatedly jumping on the bandwagon and ex-

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U.S. tank rumbles through Baghdad April 6, as Washington's military forces completed encirclement of Iraqi capital and began repeated raids throughout the city to assert their control. Next day, B-52 bombers dropped four 2,000-lb. bombs on a building where top Iraqi leaders were supposedly meeting. As the Iraqi regime crumbled, the imperialist invaders stepped up efforts to set up a protectorate.

No to the imperialist occupation of Iraq! Get troops out now!

End the imperialist occupation of Iraq! Bring the troops home now! We urge you to use the *Militant* and join with others to campaign with these demands on the job, at factory gates, in the streets or door-to-door visits in working-class communities,

EDITORIAL

on picket lines, at antiwar rallies like the one called for April 12 in Washington, D.C., and other social protest actions.

In the middle of this war of conquest, many working people—from France to the

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Birmingham: Calero gains support for fight against deportation

BY SUSAN LAMONT

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama—Róger Calero, an editor of the Spanish-language monthly magazine *Perspectiva Mundial*, visited this city March 20, and won new support for the fight against his deportation.

He was interviewed in the morning on ¡Que buena! radio station, 1010am, based in Dora, Alabama, and by *Latino* newspaper in the afternoon. *Latino* is a Spanish-language newsweekly that has statewide circulation.

In the afternoon, Calero joined a picket line of more than 100 called to protest Washington's war against Iraq. Supporters of Calero have received a warm reception

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Tyson threatens meat packers in Wisconsin with use of more scabs



Militant/Jorge Lertora

Meat packers striking Tyson in Jefferson, Wisconsin, at March 29 solidarity rally there. Supporters include UFCW Local 789 members from St. Paul, Minnesota.

BY TOM FISKE

ST. PAUL, Minnesota—Striking meat packers at Tyson Foods in Jefferson, Wisconsin, are taking steps to strengthen their strike and reach out for support. At the same time, the company is trying to ratchet up the pressure by expanding the use of strikebreakers.

"The company has had difficulty recruiting scabs," so far, said Mike French in an

interview. French is an executive committee member of United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 538, which organizes the striking workers. "There are two buses of scabs that cross our picket lines in the morning. I have seen that one is only half full, the other is less than full. The company made a big effort to recruit scabs from among workers laid off from Tyson's Culinary plant in Chicago. We

have not seen a single new scab that the company has been able to recruit that way." Some 470 meat packers worked in the plant before workers walked out February 28.

On April 4, the union received notification from the company that it intended to recruit more scabs beginning April 7. Management said it will consider the scabs currently working in the plant as of that date full-time Tyson employees.

"The union is calling another solidarity rally for Saturday, April 26, in Jefferson in front of the plant," French told the *Militant*. "Everybody is welcome who supports the strike. We are urging unions, organizations, and individuals supporting us to come and bring donations of food." Two previous rallies in March mobilized hundreds. They included union contingents from a number of nearby plants and from other parts of the Midwest.

"We are also planning other actions around this area in the coming weeks," said French. "Two members of the Truth Squads will be coming to the Twin Cities the weekend of April 12. They have been invited by Local 789 of the UFCW to speak at a local labor conference called Meeting the Challenge."

The Truth Squads are teams of Tyson strikers who have visited a number of large meatpacking plants in the Midwest over the past several weeks. They have distributed information, spoken to the leaderships of the local unions, and collected donations

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Canadian government backs assault on Iraq, while 'talking peace'

BY JOHN STEELE

TORONTO—As the U.S. army is fighting its way into Baghdad, the facts about Ottawa's real role in the imperialist slaughter are becoming clearer.

On March 17, the Liberal Party government announced that, while totally supporting Washington's goals in the region, it refused to join the so-called "coalition of the willing," and refused to send additional troops to the Mideast, because the war is not sanctioned by the United Nations Security Council. Ottawa's actions, however, show that Canada's capitalist rulers not only support the U.S.-led assault, but are part and parcel of the military effort to conquer Iraq.

"Ironically, the Canadians indirectly provide more support for us in Iraq than most of the 46 countries that are fully supporting us," U.S. ambassador to Canada Paul Cellucci stated in a recent speech, criticizing Ottawa for its diplomatic opposition to the war.

Currently, 31 Canadian soldiers are serving on exchange programs with U.S. and British forces. Six of them are in Iraq, one operating with a British regiment of military engineers that is assisting in the siege of Iraq's second largest city.

About 1,300 Canadian personnel on three frigates are part of a multinational task force in the Arab-Persian Gulf. These vessels and a dozen other warships are under the command of Canada's Commodore Roger Girouard, who reports to U.S. Vice-Admiral Timothy Keating. The fleet protects U.S. aircraft carriers, which serve as "platforms" for Washington's air war against Iraq. They are also screening passengers in the Arab-Persian Gulf, looking for Iraqi military officials and government leaders to be turned over to U.S. authorities if caught. According to *La Presse*, this fleet also "escorted" all U.S. and British ships carrying troops and war materiel to Kuwait.

For months, Canadian military planners have been working with the U.S. Central Command, directing operations in Iraq. The 25 military planners from Canada are work-

ing at the U.S. forward command post in Qatar in the Persian Gulf. They have taken part in determining war strategy and are now helping to run operations from the inside.

Canadian forces are also part of crews on Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft, which are the nerve centers that guide fighter jets and bombers so they can deliver their payloads.

By contributing 1,000–2,000 troops to the imperialist forces occupying Afghanistan, Ottawa has freed up key U.S. logistical and military assets for redeployment in Iraq.

Washington is Canada's biggest military customer. Canadian military production is thoroughly integrated into the U.S. military machine.

U.S. military aircraft carrying troops bound for Iraq regularly stop to refuel and change crews in Newfoundland.

On March 26, Foreign Affairs Minister William Graham expressed Ottawa's support for Washington's goal of overthrowing the Iraqi government, and wished the U.S. a "swift victory." Five days later, Defense Minister John McCallum, speaking in Parliament, praised the Canadian military personnel in Iraq and the Arab-Persian Gulf. "We are behind them 100 percent," he said. "We thank them for putting their lives on the line." Ottawa also supports an international tribunal to try Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and other government officials for "crimes against humanity," if they are captured alive. On March 26, all parties in Parliament supported a resolution put forward by the right-wing opposition, the Canadian Alliance, on setting up such a tribunal.

Ottawa's posturing under attack

As a smaller imperialist power neighboring the United States—which is both its main imperialist competitor and trading partner—Canada's ruling class stands in Washington's camp in the drive to take Baghdad and install a U.S. protectorate. Ottawa's drive to war against working people abroad is an extension of the intensifying assault on the rights of workers at

France: workers defend retirement age



Militant/Nat London

Over a half million workers demonstrated and millions more stopped work April 3 to defend retirement rights being threatened by the government of France. More than 80 percent of air flights, 50 percent of trains, and two thirds of the Paris metro system were shut down. Over half of the country's teachers struck, forcing the closure of many schools. The demonstrators called for maintaining full retirement rights at age 60, a right won in 1982. The protesters also demanded that full retirement benefits be granted after 37 and 1/2 years of work.

home—such as the use of so-called "anti-terrorist" laws to secretly jail immigrants as threats to "national security." The government's actions are determined by the unfolding world capitalist depression, and intensifying inter-imperialist competition for resources, raw material, and markets.

Ottawa's refusal to officially endorse the war reflects the efforts of Canada's capitalist rulers to maintain the carefully constructed illusion of Canada's role in world politics as a "peacekeeper," working through the United Nations. This foreign policy framework, put in place at the end of the 1950s, has well served the interests of Canada's ruling rich for almost five decades. So too has the government's anti-American brand of Canadian nationalism, which is used to whip up support for its foreign policy initiatives and mask the class character of its participation in imperialist wars of plunder.

Canadian nationalism is also used to mask the class divisions in Canadian society. It's used to masquerade Ottawa's anti-working class domestic policies, aimed at increasing the capitalists' profit rates, by slashing the social wage won by workers and farmers in struggle, and weakening union and other workers' rights.

In this context, a minority of the ruling class is calling for an open declaration of support for the war against Iraq, and the sending of more of Canada's armed forces into the conflict.

The Canadian Alliance has called for the sending of a full contingent of Canadian forces to Iraq.

Alberta Premier Ralph Klein sent a letter to U.S. Ambassador Cellucci thanking Washington for its leadership "in the war on terrorism and tyranny."

"We need to stand with our friends and allies in times of trouble," said Ontario premier Ernest Eves. "The people of Iraq should be free, not oppressed and threat-

ened by a dictatorial regime.... While I respect the decision of the prime minister, I believe his position is wrong."

An April 2 editorial in the *Globe and Mail* titled "Hiding the Troops" states that "Canada has soldiers involved in a war that Canada opposes.... The soldiers' actions aren't shameful at all, but the government's actions have been."

"Where our government has failed, our troops make us proud," declared the *Toronto Sun* tabloid editors April 4. "We salute them for their resolve and dedication to duty. For showing what their political masters lack."

Prowar demonstrations

Encouraged by these declarations, pro-war forces organized demonstrations in a number of cities calling for open support to the war and criticizing Ottawa's position. Thousands turned out in Ottawa, Winnipeg, Red Deer, Calgary, and Vancouver the March 29–30 weekend. In Toronto, 800 prowar demonstrators took to the streets April 4, in a noon-hour "Friends of America" demonstration addressed by the Ontario premier.

Despite the march to war and prowar campaign of all sectors of Canada's ruling rich, workers fighting to defend their rights are showing they are not willing to subordinate their interests to those of the bosses and their government.

On April 1, unions representing 40,000 Air Canada workers, for example, rejected demands by the airline bosses for a 22 percent across-the-board wage cut, a wage freeze, and an end to layoff protection to "save" the company, Canada's major airline. The airline bosses, who have asked for government support, then filed for bankruptcy protection in the courts.

John Steele is a meat packer and a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers.

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Sinn Fein: 'British troops out of Ireland'

BY PETE WILLIAMSON

DUBLIN, Ireland—"The message coming from this Ard Fheis cannot be any clearer for the British government," said Michelle Gildernew. "That message is, 'We don't want to look at your troops any more.'"

Gildernew was speaking at the Ard Fheis, or conference, of Sinn Fein, the party that is leading the fight to end British military occupation of northern Ireland. Participants discussed the current state of this fight. Two thousand delegates and guests attended the event, held here March 28-30.

Gildernew was one of four leaders of Sinn Fein elected to the British parliament in 2001, doubling its representation. "The Crown forces continue to harass nationalists on a daily basis," she said. "The use of plastic bullets has dramatically increased, particularly by the British army. The PSNI (Police Service of Northern Ireland) travel round in armored jeeps and operate from

military barracks. South Armagh and other areas are still blighted by military spy posts."

In country areas British army helicopters routinely fly at 100 feet above local homes, said another delegate. Soldiers had recently cordoned off one village for two and a half days.

A delegate from Fermanagh reported that in his area opponents of British rule had organized an effective picket of an army foot patrol. Forced off the road into fields, the patrol had to be airlifted out by helicopter.

Sinn Fein's youth movement, Ogra Sinn Fein, has played a prominent role in protests against the British presence.

Gerry Kelly, a Sinn Fein leader from Belfast who served 15 years in jail for his part in the fight against British rule, said that negotiations with London and the unionist parties had to be combined with "street protests and demonstrations, demands for inquiries, and campaigning."

Unionists in Northern Ireland—the six Irish counties that are known as Ulster—wage a reactionary fight to defend the "union" with Britain and against Irish unity.

Stalled negotiations

Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams discussed the stalled negotiations in his keynote address to the conference. Thanks to the attitude of the British government and the unionist representatives, he said, the talks face a challenge: they could either "take a great leap forward" or continue at the present "frustrating and begrudging pace."

Adams's address was televised live on RTE, the Irish TV channel. The party had gained this access by winning five seats—four more than previously—in last year's elections to the Dail, the Irish parliament. Party chair Mitchel McLaughlin pointed out that 10 years ago the same TV channel would not broadcast the voices of Sinn Fein

representatives, in accordance with government-imposed censorship.

Towards mid-April the British and Irish governments are due to propose the next phase of negotiations, including the holding of elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly, said Adams. London had unilaterally shut this assembly last October—the fourth time it had taken such action—and also announced that the elections would be delayed one month to the end of May.

"The British and Irish establishments' version of the peace process did not allow for the growth of Sinn Fein," observed Adams. This, he said, was the real source of the crisis in the negotiations. "They fear that the achievement of equality of treatment, and the emergence of a new inclusive society in Ireland, will leave much of Irish or Ulster Unionism without any rational basis and erode the very reason for the existence of the union and British jurisdiction in Ireland."

Sinn Fein is pressing for the removal of "policing as a central pillar of unionist power," said Adams. The heavily militarized police service has increasingly stepped into the shoes of the British army in the urban areas, he said, while London's troops play a more visible role in country areas. Sinn Fein demands that policing power be transferred from London to the assembly and the North-South inter-government bodies.

The Sinn Fein leader said that given further steps forward, he could "envisage a future without the IRA (Irish Republican Army)." Ulster Unionist leader and former First Minister of the assembly David Trimble, is demanding that IRA leaders disarm and declare their struggle to be at an end. He is also pressing for limitations on Sinn Fein's participation in the assembly should the IRA breach its four-year ceasefire.

Discrimination against Catholics still leaves a deep mark, said Adams, noting that unemployment among Catholic males is still twice that of their Protestant counterparts. The progress made by nationalists means the "days of second-class citizenship are finished," he said. Adams also observed that as the British grip has weakened, workers who are Protestant have in many ways been abandoned. "We do not want anyone to be treated the way we were," he said.

Youth from the New Lodge area of Belfast staffed a table outside the Ard Fheis hall. They publicized the findings of an inquiry held in November 2002 in New Lodge into the murder of six men 30 years ago there by British forces. At the time London claimed without evidence that the victims were armed.

'Premeditated murder'

"This was premeditated murder, which shows Bloody Sunday was not an isolated incident," said Chrissy Huddleston, a delegate to the conference from the area. Bloody Sunday is the name given to the 1972 massacre of 14 civil rights protesters in Derry, Northern Ireland, by British troops. The British government has been forced to mount a still ongoing public inquiry into the events.

London won't "concede anything without pressure," said Huddleston. A young campaigner at the table said that, 30 years on, New Lodge is an issue "because as we are in a position of strength, now we feel something can be done." Some 500 people had attended the New Lodge inquiry in November of last year, he said.

Sinn Fein leader Daithí Doolan voiced opposition to the U.S.-UK assault on Iraq. Permission granted by Dublin for the use of Ireland's Shannon airport as a stop-off and refueling point for tens of thousands of U.S. troops showed that "the Irish government is most definitely colluding with the slaughter of innocent Iraqis" in spite of its professed neutrality, he said.

The same weekend as the Ard Fheis, some 10,000 marched through Dublin in a protest against the U.S.-UK assault on Iraq. Ulster Unionist leader David Trimble has called for Dublin to explicitly line up behind the imperialist assault.

Meanwhile, Ireland's *Sunday Business Post* reports that a number of Irish firms have made bids to subcontract to U.S. firms in the postwar construction work in Iraq.

U.S. gov't pursues sanctions on north Korea, Pyongyang says it's a 'prelude to war'

BY RÓGER CALERO

After months-long prodding by the U.S. government, the United Nations Security Council set April 9 as the date to begin a discussion on potential sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), which Washington and Tokyo have accused of being a "nuclear threat." The U.S. government has long sought a formal rebuke of Pyongyang by April 10, the date its withdrawal from the nuclear nonproliferation treaty becomes official.

U.S. State Department officials praised the decision to set UN Security Council consultations on Washington's request as "the logical next step in the process."

The north Korean government said it considered the meeting "a prelude to war," adding it will not recognize any decisions on the matter from this UN body. "The Iraqi war shows that to allow disarming through inspection does not help avert a war but rather sparks it," said a government statement, issued by the official Korea Central News Agency April 6.

At the same time, the U.S. rulers moved unilaterally to block a sale of missile technology by Pyongyang to the government of Pakistan. Furthermore, U.S. government officials are seeking to increase economic pressure on the DPRK, by implementing measures to block the flow of cash sent by Korean workers living abroad to their families in north Korea.

The U.S. rulers have been pressing the UN Security Council to adopt a statement condemning north Korea for its withdrawal from the nuclear nonproliferation treaty, and for the removal of inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency from the country earlier this year. The White House has accused the DPRK of planning to use its nuclear power plant in Yongbyon to produce weapons-grade plutonium for manufacturing a nuclear bomb.

The Chinese government has opposed this campaign by Washington. Beijing and Moscow are the two among the five UN Security Council members with veto power that have so far blocked UN sanctions against north Korea.

"Sanctions will not do, and we are opposed to the wanton use of sanctions or the threat of sanctions," China's foreign ministry spokesman Kong Quan said at the end of March.

Beijing has backed Pyongyang's demand that Washington hold direct talks with the DPRK to resolve the crisis. At the same time, the Chinese government is pressuring north Korea to adopt a more conciliatory stance. An article in the April 4 *Washington Post* stated that Chinese vice-foreign minister Wang Yi met with DPRK foreign minister Paek Nam Sun in Beijing in mid-February and supposedly warned north Korea it was "playing with fire," in threatening to test long-range missiles and take other steps that could be used by Washington as a pretext for new aggressive measures. "Sometime after Feb. 18," the article continued, "China closed the pipeline from the Daqing oil fields to North Korea for three days. China ex-



Japanese police x-ray cargo destined for north Korea. Tokyo is aiding Washington's campaign to paint Pyongyang as a "nuclear threat." This month, Tokyo started strict surveillance of freighters traveling to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Japanese authorities claim that Korean residents in Japan are using passenger vessels to smuggle electronic equipment, computer parts, software, and machine tools to Pyongyang, "which north Korea needs for its missile programs."

plained the move to North Korea as a technical problem but 'Pyongyang didn't believe us,' said a senior Chinese scholar with knowledge of the action."

In a statement released by the Korean Central News Agency April 3, the north Korean government, while defending its withdrawal from the nuclear nonproliferation treaty as necessary in the face of serious threats to the state, put the blame on Washington for "doggedly opposing [Pyongyang's] constructive proposal for the conclusion of a nonaggression treaty."

North Korean officials have stated repeatedly their interest in reaching a negotiated agreement directly with Washington that will guarantee the country's security, while the DPRK would commit to not build "unconventional" weapons. Washington has refused to hold any one-on-one talks with the north Korean government. It insists instead it would consider taking part only in "multilateral" talks that would include Beijing, Tokyo, Seoul, and Washington.

The north Korean government has continued to publicly express its concern that the DPRK could be a target itself of a U.S. attack after the assault on Baghdad.

A number of articles in the U.S. big-business press asserted at the end of March that Pyongyang seems to be cautious. "Both U.S. and South Korean officials say they haven't noticed any unusual military maneuvers by Pyongyang in recent weeks," said an article in the March 28 *Wall Street Journal*, for example. "A senior aide to South Korean president Roh Moo Hyun said his government has expected Pyongyang to use the U.S. focus on Iraq to take provocative steps, such as testing a long-range missile. 'But it seems like North Korea isn't making such moves at this

point,' the official said."

In the meantime, the Pentagon announced April 1 that it will maintain an unspecified number of stealth fighter jets and other planes in the southern part of the peninsula, after the conclusion of joint military exercises by U.S. and south Korean troops.

Maurice Strong, a UN envoy to north Korea, said after a recent visit to that country, "I think a war is unnecessary. It's unthinkable, its consequences. And yet, it is entirely possible."

The Japanese government, for its part, has joined Washington in putting pressure on the DPRK by clamping down on Korean residents in Japan who remit millions of dollars a year to their families in north Korea. The effort has focused on repressive measures against the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan, or *Chongryun*, whose members largely consider themselves to be overseas nationals of north Korea. The organization holds seats in the DPRK's national assembly.

"The current campaign against North Korea began in April last year when Japanese authorities put pressure on the privately owned Ashikaga Bank to suspend remittances to North Korea," said an article in the March 27 *Far Eastern Economic Review*. "Next month the Japanese government is expected to begin strict surveillance of cargo transported to North Korea from Japan." Former *Chongryun* supporters have alleged that this transport, primarily handled by a north Korean-operated freighter, the *Mangyongbong*, is used by *Chongryun* members to smuggle sophisticated electronic equipment, computer parts, software and machine tools "which North Korea needs for its missile programs," according to this article.

Five Cuban patriots are released from 'hole'

BY MARY ANN SCHMIDT

MIAMI—Fifty people gathered at the offices of Alianza Martiana March 31 to discuss the campaign to defend five Cuban revolutionaries jailed in U.S. federal prisons. Andrés Gómez, a national leader of the Antonio Maceo Brigade, a group of Cubans based here who support the Cuban revolution, announced to enthusiastic applause that two of the five—René González and Gerardo Hernández—had been released from solitary confinement. As of that date, the status of the other three—Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, and Fernando González—was not clear, Gómez said. Two days later, prison authorities confirmed that all five had been released from the “hole.”

Max Lesnick, a leader of Alianza Martiana, an organization opposed to Washington's economic war on Cuba, said that many of those present and other partisans of the campaign to free the five Cuban patriots had paid for a plane trailing a banner demanding, “Free the Cuban 5; The real terrorists are on Calle 8 today.” The real terrorists are on Calle 8 today.”

The plane had flown over a demonstration of more than 5,000 people organized by counterrevolutionary Cuban-American groups in Miami the day before. The right-wing rally was called to condemn the Cuban government and to support Washington's assault on Iraq. Many called for Havana to be targeted next after Baghdad.

The terrorists referred to in the Alianza Martiana banner are counterrevolutionary groups that have a decades-long history of launching violent attacks on Cuba from U.S. soil, particularly Miami, with Washington's complicity. The five Cuban revolutionaries were in the United States to collect information about the activities of these groups.

The FBI, which arrested the five in 1998, was unable to prove they committed any illegal acts. Instead, the five men were convicted on a series of conspiracy charges, in-



Alianza Martiana and other groups in Miami chartered a plane that flew over a demonstration of more than 5,000 people March 30. The banner trailing the plane reads “Free the Cuban 5. The real terrorists are on Calle 8 today.” The march was organized by rightist Cuban-American groups to support Washington's assault on Iraq, and to demand that Havana be targeted next.

cluding conspiracy to act as an unregistered agent of a foreign power, to commit espionage for Havana, and to commit murder. They were given prison sentences ranging from 15 years to a double-life term. In an attempt to isolate them, Washington sent them to five different penitentiaries thousands of miles apart from each other.

A few weeks before the deadline for the five to file appeals of their convictions, the Justice Department implemented Special Administrative Measures placing them under severe restrictions, including solitary confinement with no access to any reading or printed material. Their lawyers were notified in writing that they would be in isolation for a year, which could be renewed. At least one was denied access to his attorney.

Hernández, who has been given the harshest sentence, a double-life term, was held in

the worst conditions—in “The Box,” a hole within the “hole” of the maximum security penitentiary in Lompoc, California. He was thrown into a room where he could only walk three steps. He was forced to wear only underpants and a shirt. He spent his last week trying to plug a leak in the ceiling from a toilet above his cell. His complaints to the prison's medical services were ignored.

Defenders of the five across the United States and elsewhere organized a month-long campaign of letter writing and other activities demanding that the Federal Bureau of Prisons remove the five men from the hole.

On April 1, it was officially confirmed that all five had been released from solitary confinement.

A statement from Cuba's National Assembly released that day, said, “It has been demonstrated that during a month, the government

of the United States violated the rights of the prisoners, of their lawyers, and the norms of due process, seriously damaging the appeal process. Taking them now out of ‘the hole,’ the U.S. government is proving that [there] never existed a ‘national security’ justification and that it was obliged to go back because of the denunciations and protests.”

Washington claimed that the five were removed from the general prison population, and had their visitation rights cut off, because they were a potential threat to “national security.” U.S. attorney general John Ashcroft sent an order to the Federal Bureau of Prisons alleging that the contact the five have maintained, by mail or in person, with other people could result in the unauthorized disclosure of information that “could pose a threat to the national security of the United States.” The order was supposed to last for a year and could have been extended at any time by the attorney general.

“The U.S. government has not finished yet with its arbitrary, discriminatory and illegal actions,” the Cuban National Assembly statement continued. “It still maintains inadmissible prohibitions related to the use of the phone, the correspondence, the consular access, and the family visits, that should be completely lifted....”

“The government of the United States in March 2003 has repeated the methods and techniques it used earlier to prevent a fair trial—that is precisely the principal question that the Atlanta Appeals Court should consider. That is the best proof to demonstrate that the Court should dismiss the Miami farce and order the release of the five prisoners.”

The defense team for the five was planning to file appeals of their convictions at a hearing of the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals in Atlanta April 7.

Leonard Weinglass, lawyer for Antonio Guerrero and part of the overall legal defense for the five, however, requested a 30-day extension because it was impossible for the defense to organize necessary collaboration with their clients over the last month.

In an April 4 interview with Radio Havana, Weinglass reported that Antonio Guerrero “did tell me that the three letters he wrote to me while he was detained in isolation have today been returned to him. They were not delivered despite the fact that the U.S. attorney promised me that legal mail rights were fully restored. They were not because he never got my letters, either.” Weinglass also said that prison authorities had just handed Guerrero a box of 200 letters sent to him while in solitary confinement.

“I am now examining the possibility of filing a lawsuit against the government for the mistreatment of the five,” Weinglass told Radio Havana, “and the lack of justification or reason for putting them under such horrendous conditions.”

The statement from Cuba's National Assembly called for intensified work on their behalf. “It is necessary to multiply and intensify the solidarity, now that we have this additional proof about the serious misconduct of the U.S. government,” it said. “Solidarity took them out of ‘the hole.’ Solidarity will free them.”

Letters of solidarity and books or other printed materials for the five Cuban patriots can be sent to the addresses below.

Tyson threatens strikers with scabs

Continued from front page

of money for their fight. “In a local initiative to advance solidarity with our fight, Local 179 in Cherokee, Iowa, is organizing a benefit dance for May 24,” French said.

The strike began after meat packers rejected 10 concession demands by the company that would cut a total of more than 30 percent in wages and benefits. Tyson Foods,

the world's largest processor and marketer of chicken, beef, and pork, reported gross income of more than \$23 billion last year.

Two meat packers at Dakota Premium Foods in the Twin Cities, who are members of UFCW Local 789, were among those who took part in the March 29 support rally for Tyson strikers in Jefferson. They spoke on the importance of solidarity with the em-

battled meat packers at an April 4 Militant Labor Forum in St. Paul, Minnesota.

“I was impressed with the spirit of solidarity I could see in all the strikers,” stated Miguel Olvera, a leader of the two-year-long successful union organizing drive at Dakota Premium Foods in South St. Paul and a speaker at the March 29 rally in Jefferson. “From my experience in the Dakota fight I know that workers in this situation should not step back but fight, and fight some more. With more solidarity the strikers can move forward. There are not a lot of struggles like this taking place in the United States right now. But each of these fights is important. It is the details of organizing unity that are so important. And this depends on leadership, which is something that all workers have the potential within themselves to develop.”

“These strikers are open, eager, and happy to see solidarity from workers from St. Paul, Omaha, Des Moines, and Chicago,” stated Jenny Benton, another meat packer at Dakota, and a shop steward of UFCW Local 789.

“The company has been trying to divide working people over this strike by recruiting scabs who are Latino. The big majority of the strikers are U.S.-born. However, these age-old tactics of the companies to divide workers are not as effective as they once were. The delegation sponsored by my local was 13 people, half Latino, and was very well received. When Miguel spoke, the Tyson strikers gave him a big round of applause in appreciation.”

One worker in the audience suggested that the Tyson strikers should raise their demands to the political level. “The most important thing is to advance support for the strike as it is, against the steep concessions demanded by Tyson,” stated Benton.

“The issues have been defined by the company. As Miguel stated, with more support the strike can move forward. It is only in this way that the labor movement can be strengthened. And other meat packers in the Midwest and around the country know that the stakes in the Jefferson fight are very high.”

UFCW Local 538 can be reached at (920) 674-5558 or through the strike headquarters web site at tysonfamiliesstandup.org

U.S. immigration frames up Somali rights campaigner

BY BECKY ELLIS

ST. PAUL, Minnesota—Omar Jamal, executive director of the Somali Justice Advocacy Center, was released from jail April 3 after having his bail reduced from \$10,000 to \$6,500. He had been arrested by the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (BICE) three days earlier for allegedly filing false immigration documents five years ago. The arrest took place on the heels of a Tennessee grand jury six-count indictment of Jamal on these charges last week.

Fifty supporters and family members attended Jamal's bail hearing. They had carried out a three-day campaign of phone calls to the BICE—the reorganized Immigration and Naturalization Service—office demanding his release.

An estimated 20,000 Somalis live in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, making it the largest concentration of Somalis in the United States.

Police harassment of Somalis increased in the last year and a half. Jamal said police were “just shooting them and killing them just like in Mogadishu and the civil war. This isn't what we expect.”

Somalia has been without a central government since civil war broke out in 1991. Mogadishu is the country's capital.

Jamal, 30, helped to lead a public fight against the killing of Abu Kassin Jeilani, a Somali man, by Minneapolis police last year. He called for the removal of Minneapolis police chief Robert Olson and helped

organize a demonstration of 500 to demand justice.

As Washington began to push deportations of Somalis convicted of criminal or immigration violations, Jamal led a public campaign to stop the expulsions through forums, press conferences, and other activities. A federal judge in Seattle issued a nationwide ban on the deportations of Somalis in early 2003.

Jamal visited Seattle, and Lewiston, Maine, on a “National Tour against Hate” in January of this year. The mayor of Lewiston, where 1,100 Somali reside, had published an open letter asking that no more Somalis take up residency there.

After the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center, Jamal helped organize a public campaign against the shutdown of Somali money transfer agencies by the U.S. Treasury Department. The government accused these agencies of financing “terrorism.” Since then most of these agencies have been cleared of all charges by the government.

Richard Breitman, a local immigration lawyer, said Jamal's case appears to be an exception to standard legal practice. “I've just never seen it in 20 years, to criminally prosecute an asylum applicant,” he stated.

For each of the six counts of making false statements when he applied for asylum, Jamal is liable for up to five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. BICE is also seeking to deport him.

Write to the five Cuban revolutionaries

René González, Reg. #58738-004, P.O. Box 725, FCI Edgefield, Edgefield, South Carolina 29824

Antonio Guerrero, Reg. #58741-004, USP Florence, P.O. Box 7500, Florence, Colorado 81226

Gerardo Hernández (Manuel Viramontes), Reg. #58739-004, USP Lompoc, 3901 Klein Blvd., Lompoc, California 93436

Fernando González (Rubén Campa), Reg. #58733-004, FCI Oxford, P.O. Box 1000, Oxford, Wisconsin 53952-0505

Ramón Labañino (Luis Medina), Reg. #58734-004, USP Beaumont, P.O. Box 26030, Beaumont, Texas 77720-6035

'Militant' supporters win new subscribers

BY SAM MANUEL

"With everything going on in the world, I've made a decision to study history," said a young participant in an antiwar rally in Lincoln, Nebraska, as he bought several titles published by Pathfinder Press to go with the *Militant* subscription he had picked up at a Washington protest earlier in the year.

With six subscriptions sold, the April 5 rally proved an effective way to kick off the international sales drive in the state,

reported Jacob Perasso from Omaha.

Over the April 5-6 weekend socialist workers and young socialists in seven countries launched an international circulation drive to sell subscriptions to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*. The sales campaign continues through June 1.

The drive begins as the U.S. and British imperialists proceed to overrun and occupy Iraq, setting the stage for deeper plunder of the country and further wars of conquest.

The factual reports and working-class analysis of these events carried by the socialist periodicals make them important weapons for working people and youth.

They also carry frontline reports on struggles by workers in meat packing, and other fronts of working-class resistance to the bosses' offensive, along with many other articles of interest to working people.

The international campaign includes sales of Pathfinder's *Capitalism's World Disorder: Working-Class Politics at the Millennium* by Jack Barnes, along with several issues of *New Internationalist*. These publications tackle questions like the deepening world capitalist depression and the inter-imperialist conflicts behind the U.S.-British invasion of Iraq.

Campaigners in Australia, Canada, Iceland, New Zealand, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and in cities across the United States are mapping out plans for the eight-week drive.



Militant/Sam Manuel

Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialists table at April 1 protest in Washington, D.C., to defend affirmative action—an action which drew tens of thousands of people.

Their weekly routine will include sales in workers' districts, in workplaces, and at factory gates. Supporters will also take the socialist newspapers and books to social protest actions and strike picket lines.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

ALABAMA Birmingham

Support the Socialist Alternative in 2003. Brian Taylor for Mayor of Birmingham. Speaker: Brian Taylor, Socialist Workers Party, Young Socialists, United Mine Workers of America Local 2133. Fri., April 18, 7:00 p.m. 3029-A Bessemer Road. Donation: \$4; Students and unemployed, \$2 (205) 780-0021.

The chart below lists the goals adopted by local supporters, and the overall international goals.

Over the next eight weeks the *Militant* will publish reports on progress in the campaign, along with photographs of sales teams at work.

—CALENDAR—

ILLINOIS Chicago

Rally in Chicago to Demand that Jewel Stores Support the National Azteca Foods Boycott. Join with religious, student, and community leaders as we demand justice for the Azteca Food workers who have been on strike since Sept. 30, 2002. Wed., April 16, 12 noon. Jewel store location at Roosevelt and Wabash, Chicago. (312) 829-8300.

Militant/Perspectiva Mundial Subscription Drive April 5-June 1

Country	Militant Goal	PM Goal	Book Goal
AUSTRALIA	30	5	12
CANADA			
Vancouver	35	5	15
Toronto	35	5	25
Montreal	12	4	15
CANADA total	82	14	55
ICELAND	15	1	
NEW ZEALAND			
Christchurch	16	1	4
Auckland	20	1	5
N.Z. total	36	2	9
SWEDEN			
Stockholm	10	2	4
Gothenburg	12	2	8
SWEDEN total	22	4	12
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	40	15	25
Central Scotland	12	1	8
UK total	52	16	33
UNITED STATES			
Atlanta	35	15	25
Birmingham	20	5	10
Boston	35	15	25
Charlotte	20	8	16
Chicago	40	25	25
Cleveland	20	8	18
Des Moines*	25	12	12
Detroit	25	8	12
Houston	25	10	25
Los Angeles	45	20	20
Miami	32	10	25
NE Pennsylvania	20	6	10
Newark	55	20	30
NY Garment Dist.	100	40	60
Omaha*	17	31	17
Philadelphia	30	7	10
Pittsburgh	30	3	20
San Francisco	35	15	25
Seattle	30	8	20
Tampa	25	5	15
Tucson	10	2	6
Twin Cities	45	35	25
Utah	10	5	10
Washington	25	12	15
Western Colorado			
U.S. total	754	325	476
Int'l totals	991	367	597
Goals should be	1000	350	600

IN THE UNIONS

	Militant Goal	PM Goal	Book Goal
AUSTRALIA			
AMIEU	4		2
MUA	4		2
Total	8		4
CANADA			
UFCW			
UNITE			
Total	0	0	0
NEW ZEALAND			
MWU	2		
NDU	2		
Total	4		
UNITED STATES			
UFCW	50	75	40
UMWA	15	4	10
UNITE	25	20	20
Total	90	99	70

BY PAUL PEDERSON

As the \$85,000 *Militant/Perspectiva Mundial* Fund campaign approaches the halfway point, supporters of these socialist publications in most areas have a substantial challenge in front of them to close the gap between the funds pledged and those collected thus far.

At Week 4 a total of \$9,178 is in hand, with another \$4,620 reported to be in the mail. To be on a steady course to complete the drive these figures combined should be at \$37,400.

A key part of closing the gap will be successful fund-raising events organized over the next couple of weeks around which campaigners can focus their efforts. Reaching the local and international goals means appealing as broadly as possible—well beyond longtime supporters—to workers, youth, and others who read the *Militant* or *Perspectiva Mundial* and who, if asked, would gladly make a contribution to help sustain these working-class periodicals.

One recent such event was held in New York April 3. The Pathfinder bookstore in Manhattan's Garment District, where the event was held, was packed. Some students and several others present said it was their first visit to the Pathfinder bookstore, which sells the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* as well as books on revolutionary politics.

Ma'mud Shirvani, the Farsi-language editor of Pathfinder Press, gave a presentation on the imperialist war drive in the Mideast that explained the legacy of the Iranian revolution today.

In his talk, Shirvani pointed to the importance of the on-the-scene coverage from Iran that the *Militant* brought its readers during and after the 1979 popular insurrection that overthrew the U.S.-backed monarchy there. Today, Shirvani explained, that coverage is an important contribution to the recorded history of the revolution, and a testimony to the importance of sending *Militant* reporters to respond to developments in the class struggle around the world. Those attending the meeting raised more than \$1,400 for the fund.

This fund campaign makes it possible to produce the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, as well as international and national reporting trips. The \$85,000 is needed to help cover costs of printing and shipping, renting the office space, paying the phone and electricity bills, and maintaining the equipment needed to put out a new issue of the *Militant* each week. Those funds are needed now to help cover expenses that have come due.

Campaigners are asked to send in brief reports covering the progress of the fund-raising efforts in their areas by 8:00 a.m. on Mondays.

AMIEU—Australasian Meat Industry Employees' Union; MUA—Maritime Union of Australia; MWU—Meat Workers Union; NDU—National Distribution Union; UFCW—United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA—United Mine Workers of America; UNITE—Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees.

\$85,000 Militant Fund March 10-May 12: Week 4

	Goal	Paid	%
Charlotte NC	3,000	1,290	43%
New York NY	7,500	2,116	28%
Twin Cities MN	3,000	750	25%
Birmingham AL	2,500	460	18%
Omaha NE	900	164	18%
Los Angeles CA	7,500	1,350	18%
Philadelphia PA	3,000	500	17%
Des Moines IA	900	125	14%
Miami FL	1,600	210	13%
Boston MA	2,800	320	11%
Newark NJ	3,800	410	11%
Utah	800	50	6%
Houston TX	3,200	180	6%
Washington DC	2,200	120	5%
San Francisco CA	7,000	350	5%
Detroit MI	3,000	100	3%
Cleveland OH	1,100	5	0%
Atlanta GA	4,100	0	0%
Chicago IL	4,200	0	0%
Northeast PA	1,600	0	0%
Pittsburgh PA	3,000	0	0%
Seattle WA	6,000	0	0%
Tampa FL	1,800	0	0%
Tucson AZ	250	100	40%
Western CO	2,500	0	0%
Other	0	306	
U.S. Total	77,250	8,906	12%
Iceland	150	50	33%
New Zealand	1,500	212	14%
United Kingdom	500	10	2%
Australia	1,000	0	0%
Canada	3,460	0	0%
France	300	0	0%
Sweden	400	0	0%
International total	84,560	9,178	11%
Int'l goal/Should be	85,000	37,400	44%

U.S. invaders take Baghdad, plan regime

Continued from front page

pressing support for the assault on Iraq, have objected to the plan for a U.S.-dominated protectorate. They fear they will largely be excluded from political and economic influence in the region. Even London, the staunchest ally of the U.S. rulers in this war, has expressed reservations and tried to convince the Bush administration—unsuccessfully—to allow wider latitude for involvement of powers from the European Union in running postwar Iraq.

The dispute highlights the driving force behind the assault on Iraq: the conflict between the various imperialist powers over the redivision of the Middle East and control of natural resources in the region—and more broadly in the world.

The U.S.-British invasion of Iraq began March 20 with a lightning ground advance toward the capital and an intense bombing of major Iraqi cities. After a week that seemed like a cakewalk, U.S. and British forces met some resistance, having to regroup and send reinforcements to the south. Following another week of strengthening supply lines and suppressing irregular Iraqi government forces in southern cities, the international airport on the western outskirts of Baghdad was captured by U.S. Army and Special Operations troops.

Over the previous week, U.S. forces, just 50 miles outside Baghdad, had relentlessly shelled Iraqi Republican Guard divisions entrenched around the city. The guard offered little resistance to the U.S. advance.

Republican Guard divisions destroyed

Armored units from the Third Infantry Division rolled rapidly up the final stretch to Baghdad, killing hundreds of Iraqi soldiers who fired small arms at the passing tank columns. One captured soldier from the Medina Division of the Republican Guard told U.S. reporters that Iraqi troops had been subjected to a terrifying bombardment. “When the bombs hit the tanks, many people got in their cars. Then the bombs hit the cars,” he said. Iraqi soldiers said that among the bombs dropped by U.S. planes were cluster bombs.

In one of the signs of the disintegration of the capitalist regime in Baghdad, stripped-off uniforms and abandoned tanks and artillery littered the roadside. Some residents in the town of Suwayrah—where the Medina Division headquarters had been abandoned—and other points along the way cheered the passing U.S. troops.

As the imperialist forces entered Baghdad, tens of thousands of residents fled northward, clogging the roads out of the city for miles.

U.S. tank and infantry units seized the Saddam Hussein International Airport after a night of heavy fighting, aiming a political as well as military blow at the regime. Pentagon spokespeople said their troops killed 320 Iraqi troops in heavy artillery attacks and bombings. Doctors at a nearby hospital reported they were swamped with wounded and that dozens in nearby neighborhoods had been killed during the airport battle.

Within two days, U.S. transport planes and other military aircraft began landing at this airport.

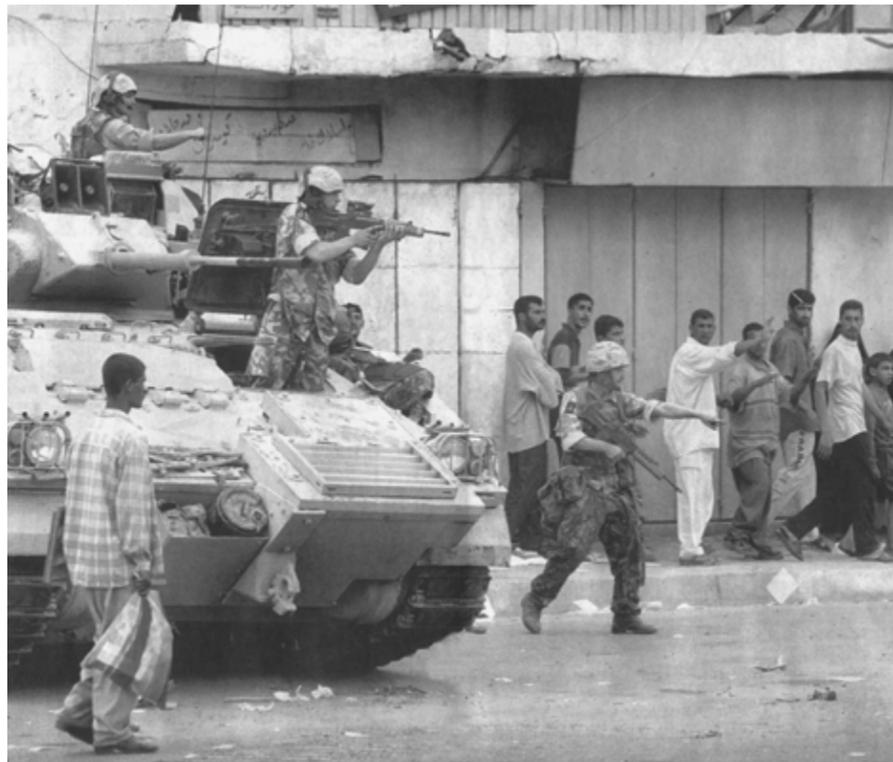
U.S. forces rapidly encircled the capital and established checkpoints on all major routes into the city, making a point of asserting that civilians would not be blocked from coming and going. They began to launch increasingly bolder incursions into the city, while seeking to root out resistance by paramilitary combatants.

On April 7, U.S. troops seized several key buildings in downtown Baghdad, including the information ministry and the main presidential palace, where they faced rocket-propelled grenades and small-arms fire from defending troops. Tank units have rolled through downtown areas, to demonstrate to government officials and Baghdad residents “that we can go wherever we want when we want,” Capt. Frank Thorp, a Pentagon spokesman, told the media. On April 6, a unit of 25 Abrams tanks and 12 Bradley armored vehicles drove through southwestern Baghdad, killing about 1,000 Iraqi troops, according to U.S. officials. Thorp said the raids were intended to bring down the regime, “not to take ground.”

Press reports indicate that the invaders have met some resistance from the government’s paramilitary Fedayeen, but little from the demoralized Republican

Guard troops.

Washington’s objective is to further isolate and shatter the government and the ruling Baathist party apparatus, rather than storm the city. The U.S. invaders are trying to avoid the much higher casualties on both sides a military blitz might lead to, with the political price accompanying such a toll.



British commandos use heavy armor as they push unopposed through center of Basra

Overall, the Bush administration has followed a calculated strategy of dealing with the civilian population more carefully than most imperialist armies have done in previous invasions. This is due not to a sudden surge of humanitarian concern on the part of the U.S. rulers. Their goal with this strategy is to minimize opposition to the imposition of a U.S. protectorate that will reinforce Washington’s ability to dominate the region and plunder its resources. In the short term, this approach has been successful.

Iraqi government officials reported that as of April 3, a total of 677 civilians had been killed and 5,062 wounded during the first two weeks of the imperialist assault on Iraq. According to Pentagon officials, U.S. forces had fired 750 cruise missiles and 14,000 precision-guided missiles in the first two weeks of the war.

Information compiled from dozens of TV and other international media reports indicated that, as of April 8, at least 900 Iraqi civilians and as many as 9,700 Iraqi soldiers had been killed in the assault.

Reported U.S. deaths as of the same date amounted to 91 troops, while the British toll was 30 dead soldiers.

Invaders try to avoid civilian casualties

Some of the U.S. missiles and bombs have hit civilian targets, including a working-class neighborhood and a market in Baghdad on March 26 and 28, respectively, leaving dozens killed and sparking anger among local residents. In other instances, U.S. troops did not hesitate to shoot with heavy weapons at civilian vehicles that did not immediately heed orders to stop at checkpoints, killing a number of unarmed women and children in the process.

Nonetheless, it is clear that U.S. officials have been seeking to avoid massive Iraqi civilian casualties—in contrast with the 1990–91 assault, where Washington and London slaughtered at least 150,000 people. Unlike the indiscriminate, sweeping bombings unleashed then, in Baghdad the missiles have mostly been aimed at government buildings and military targets.

So far the imperialist forces have not destroyed the capital’s infrastructure, which would lead to a rapid health crisis from lack of electricity and running water. This is both because Washington plans to use existing facilities to help take control of the country, and because it didn’t need to destroy much of Baghdad in order to take it.

After two weeks of bombings, U.S. forces knocked out Baghdad’s telephone exchanges as they prepared for the move on the capital. Journalists visiting the sites noted that “in almost every case the missiles or bombs used appeared to have struck bull’s-eyes in the roofs” and plunged

straight down into the buildings, *New York Times* reporter John Burns wrote. “The striking thing, in these cases, was that even Iraqi officials made no claim of deaths,” he noted, adding that the surrounding neighborhoods had mostly been abandoned days before.

The efforts to seize Baghdad without

The resistance in southern Iraqi cities, however, while not expected by U.S. officials, was limited largely to guerrilla harassment by the regime’s paramilitary forces. There has been no evidence of massive popular resistance, despite the anger of many working people at the hundreds of civilian deaths and thousands of serious injuries caused by U.S.-British bombings, and at the severe hardships caused by the past 12 years of imperialist economic sanctions.

The Saddam Hussein regime, far from organizing and mobilizing working people, relegated them to the sidelines. It resorted to brutal coercion as well as exhortations and false claims such as the supposed arrival of 4,000 Muslim volunteers from other countries to conduct “suicide” attacks. It placed salvation largely in the hands of the Republican Guard and its rotted-out officer corps.

In the second week of the war, the U.S. and British military were able to redirect some of their troops to attack the Fedayeen militia, while continuing to target the Baathist party apparatus. By the following week, U.S. forces were entering Baghdad.

Defenders of the Rumsfeld approach skewered the critics and their warning of a supposedly flawed military plan. “With American troops at the gates of Baghdad, the plan is looking pretty good now,” wrote columnist Charles Krauthammer April 4. He made fun of how R.W. Apple, the *New York Times*’s longtime military “expert,” had been quick to predict a “quagmire.”

Liberal *Times* writer William Keller acknowledged after the fact that the Bush administration’s course was “impressive: a well-considered strategy, adaptable to the unexpected turns of war and accomplished, so far, with remarkably low U.S. casualties and far, far fewer civilian deaths than the alarmists predicted.” Apple himself turned on a dime and praised the Bush administration strategy, saying the U.S. troops who had taken the Baghdad airport “arrived there faster than either critics or supporters of the war imagined that they could” and that “the vaunted Republican Guard has proved to be a washout for the second war in a row.”

Brig. Gen. Vincent Brooks, the 44-year-old Central Command officer who gives the daily press briefings on the war, won praise in the big-business media for not having lost his cool in face of hostile and often ignorant questions from liberal journalists.

Meanwhile, Washington has continued its main propaganda themes to rally public opinion behind the war. One is the claim that the Hussein regime stockpiled chemical and biological weapons that posed a threat to the United States. Despite dire predictions, Iraqi forces have not used chemical arms against the invading armies. Previous U.S. claims over the past two weeks—allegedly finding hidden chemical weapons facilities or Iraqi soldiers wearing anti-chemical weapons gear—have generally made headlines in the capitalist media for a day or two and then faded. On April 7, U.S. officials claimed they found evidence of chemical weapons at what they called a military training camp in central Iraq.

The U.S. rulers have also intensified their patriotic campaign to “support our troops.” The campaign to display yellow ribbons has expanded, as the government and big-business media have played up the rescue of a captured U.S. soldier, Pfc. Jessica Lynch, as well as the funerals for GIs who have died during the invasion. The press has highlighted the deaths of a few soldiers who were women, Black, or Native American.

Imperialist conflict over control of Iraq

Before Washington and London launched the war, their imperialist rivals in Paris and Berlin, as well as the regime in Moscow, had argued for extending the United Nations “arms inspections” in Iraq and getting a UN stamp of approval as a way of legitimizing the assault on that Middle Eastern nation. The U.S. and British governments dismissed these proposals and launched the offensive. Now that the invasion is well-advanced, their rivals have declared their support for the war, maneuvering to try to ensure themselves a place at the postwar trough.

“I think it is absolutely natural,” said French foreign minister Dominique de Villepin at an April 4 news conference, endorsing the Anglo-American invasion,

‘Rumsfeld doctrine’ critics left in dust

Washington’s successes on the Iraqi battlefield pushed back the carping by retired generals and liberal critics of the Bush administration’s military strategy, vindicating the approach that U.S. defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld has most forcefully advocated.

The “Rumsfeld Doctrine” calls for Washington using smaller, faster-moving military units that rely heavily on special forces and weapons technology, and are willing to take more risks in the field. The critics had complained that the U.S. ground force was not large enough, was facing stiffer-than-expected Iraqi resistance, and had become stretched.

of occupation

“that in the security phase, the forces on the ground have a specific responsibility.” German chancellor Gerhard Schröder, echoed by Russian president Vladimir Putin, has called for a quick victory for the occupying forces.

To counter the move to set up a U.S.-dominated occupation regime in Iraq, however, the French and German governments have called for a major UN role. “Nobody can hope to build peace alone,” de Villepin lectured. The White House has rejected this demand. U.S. national security advisor Condoleezza Rice said April 4 that “the coalition intends to have a leading role...the leading role,” referring to Washington and London. She said the United Nations might have a secondary role “where its expertise makes sense.”

De Villepin also objected to plans to award most “reconstruction” contracts to U.S. companies. “The idea that Iraq can be an El Dorado, a cake that states can cut up and share doesn’t appear to me to be good sense,” he huffed.

The same day, the U.S. House of Representatives approved a proposal to bar companies based in France, Germany, Russia, China, and Syria—whose governments opposed a U.S.-sponsored war resolution before the UN Security Council—from U.S. government contracts to rebuild Iraq after the war. The Senate has avoided a vote on the controversial issue thus far.

London, too, is concerned that, while a “coalition partner,” it may not get much of the Iraqi gateau. British prime minister Anthony Blair has also called for a more central UN role in the future occupation regime. British officials said Blair would raise his proposals at his April 7–8 war council with Bush in Belfast, northern Ireland.

Assaults on Moscow, Damascus

Washington also taught Moscow a lesson, and U.S. government officials have threatened the Syrian government it may be next on their hit list.

Vladimir Titorenko, Russia’s ambassador to Iraq, arrived April 7 in Damascus, Syria’s capital, in a diplomatic convoy that he said had come under fire from U.S. forces besieging Baghdad, injuring five people.

“After leaving Baghdad,” Titorenko told reporters near the Iraqi-Syrian border, “we faced a number of American armored vehicles, tanks, and guns.” He added that the convoy stopped when they saw military vehicles. “There was shooting [at us], and some hand grenades were thrown at other vehicles,” he stated. “We tried to warn them, but they fired at us directly, and the shooting continued for about 40 minutes.”

A spokesman for Moscow’s foreign ministry said five Russian diplomats were injured in the April 6 assault. Titorenko, who drove his own car to Syria, said his driver had been left in Iraq to be treated for “serious injuries” he sustained in the attack.

The U.S. Army initially claimed it had no troops in the Baghdad suburb where the incident took place. A Russian TV correspondent who had been in the convoy said it was caught in a crossfire between U.S. and Iraqi forces. In Moscow, a senior U.S. diplomat later said the incident had occurred in an area where U.S. forces were active.

On April 8, with Moscow’s relations with Washington hitting a new low, Russian defense minister Sergei Ivanov canceled his visit to the United States, which had been scheduled for April 13.

Two days earlier, U.S. deputy defense secretary Paul Wolfowitz threatened the Syrian government over its support for the Iraqi regime. “There’s got to be a change in Syria,” Wolfowitz said on NBC’s “Meet the Press” TV show April 6. Washington had warned Damascus earlier to stop sending war materiel to the Iraqi army and close its border to Muslim militants who were already traveling from Syria to Iraq to join the fight against the U.S.-led invasion. “The Syrians need to know,” Wolfowitz emphasized, “they’ll be held accountable.”

The U.S. official continued, “I think a lot of countries, including Syria, will eventually get the message from this [Iraq war] that it’s much better to come to terms peacefully with the international community, to not acquire these weapons of mass destruction, to not use terrorism as an instrument of national policy.”

James Woolsey, a former CIA director who has been considered for a post in the U.S. group that will install a new regime

in Iraq, told an audience at the University of California in Los Angeles (UCLA) April 2 that the “fascist” government in Syria has to be replaced.

Moves apace for a protectorate

Meanwhile, moves are apace to establish a protectorate in Iraq that will be run directly by the Pentagon. The White House is reportedly preparing to announce retired general Jay Gardner as its “civilian administrator” for the so-called Iraqi Interim Authority, which Rice described as “a repository of sovereignty” for that nation. Wolfowitz stated April 6 that such a regime would last more than six months before Washington would consider turning it over to Iraqi figures. Lt. Gen. Thomas Franks, commander of the U.S.-led forces assaulting Iraq, is set to be the supreme military authority of the occupation regime. Franks visited U.S. troops fighting in the Iraqi battlefield for the first time April 7.

Washington is planning to use exiled Iraqi bourgeois opposition leaders as figureheads in such a regime. Ahmad Chalabi, head of the U.S.-funded Iraqi National Congress, was secretly flown by the U.S. military to southern Iraq as part of these moves. Chalabi has not set foot in Iraq for 45 years, having departed in 1958, after the July revolution that brought down the imperialist-backed monarchy and five



Protesters in Cairo, Egypt, condemn imperialist military assault on Iraq, April 7.

years before the reactionary coup that brought the Baathist party to power.

Some Iraqi exiles have called for the country to be opened to international oil companies as quickly as possible. “The move could spell a windfall for big oil companies such as ExxonMobil, Royal Dutch/Shell, BP and TotalFinaElf and oil service

companies such as Halliburton and Schlumberger and would strain the OPEC oil cartel’s attempt to keep oil prices high,” the *Financial Times* reported April 7.

The London daily reported that U.S. plans call for the Iraqi protectorate to “remain a member of OPEC but be exempt from quota restrictions.”

Baath party beheaded 1958 revolution

BY PATRICK O’NEILL

Among the institutions of the Iraqi state targeted by U.S. and British forces is the Baath Party of Saddam Hussein. Air attacks have leveled party offices in several cities, and the party’s apparatus has crumbled before the rapid imperialist advance. Meanwhile, seeking justification for their assault, the imperialist propagandists have trumpeted the Baathists’ repressive record.

This is a shift from the backing that Washington and London gave to Saddam Hussein’s regime throughout the 1980s, up until Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

For working people in Iraq, the Baath Party has consistently governed on behalf of the country’s capitalist rulers. In fact, the first Baath Party government, brought to power by a military coup on Feb. 8, 1963, dealt Iraqi workers and farmers the single biggest defeat in the country’s modern history.

In those events Baathist leaders joined a number of military officers in overthrowing the government of Gen. Abdel Karim Kassem. The new regime executed Kassem and other prominent figures, and imprisoned thousands of members of the Iraqi Communist Party and other opponents in makeshift camps. Three days after the coup, the new government was recognized by Washington, London, and other imperialist powers, as well as by Moscow.

In carrying out these ferocious purges, the Baathist government decapitated the vanguard of the revolution of 1958. The July 14 Revolution, as it is known, had begun with the overthrow of the British-backed monarchy. Iraqi working people poured into the streets in celebration of that victory.

Kassem’s government, supported by nationalist-minded forces that included a wing of the Baath Party, had legalized trade unions and implemented a land reform aimed at dismantling feudal domination of the countryside. It placed heavy curbs on the operations of the British-controlled Iraqi Petroleum Company and established the Iraqi National Oil Company.

Kassem’s procapitalist regime also took a number of reactionary steps. He banned political parties, including the Stalinist Iraqi Communist Party, whose leaders had supported his government and had campaigned for inclusion in his cabinet. He also launched a military assault in the north against the Kurdish struggle for national self-determination.

Formation of Baath Party

In addition to its bloody purges, the regime installed by the 1963 coup continued the anti-Kurd offensive. Later that year the Baath Party leaders were themselves purged from the government.

The Iraqi party had been formed in 1954 with the name Baath Socialist Party. The

Baathist movement—meaning “rebirth” in Arabic—had originated in Syria, where the party was founded in 1947. The party also exists in Jordan.

The formation of the Baathist parties was part of the rise of Arab nationalism and resistance to the colonial oppression of the major European capitalist powers. The most prominent spokesperson for Arab unity of the period was Gamal Abdel Nasser, the Egyptian president from 1956 to 1970. Nasser’s government nationalized important sectors of the Egyptian economy and in 1956 seized the Suez Canal in the face of British and French government opposition.

The Iraqi party retook power in 1968 in a coup headed by Ahmad Hasan al-Bakr. The new government embarked on a course of industrialization, benefiting from the vast revenues provided by oil exports. In 1972 the oil industry was nationalized.

Saddam Hussein rose to become prime minister of the new government in 1970. Within a decade he had emerged victorious from the party’s inner power struggles, assuming the presidency and the leading role in the country’s armed forces.

The president and his supporters have molded the party as a secretive and repressive instrument of their rule. Party cadres function as part of the police and military apparatus, while constructing their own parallel structures of surveillance and repression.

At the same time, Saddam Hussein has built loyalty to his capitalist government on clan and regional lines. His support is based on his home province of Tikrit in the north. Dispensing privileges from its oil revenues, the regime fosters support among a layer of those Iraqis who identify with the Sunni branch of Islam. The Sunni population is more urban than the Shiites in the south, who face even harsher living conditions.

The soldiers in Saddam Hussein’s Special Republican Guard, a 15,000-strong elite force entrusted with the defense of central Baghdad, are recruited primarily from Tikrit and other areas considered loyal to the regime. Several of the guard’s top officers are drawn from Saddam Hussein’s own family.

The armed forces have targeted the Shiites, most of whom eke out a living in the desert or marshes, for ongoing repression. The present regime has also maintained Baghdad’s campaigns against the Kurds. In 1991, following Iraq’s defeat in the Gulf War, both the Kurdish people and Shiites in the south rebelled. The imperialist forces stood aside as Saddam Hussein sent his army to crush the uprisings.

With this police-party dictatorship functioning to stifle opposition by workers and farmers, Saddam Hussein pursued a course of industrialization, militarization, and territorial expansion through the 1980s. Much

of the industrial and military equipment was supplied by the Stalinist regime in the Soviet Union.

Saddam Hussein also built ties with the imperialist powers—particularly Paris.

Regime found favor with imperialism

Baghdad’s expansionist and anti-working-class policies also found favor with U.S. imperialism—most dramatically in the Iran-Iraq war.

The overthrow of the shah by the Iranian workers and peasants in 1979 tore down one of the principal props of imperialist domination in the region. Washington publicly encouraged Baghdad to launch a military offensive to regain the Shatt-al-Arab waterway—relinquished to Iran under U.S. instructions four years earlier.

In September 1980 Baghdad launched its invasion of Iran, touching off a war that lasted eight years and cost hundreds of thousands of lives on each side. While Tehran ceded the Shatt-al-Arab waterway in the 1988 ceasefire, Baghdad returned it in August 1990 to relieve military pressure on its eastern flank as Washington mobilized hundreds of thousands of troops in preparation for the Gulf War.

True to the Baathist tradition, Saddam Hussein used anti-imperialist demagoguery to justify its 1990 grab for Kuwaiti land and oil. He cynically attempted to “link” the Palestinian struggle with the invasion, promising to withdraw from Kuwait if Palestinian demands for national self-determination were granted.

It is “the unfortunate fate of the Palestinian issue to be manipulated and used by the Arab leaderships historically for their own ends...whether economic, political, regional, or international,” commented Palestinian leader Hanan Ashrawi in a May 1991 interview with the *Militant*.

Baghdad’s invasion of Kuwait registered a deadly miscalculation. Saddam Hussein had gambled that Washington would take no action. In fact, the imperialists imposed brutal sanctions, staged a massive buildup, and unleashed a bombing campaign and invasion in which 150,000 Iraqis were slaughtered. Over the next 12 years Washington, London, and Paris imposed no-fly zones in the north and south of the country. Along with UN sanctions and “weapons inspections,” these “patrols” helped to set the stage for the current assault.

In the face of the rapid U.S. and British military drive, the Baath Party leaders have been unable to mobilize resistance, in spite of widespread opposition to the imperialist violations of national sovereignty. They have tried to coerce working people and youth into taking up arms—resorting to the methods of terror that have marked their rule since they dealt workers and farmers an historic defeat nearly 40 years ago.

Turkish, Syrian regimes suppress Kurdish struggle

This is the second of two articles on the Kurdish struggle for national self-determination. About 25 million Kurds live in Kurdistan, the shaded territory on the map below, which spans the intersection of Iraq, Iran, Turkey, Armenia, and Syria. The first article, "Kurdish struggle for self-determination has long history," was published in last week's *Militant*. It took up the evolution of this struggle through the 20th century, in a Mideast that was carved up by the imperialist powers leading up to and after both world wars. It explained that during the 1990–91 Arab-Persian Gulf War and its aftermath the Kurdish people came to center stage in world politics as never before. Prior to the Gulf War, the Kurdish struggle was largely in retreat, having been dealt repeated defeats over the previous half century by the Iraqi, Turkish, Iranian, and Syrian ruling classes, with the complicity of Washington, London, Paris, and Moscow.

(Second of two articles)

BY SAM MANUEL

Washington shares a similar, though not identical, aim with its Turkish ally of blocking any initiatives by Kurds in their struggle for national self-determination. This can be seen in recent statements by U.S. government officials that they back the "territorial integrity" of a post-Hussein Iraq, while giving lip service to the national aspirations of the Kurdish people. Some commentators in the U.S. big-business press have floated the idea of a confederated Iraq after Washington wins the war, with an autonomous Kurdish republic in the north, as a way to punish Ankara for its refusal to allow U.S. troops to use its soil to invade Iraq from the north.

Ankara fears that the emergence of a Kurdish republic across the border with any degree of sovereignty would inflame aspirations for independence among Kurds in Turkey, who are a sizable minority.

There is a recent precedent. After the Gulf War, the rebellion by the oppressed Kurdish people in southeastern Turkey gained strength, and Istanbul has not been able to get them back under control to the same degree as before. In April 1993, for example, some 40,000 Turkish troops mounted a largely unsuccessful spring offensive into northern Iraq aimed at Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) insurgents waging guerrilla war into Turkey from cross-border bases. An equally large Turkish cross-border offensive in March 1995 also brought meager results.

In the last 15 years, more than 30,000 people have died in Turkey's war against the Kurdish people. Though a cease-fire was declared in 1999, the Turkish military has continued to periodically attack Kurds in

northern Iraq under the pretext that PKK guerrillas remain based there.

The PKK was formed in the fall of 1978 by a group of young radical intellectuals at the University of Ankara who were attracted to Maoism. The party's central leader, Abdullah Ocalan, was abducted in Kenya in 1999 by Turkish security forces and was flown to Turkey where he remains in jail. Ocalan had previously fled to Russia, where the PKK had earlier enjoyed good relations with Moscow. He was expelled by the Russian government under pressure from Ankara and Washington.

Successive Turkish governments have never recognized the existence of Kurds, classifying them as "mountain Turks." Until last August, Kurds were prohibited from publishing newspapers and magazines, broadcasting in Kurdish, or from receiving education in their language.

The contempt of the Turkish rulers for Kurdish national rights seeps through even in the wording of the new law. It guarantees the right to teach "languages and accents spoken by Turkish citizens," a reference to the Kurdish language that remains a banned term in official documents. The legislation was passed as part of a package of desperate measures by the Turkish rulers for their failed attempt to be considered for admission to the European Union.

Discrimination in Syria

About 160,000 Kurds have been denied Syrian citizenship, meaning they cannot vote, own property, go to state-run schools or get government jobs. They carry special red identity cards that identify them as "foreigners." Another 75,000 Kurds are not recognized at all and have no identity cards. They cannot even be treated in state hospitals or get marriage certificates.

Repression of the Syrian Kurds intensified with a census conducted in 1962 by the ruling Baath party that stripped 120,000 Kurds of citizenship overnight. Their offspring were also classified as foreigners or *maktoumeen*, swelling the population of dispossessed to 250,000 today. The Syrian regime settled thousands of Arabs on land confiscated from Kurds living near the border with Turkey. The settlers were also given better facilities, such as schools and clinics.

The Arab Baath Socialist Party came to power in Syria in a coup in the early 1960s, about the same time the Baathist party took control in Baghdad. The bourgeois nationalist regime used Pan-Arab demagoguery and re-established close relations with the Egyptian government of president Gamal Abdel Nasser. In 1958, Syria and Egypt united in a short-lived United Arab Republic that came to an end after a military coup in Syria in 1961.

Damascus also developed close relations with Moscow, and shared opposition to the



Kurds protest in Turkey in 1992. Ankara has systematically suppressed Kurdish national struggle, waging a war that has taken 30,000 lives in the last 15 years. Now it has moved forces toward its border with Iraq again to block any initiatives for Kurdish sovereignty.

Kurdish struggle for self-determination with the Stalinist regime in the Soviet Union.

The Syrian government even changed the names of Kurdish villages and stores into Arabic. Damascus banned the teaching of Kurdish in schools and made it illegal to publish in that language. Some restrictions were eased in 1970, allowing Kurds to speak their language in public, attend school, and watch Kurdish singers on Syrian television.

In an unusual move, Syrian vice-president Abdul-Halim Khaddam met with an Iraqi Kurdish delegation recently. Kurdish groups also recently held a round-table discussion on their plight with the participation of Syrian intellectuals. The government did not interfere with the event.

Last August, Syria's president Bashar Assad made the first visit to Kurdish areas by a Syrian leader since the country's independence in 1946. He spoke of "national unity" and did not even acknowledge the Kurds.

Abdul-Hamid Darwish, head of the Kurdish Progressive and Democratic Party, told Associated Press that Syrian Kurds don't want separation. "We don't seek the establishment of a Kurdish area," he said. "We just want to administer our area and to freely practice our cultural, social, and political rights."

Iranian revolution

The overthrow of the shah in 1979 spurred a resurgence of the Kurdish struggle in Iran. In May and June of that year, revolutionary councils were established in the capitals of several Kurdish regions. The Kurdish-held areas became poles of attraction for other oppressed nationalities, and parties on the left, including the pro-Moscow Tudeh party and the pro-Peking Peykar and Communist Union. Various currents of the Fedayeen also sought to attract followers in the area.

The new government opposed Kurdish demands for any form of autonomy and unleashed a brutal campaign against the mostly peasant Kurds.

During this crackdown, which coincided for a period with Tehran's mobilization against the assault on Iran by the Iraqi regime beginning in 1981, a number of groups in the workers movement accused Kurdish organizations of carrying out military provocations, justifying Tehran's brutality. Only one communist organization, the Workers Unity Party (HVK), that functioned in Iran at the time gave unconditional support to the Kurdish struggle. The HVK argued that Tehran's war against the Kurdish people, far from strengthening resistance to Baghdad's invasion, was actually weakening it. Since the Kurds had long faced national oppression at the hands of the Iraqi regime as well, they were potentially a powerful ally—on both sides of the border—in the fight against the U.S.-

backed Iraqi aggression.

Over the last several years the Iranian government has loosened some restrictions, especially concerning Kurdish culture. The schools in Kurdistan are allowed to teach Kurdish. The history and traditions of the oppressed people, which were not allowed to be published before, are now permitted and have flourished. Last May the Kurdish Cultural Center in Tehran organized the country's first scientific conference on teaching the Kurdish language.

Divisions among Iraqi Kurds

Inside Iraq, two Kurdish factions—the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) declared an "autonomous" administration in the region and elected a Kurdish national assembly in 1992. They have hitched the future of the Kurdish struggle to the U.S.-led war to overthrow Saddam Hussein. These bourgeois nationalist parties reject



demands for an independent Kurdistan. They have pledged to "maintain the integrity of Iraq" and favor an autonomous Kurdish province in a federal Iraq.

The KDP and PUK have gone to great lengths to assure Washington and Ankara that they have no intentions of declaring a separate Kurdish state in northern Iraq. Ranking officials of the two groups have also made diplomatic visits to give similar assurances to Iran and Syria.

The KDP and PUK fought a bloody war against each other for power in the northern autonomous region from 1994 to 1998. The KDP requested and received military assistance from Baghdad, enabling it to retake a key regional capital from its rival in 1996. Last September the two sides agreed to a cease fire and have maintained a tenuous power-sharing arrangement.

Whatever alliances these groups make with the invading U.S. armies, however, the Kurdish struggle for national self-determination remains a threat to imperialism and to the bourgeois regimes in the region.



Soldiers in the army of the Mahabad republic, a Kurdish independent state established in northern Iran in 1946 (see first article in this series). The Mahabad republic was invaded and occupied by the armies of the Iranian monarchy later that year.

Iran: decades of struggle to topple shah

(First of three articles)

BY MA'MUD SHIRVANI

A target of Washington's recent war drive has been Iran, where a revolution in 1979 fundamentally altered the relationship of forces in the Middle East to the detriment of imperialism. What that revolution was and how it came about is the subject of these articles.

The 1979 revolution was the culmination of a century-old revolutionary struggle against the monarchy and the exploitation of Iran by imperialist powers. Mohammed Reza Pahlavi was the last king (*shah* in Persian) to ever rule Iran. He had been ousted from power by a popular upsurge that started in the early 1950s, only to be placed back on his throne through a military coup d'état in 1953 organized by the U.S. government and led by the CIA.

After the coup reinstated him, the shah ruled for another 25 years, but the moribund monarchy imposed on the country by the imperialists lost all national legitimacy. In order to keep itself in power the monarchy resorted to brute police and military force. Its secret police, SAVAK, trained by U.S. secret services, was notorious for its torture chambers. Trade unions and almost all opposition parties were banned. Political prisoners filled the jails. In 1963 thousands demonstrating against the shah's policies were killed. The Islamic clerical leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini was forced into exile for his role in advocating these protests.

With Washington's backing, Iran's army grew to be the fifth largest in the world, poised to carry out counterrevolutionary interventions in the region. In 1973 the shah sent 2,000 troops south to Oman in the Arab-Persian Gulf region to help another monarch, Sultan Qabus, suppress a guerrilla insurgency. The shah permitted the United States to establish military stations in northern Iran to spy on the Soviet Union. Iran's government developed close relations with the Israeli regime and the South African apartheid state and supplied them with oil.

Suppression of oppressed nationalities

Inside the country those nationalities that were not Persian-speaking—Kurds, Arabs, Turkmen, Azerbaijanis and others—were denied their linguistic and national rights and any manifestation of their national pride encountered SAVAK's wrath. National oppression was one of the central pillars of the monarchic state, and the odious Persian chauvinism was perpetually fanned by the regime to the detriment of working-class unity.

The shah's much publicized land reform in the early 1960s primarily benefited large landowners and capitalists, as well as a layer of better-off peasants. By the early 1970s impoverished peasants were moving into the cities in massive numbers with meager possibilities for employment. Industrial growth was warped by the unequal exchange in the capitalist world market. Oil revenues were wasted conspicuously on imported luxury goods and fancy buildings in affluent neighborhoods for the ruling class and upper layers of the middle class, and by huge arms purchases.

The degree to which the monarchy was isolated from Iranian society showed itself precisely when the shah imagined himself to be at the zenith of his power on the Peacock Throne. In 1971 the king decided to celebrate the 2500th anniversary of the founding of the Persian monarchy. He threw a party lasting five days in the desert near the ruins of the ancient capital Persepolis. Five hundred guests, including 50 heads of state, wine and dined on drinks and delicacies flown in from France. They slept in silk-lined tents imported from Paris. The only thing indigenous was a ton of Persian caviar from the Caspian Sea.

To "secure the area" for this imperial party a circle 70 miles in diameter was cleared of all "suspicious elements," including entire tribes who inhabited the area and worked the land. The government purchased 250 Mercedes-Benz automobiles to save guests the inconvenience of walking when they wanted to drop in on fellow party-goers.

This frenzy of giddiness was happening

while annual per capita income in Iran was less than \$1 per day, and average monthly consumption of meat was 2.7 pounds per person.

James Carter praises the shah

In early January 1978, U.S. president James Carter visited the shah in Tehran, and stated that "Iran is an island of stability in one of the more troubled areas of the world."

"This is a great tribute to you, Your Majesty, and to your leadership, and to the respect, admiration, and love which your people give to you," Carter said.

But unknown to the U.S. president and his host, five months earlier a tremor in the "island of stability" had signaled a sea change in mass consciousness and combativity.

In August 1977, some 50,000 workers and newly arrived peasants, living in the shanty towns that stretch along the southern part of Tehran, finally won their fight against the cops, SAVAK, and gendarmes who had come to demolish the "illegal" huts they had built to live in. This was the culmination of a tug of war for years. This time, however, the regime was forced to retreat. A 38-year-old worker later described one of the confrontations at night. "We sent the little kids to puncture the tires of the bulldozers which led their whole army... Women then began to bombard them with stones and cobbles which we had already stored up.... We then launched an offensive, and took on the bastards in a pitched hand-to-hand battle. [They] had to run away, leaving some of their machinery and equipment behind.... It was really like a Vietcong operation."

This was the first such victory against the regime since the 1953 coup, and it went unnoticed to a large extent. But less than two months after Carter's "island of stability" remarks, a major event shook the country. On Feb. 18, 1978, people in the Azerbaijani city of Tabriz took to the streets in massive numbers. "Death to the shah!" was one of the slogans raised for the first time. A year later the Persian monarchy was overthrown.

The Tabriz events came in response to police brutality at an earlier demonstration in the city of Qun in defense of Ayatollah Khomeini. A hated major in the police shot and killed a young man in cold blood. Popular patience snapped. The city exploded. Workers, youth, shopkeepers, and uprooted peasants who had flocked to the city hit the streets.

The Tabriz garrison proved unreliable in carrying out the "shoot to kill" orders of the officers. Major parts of the city were taken over by the population. Army units from outside had to be brought in to put down the uprising with bloody brutality.

The Tabriz uprising electrified the country. Both because of its massive, militant character and also because Azerbaijan, with Tabriz at its center, had occupied a special place in Iran's previous two revolutions in the 20th century.

The constitutional revolution

The first Iranian revolution, known as the Constitutional Revolution, followed the 1905 Russian Revolution. Popular democratic councils (*anjomans*) were formed and a constitution was won. But the Qajar shah reneged and, with the aid of Russian soldiers sent by the tsar, staged a counterrevolutionary coup, bombarded the first *majles* (parliament), tore up the constitution, executed the constitutionalists, and reestablished autocratic rule in the country with the exception of a district in Tabriz.

There a handful of revolutionaries led by Sattar Khan opposed the counterrevolutionary coup and fought back. Their heroic resistance gained momentum. The Tabriz Anjoman was revived and took over the city. Toilers joined by internationalist volunteers, including Bolshevik fighters from tsarist-occupied territories, northern Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia, defended the besieged city for more than a year and beat back all the invading armies of the monarchy.

The resistance grew across the country, and revolutionary armies marched on to Tehran. The despotic shah fled and found sanctuary in the Russian embassy in



Workers and peasants in Azerbaijan made a revolution in 1945, in the aftermath of World War II, and established their own government. A contingent of the revolutionary militia, the Fedayeen, above. The Tabriz daily *Azerbaijan* is in the foreground. It was published by *Democrat Firgisi* (Democratic Party), which led the revolution.

Tehran. The *majles* was reestablished.

The political work carried out among the immigrant workers from Iran in the Baku oil fields and other areas by the Bolsheviks, the Russian revolutionary party led by Vladimir Lenin, had helped to forge a revolutionary underground nucleus that led the Tabriz resistance. Armed with experience from Iran's first revolution, the Adalat (Justice) Party was founded in Baku during the 1917 Russian Revolution. The party participated in the Russian Revolution and later in its defense.

The party (later renamed the Communist Party) was a member of the Communist International and its leadership collaborated with Lenin and other Bolshevik leaders in hammering out a revolutionary program for colonial and semicolonial countries. The party was part of the leadership of a revolutionary regime of workers and peasants in Gilan (the Gilan Soviet), on the Caspian Sea, which took power for a brief period in 1920.

Azerbaijani revolutionary government

Iran's second major revolutionary struggle of the century took place in Azerbaijan after World War II. Inspired by the victory of the Soviet Union over Nazi invaders in the war, in 1945 workers and peasants made a revolution in Azerbaijan and established their own government with Tabriz at its center. The shah's army surrendered and the workers and farmers government rapidly began an extensive land reform program, and for the first time in Iran women gained the right to vote. The Kurdish people in Iran established their own republic, the Mahabad Republic.

These victories gave impetus to the struggles waged by workers and peasants in other parts of the country. Oil workers in the south carried out strikes during the spring of 1946 which increasingly took on a political character.

The class struggle escalated, but the toilers lacked a national leadership capable of leading them to emulate Azerbaijan's revolution and establish a workers and farmers government throughout the country. The Communist Party of Iran had been decimated during the Soviet bureaucracy's counterrevolution led by Stalin against Lenin's communist course. In its place the Stalinist leadership established the Tudeh (Masses) Party in 1941.

To pacify the class struggle heightened by the revolution in Azerbaijan, the Iranian regime sought the assistance of the Tudeh Party leadership, and leaders of that party accepted ministerial posts in the government. A series of Stalinist betrayals led to the overthrow of Azerbaijan's workers and

farmers government, without a battle, at the end of 1946.

Struggle to nationalize oil

By the end of the decade, however, toilers across the country had recovered from the shocking blow of the defeat in Azerbaijan and began mass political actions. Strikes started against the British-controlled Anglo-Iranian Oil Company in early 1951. By the spring, 45,000 oil workers had walked out in Khuzistan, the oil-rich province in the south. At the same time, under mass pressure the *majles* in Tehran approved a bill to nationalize the oil industry in the entire country.

Mohammad Mossadegh, a bourgeois nationalist leader who had championed the cause of nationalization of the oil industry, became the prime minister and the Iranian government took over the extensive oil installations, greeted by mass jubilation.

Shortly after this, an alliance of the United States, Britain, and the shah's court, supported by large landowners, emerged to derail and defeat the anti-imperialist movement. Repeated attempts by the shah to unseat Mossadegh were met by fierce mass resistance in the streets, the toilers giving their lives to push back the counterrevolution. The Tudeh Party grew again and attracted self-sacrificing workers and youth. It even built an extensive secret military organization within the shah's army.

But when the CIA-engineered coup got under way in August 1953, approved by U.S. president Dwight Eisenhower, Mossadegh's government did not call on the masses to come to the streets in its defense. An opportunity opened for the working class to come forward by mobilizing to defend national sovereignty against imperialist counterrevolution. At the decisive moment the Tudeh Party leadership refused to call on the anxiously waiting masses to mobilize in the streets to defeat the pitiful contingent of thugs and a few army units. The counterrevolution succeeded without a battle.

The second Iranian revolution, which began in 1945, was finally defeated in 1953 and the monarchy got a lease on life for another quarter of a century. Yet the imperialists were not able to — they did not even try — to denationalize the oil industry.

The national bourgeoisie and Stalinist leaderships had failed the historic test in the second revolution. This would be a factor in the outcome of the third revolution, in 1979, which we will take up in future articles.

(To be continued next week)

SWP wins federal election rights victory

BY SAM MANUEL

WASHINGTON—The Federal Election Commission has extended an exemption to Socialist Workers Party election campaigns from requirements to report the names of their financial contributors and vendors. The exemption applies to the Socialist Workers National Campaign Committee, and committees supporting Socialist Workers candidates. The four-to-two decision by the FEC April 3 extends the disclosure exemption until the end of 2008, through the next two presidential election campaigns.

The SWP's fight for the exemption is part of its decades-long support for the right of workers, farmers, and their organizations to engage in political activity, including elections, free from government and right-wing harassment. The communist movement has consistently opposed every measure by the capitalist rulers and their hired thugs to assert a monopoly over the right to organize, the ability to carry out political action, and the possibility to be heard by the working population.

The SWP has run candidates for office since its founding in 1938. It has fielded candidates for U.S. president and vice president in every election since 1948. These socialist campaigns serve as a platform to reach out with revolutionary ideas to a broad working-class audience, as well as to defend the party's ability to function on the same footing as any other political organization in the United States.

The 1971 Federal Election Campaign Act required candidates and campaign committees to file detailed reports listing those who contribute more than \$200 to their campaigns—names, addresses, and occupations, as well as amounts contributed. These reports are open to the public. As such, they are a convenient “enemies list” for government agencies, employers, private spies, and right-wing groups and individuals.

The SWP won partial exemption from this act in a 1979 FEC ruling, which has been extended several times at roughly six-year intervals. Since then, the party has not been required to disclose the names of contributors to its election campaigns, as well as the names of vendors with whom campaign committees do business. The SWP won the exemption on the basis of the threat to First Amendment rights to free association posed by the disclosure of campaign contributors' names.

Attorney Michael Krinsky—a senior partner at the New York firm of Rabinowitz, Boudin, Standard, Krinsky & Lieberman—filed the request for the extension of the exemption in February on the party's behalf.

At the end of March, after reviewing the materials filed, FEC staff attorneys recommended granting the party's request.

Some debate took place during the April 3 FEC meeting. Two of the six commissioners—Daniel McDonald, a Democrat, and David Mason, a Republican—spoke and voted against the extension. They both argued that the level of harassment of the party and its election campaigns by government agencies has “declined.” Half of the Commission's members are Republicans and half Democrats.

FEC chairperson Ellen Weintraub, a Democrat, said she agreed with the assessment that government harassment of the party had declined. At the same time, she stated that, with Washington at war, public perception that the views of the SWP are “unpatriotic” and “opposed to the current government” could have a chilling effect on its First Amendment rights. She said that when the exemption expires in 2008 “hopefully we can say it is no longer necessary.”

The request for the extension, and the recommendation for its approval by FEC's legal staff, gave considerable weight to what FEC staff attorney Michael Marinelli called the “history of violence or threats of violence, whether state or private,” including wiretaps, use of informers, poison pen letters to employers, black-bag break-ins, and other illegal acts against the party.

Debate at April 3 FEC meeting

McDonald and Mason attempted to take advantage of the fact that the mass social struggles by working people—beginning with the civil rights movement, widespread opposition to the war in Vietnam, and the fight for women's equality—pushed back



Militant/Darryl Sheppard

Sam Manuel, second from left, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Washington, D.C., mayor during Oct. 16, 2002, candidates debate. On April 3, the Federal Election Commission granted the party's request for extending through 2008 its exemption from federal requirements to report names of financial contributors to its election campaigns. The fight for this exemption is part of the SWP's decades-long support for the right of workers, farmers, and their organizations to engage in political activity, including elections, free from government or right-wing harassment.

the ability of the White House and right-wing groups to carry out some of these open forms of harassment aimed at restricting the rights of working people to carry out political activity.

“I just don't see a strong case being made for granting this extension,” said McDonald. “Times have changed.” He said that there are other groups facing “racial and religious” bias that can “make a better case”—a cynical reference to the

government's detention of thousands of immigrants based solely on their country of origin. He complained that if the commission always used this standard of *past* government harassment, it will “never be able to move on from this point.”

The SWP detailed 74 incidents of harassment in the last six years to support its application for the extension. They included 28 cases of police interference with election campaign activities. These con-

Boston: workers protest ‘no match’ letters

BY TED LEONARD

BOSTON—“This does not affect only you or your neighbor, it affects many,” said María Elena Letona, director of *Centro Presente*, an immigrant rights group. The center was also one of the sponsors of a public forum here protesting Social Security “No Match” letters. These are letters sent by the government to employers, fingering workers whose social security numbers authorities claim do not match federal records.

About 100 people attended the March 15 program, held at the Holy Redeemer Church. Other sponsors included immigrant rights groups in the greater Boston area, United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 1445, and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 254.

UFCW Local 1445 has attempted three organizing drives at Kayem Foods, a large meat processing plant in the Boston area with a majority immigrant work force. SEIU Local 254 organizes janitors here who waged a contract fight last fall against the Boston cleaning bosses.

‘No match’ letters aid anti-union drive

A letter sent by the union to workers at Kayem Foods earlier this year stated, “The United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1445 is concerned that the no-match letters may be used by Kayem Foods as a pretext to retaliate against employees who participated in our recent effort to form a union—a right guaranteed under federal law that is central to the needs, interests, and dignity of employees.”

Daniel Avalos, a worker fired from Kayem in February, spoke at the meeting. “I got a letter from the company telling me they wanted me to meet with Human Resources,” Avalos said. “They told me, ‘we need more proof of your social security number.’”

Avalos said he knew he didn't have to talk to the boss about his immigration status, but eventually he showed the company his work permit. “I wanted to set an example to others that you don't have to comply,” he said.

Two weeks after his run in with the company over his social security number he was fired. A flyer circulated in the Kayem

plant in Spanish and English by his supporters explained, “They fired him for a mistake made by a group of workers in the department.... We wonder if Daniel was targeted. Two weeks before he was fired for the mistake in the department the company had threatened him around his social security number, which is completely in order today.”

Avalos had been active in the organizing drives at Kayem.

Fernando Lemus, a UFCW organizer, introduced Avalos to the meeting. He also introduced two workers from Genoa Sausage, another food processing plant in the area owned by Kayem Foods. Lemus said the two workers from Genoa had lost their jobs because of “no match” letters.

The UFCW organizer said that Kayem “uses every trick in the book.... After asking workers for more proof, some people answer explaining their legal situation and the company replies, ‘We can't keep you.’”

According to the *Boston Globe*, Kayem Foods received letters identifying 51 workers whose social security numbers did not match their names in the federal database. Several workers quit, and five were fired.

Scott Farmelant, a spokesman for Kayem Foods, told the *Globe*, “They were terminated because they admitted saying they gave false social security numbers. We're prohibited by law from hiring anyone who is illegal.”

In an open letter in the April 3, 2003, *Chelsea Record*, Ray Monkiewicz, president of Kayem Foods, said they received a letter from the Social Security Administration (SSA) in March 2002 informing them of employees whose social security numbers did not match their records. The SSA letter asked Kayem to respond within 60 days with any changes. The company sent letters to the affected employees.

In December 2002, according to Monkiewicz, Kayem decided to “revisit the issue” and sent out another letter to employees.

Workers at Kayem Foods had lost a union election in August 2002.

Lemus pointed out at the meeting that “no company has the right to ask about a worker's legal status after they have been hired. The problem is between the SSA and the worker.”

sisted of prohibiting campaign supporters from distributing materials in public places, threatening campaign workers with arrest, photographing participants in an antiwar demonstration, issuing campaigners citations, and in many cases expressing hostility to the views of the socialists and their right to promote them publicly. Each incident was documented by sworn declarations, official records, photographs, and articles that appeared in mass circulation periodicals.

In defense of the FEC legal staff's recommendation, Marinelli pointed out that among the incidents described in the party's request was the 2001 firing of Michael Italie, SWP candidate for mayor of Miami, by his employer, Goodwill Industries, explicitly for advocating his political views off the job. The advisory opinion stated that this was the most well-documented case of harassment of a Socialist Workers candidate.

When Marinelli referred the commissioners to a series of three break-ins at the party's mayoral campaign headquarters in Washington, D.C., he was interrupted by Mason, who argued that there is no evidence the break-ins were “politically motivated.” The campaign headquarters was broken into over a three-day period last August, as campaign supporters were wrapping up a petitioning effort to get the party's candidate on the ballot.

The request submitted by the SWP cited legal precedents establishing that the “absence of such concrete evidence [of harassment], however, does not mandate dismissal of the claim.”

In approving the extension, the commission concurred with the legal staff's advisory opinion, which stated, “The history of governmental harassment continues to have a present-day chilling effect that is

Continued on Page 11

In 2002, the SSA sent out over 950,000 “No Match” letters. The purpose of the letters, according to the government agency, is to help ensure that workers' earnings are properly credited so when they retire or if they become disabled they are eligible for Social Security benefits.

Unmatched funds are held in the “Earnings Suspense File.” This fund has now grown to more than \$300 billion.

Intrusion started under Clinton

The SSA program of sending out letters began in 1994, under the administration of William Clinton. In the past, the letters were sent to companies with a relatively large number of employees with mismatched Social Security numbers. Last year, the government implemented a change. Letters are now sent to every company that has even one employee whose number does not match.

Ana Avendaño, a lawyer with the National Immigration Law Center in Washington DC, who spoke at the meeting stated, “There are many reasons why the numbers don't match. The most common reason is a woman gets married and doesn't change her name, or names or numbers are transposed or misspelled.”

More than 100,000 immigrants lost their jobs last year because of the letters, Avendaño said, and there has been no change in the amount of money in the “Earnings Suspense File.” Next year the SSA is planning to go back to the initial basis on which letters were sent to employers.

“However, something worse is being planned,” Avendaño said. “A pilot program is being tested.” Under the new program an employer can go at anytime to a web page set up by the SSA, enter a password, and find out the status of any one of their employees' Social Security numbers.

A number of immigrant rights groups are planning street protests against these assaults on the rights of immigrant workers, such as a May Day rally in defense of immigrant rights. “May 1 will be a very important day,” María Elena Letona told participants at the March 15 meeting.

Ted Leonard is a meat packer at the Kayem Foods plant in Chelsea, Massachusetts.

Socialist unionists campaign against imperialism, its wars

BY TOM FISKE
AND HILDA CUZCO

NEW YORK—"We will be facing challenges in the coming period that we have not faced before, or we have not faced for some time," said Joel Britton, in his opening report to a March 24 meeting here of socialist workers and young socialists who work in the meatpacking industry. Members of this industrial trade union fraction of the Socialist Workers Party belong to the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) in plants organized by the union.

Participants attended a special forum the day before that featured SWP national secretary Jack Barnes. He spoke on "The working-class response to imperialism's assault on Iraq and deepening world depression." The forum was reported in the April 7 *Militant*, under the headline, "War, labor resistance discussed at NY event."

The discussion at the fraction meeting centered on implementing the political perspectives put forward in Barnes' talk within the UFCW and the resistance of meat packers to attacks by the employers.

The U.S.-led assault on Iraq had just begun. "This war, and the accompanying war drives against Iran and north Korea, have accelerated politics in this country," stated Britton, the organizer of the steering committee of the meatpackers fraction. He stressed the need to explain to co-workers and others "that the war is being fought in the interests of 'them,' the capitalist bosses, and against the interests of 'us', working people around the world." The competition among the imperialist powers, for control of the oil wealth in the Middle East and elsewhere, is a driving force of this conflict.

The meeting discussed the importance of a proletarian orientation in fighting against imperialism and its wars.

Attending protests against the war, bringing co-workers if possible, and coming back with this experience to relate it to other fellow workers is essential, Britton said. Even more important is patient communist propaganda work, not only on the job, but at factory gates, working-class communities, on picket lines, and elsewhere, he said.

Under the guise of concern for the safe and rapid return of the GIs, there will be displays of patriotism. "We will set an example, along with other vanguard workers, in refusing to participate in any kind of patriotic display, such as yellow ribbons or moments of silence," Britton said. "We should continue to firmly explain our position to co-workers." He added that immigrant co-workers will not be immune to capitalist propaganda about the need to

subordinate workers' struggles to the U.S. war effort.

In face of prowar pressures, "We should fight to keep having civil discussions with our co-workers," said Britton, "as bosses and right-wingers aim at cutting down the space to do this."

The meeting decided that a crucial activity this spring will be winning new subscribers among fellow workers to the *Militant* and its sister publication in Spanish *Perspectiva Mundial*, as well as selling the Marxist magazine *New International* and Pathfinder books (see ad on page 15 for special offers on these titles).

Several workers at the meeting explained that meatpacking bosses are using the pretext of "homeland defense" to implement new work rules that will be used to selectively victimize workers.

The communist workers discussed how to help expand solidarity with meat packers on strike against Tyson Foods in Jefferson, Wisconsin. They resolved to participate with co-workers and union officials, in solidarity rallies and food drives, and build support for the "Truth Squads" of Tyson strikers visiting plant gates in the Midwest.

Edwin Fruit, a UFCW member at Tyson Foods in Perry, Iowa, said the visit from such a Truth Squad to his plant received a warm reception by his co-workers. "One of the Tyson strikers was impressed that Latino immigrant workers contributed funds," Fruit said. "The Tyson strikers are predominantly U.S. born."

"Struggles like the Tyson strike have a logic against the U.S. rulers' war on Iraq," Britton noted. "The strike itself is an expression that workers will not subordinate their own class interests to the capitalists. Whatever their opinion on the war, they are determined to continue their struggle."

"In any labor struggle that's serious, and sustains itself for some time, a broad vanguard begins to form," stated Samuel Farley, a leader of the successful union-organizing drive at Dakota Premium Foods, a beef slaughterhouse in South St. Paul, Minnesota. "This broad vanguard is continually reforming and changing, but such a leadership can have the strength to lead the union as a whole. In the plant where I work we have been through three years of fights to consolidate a union and win better conditions of work."

The Róger Calero defense case comes up against a central offensive of the ruling class in this country, reported Britton (see front-page article). The rulers are trying to deprive immigrant workers of their rights, and use them to divide the working class

nor parties "don't need to keep any records."

Following the hearing, SWP leader Steve Clark was interviewed by a reporter from the Associated Press. Asked what he thought of the argument by some commissioners that harassment of the party had declined, Clark said, "The government is probing right now to push back the political gains won by working people through the mass social struggles of the 1960s and 70s." He pointed to the 2001 USA Patriot Act, which gives wider latitude to the FBI and other political police agencies to conduct wiretappings and arbitrary searches and seizures in private homes and businesses. Clark noted that in several cities local governments, basing themselves on initiatives by Attorney General John Ashcroft, have begun to revive "Red Squads." City attorneys in several cities have argued that in order to fight "terrorism" local cops need to be able to "gather information" on suspected groups and individuals, regardless of whether that activity is believed to be criminal or not.

"This makes the victory won by the SWP one that can be used to defend the ability to organize and take political action by workers, farmers, and others exercising their constitutional rights," Clark said.



Militant/Lisa Potash

Supporters of fight for UNITE union recognition at Cintas laundry rally outside the offices of government labor relations board in Chicago on February 5. The struggle by these workers against Cintas, the largest industrial laundry company in North America, is an example of the resistance by workers to the bosses' offensive.

in this country, the SWP leader said.

"Several meat packers in Omaha helped organize a Calero defense meeting," David Rosenfeld told the meeting. "Bill Pearson, president of UFCW Local 789 in St. Paul, Minnesota, spoke as part of the program. He explained that the Calero case is important for the entire labor movement."

The socialist meat packers decided to work to spread support for this and other defense cases in their industry and union.



BY STEVE WOLF

NEW YORK—As Washington presses its assault on Iraq, leading to more U.S. casualties, co-workers will tend to rally behind the war effort, said Lisa Potash at a March 24 meeting here of communist workers from garment and textile plants across the United States. Many were members of the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees (UNITE). The gathering coincided with meetings of the industrial union fractions of the Socialist Workers Party in meat packing (see article above) and coal mining.

Potash is a sewing machine operator in a Chicago garment shop. In some plants, yellow ribbons have already begun to be passed out by the bosses, she said. Many co-workers who were earlier opposed to the war are becoming resigned to it now, hoping it will be over quickly. They say that since it has started they must support "our troops."

Class-conscious workers don't wear yellow ribbons or other trappings that are part of the bosses' attempt to win support for the war effort, said Potash.

They also don't make themselves scarce when bosses try to pressure workers to wear a ribbon, take part in a moment of silence for "our troops," or carry out some other "patriotic" deed. Communists need to stand their ground and make their views transparent. It's the only way to defend the space they have for proletarian political work within the working class.

One participant who works in a garment factory in Pennsylvania noted that many of her co-workers have relatives or friends in the U.S. armed forces. Maps of where troops are stationed in Iraq have been hung in the plant, she said, along with yellow ribbons, many of which are being worn by her co-workers. "It's not enough to just say I don't support the war," she said. "You need to explain why, even if people don't agree."

Support for "our troops" and for the war, however, doesn't mean that workers won't be interested in the views of those who oppose the imperialist war drive. In the first couple days of the U.S. bombing, for example, socialist workers at the Pillowtex mills in North Carolina stepped up sales of the *Militant* and Pathfinder literature on the job. On one particular day they sold a copy of the book *Marianas in Combat*, which depicts the role of women in the Cuban Revolution, and took an order for the Spanish-language edition of *New International* with "The Opening Guns of World War III."

The imperialist assault on Iraq takes place during a deepening economic depression, Potash said. Workers at many factories are working short weeks or short hours. Others have been laid off outright.

Communists have to be working in industry to build the SWP, Potash emphasized. Fractions in garment and textile will need to work with jobs committees in the SWP

branches to work through these challenges.

Maintaining sewing skills is crucial for continuing to find and hold jobs, including under depression conditions, especially in garment factories where it's common for the company to disregard seniority, she said. Where they can't get into garment and textile shops, these socialist workers will hold other industrial jobs until they can find work in garment factories and textile mills.

As the depression unfolds, bosses float schemes for shorter hours and working weeks. Socialists at the Pillowtex mill in Concord, North Carolina, for example, reported that workers there have been discussing a proposal to work one week on and have the next week off in order to be able to collect unemployment. Pillowtex has announced that it's seeking to sell its factories. Possible buyers include Spring, a notorious anti-union company. UNITE won recognition at Pillowtex in 2000, after a 25-year-long fight for the union.

"Socialist workers participate in their union and with coworkers in any efforts to win some relief from management abuses on short time or layoffs," said Laura Garaza, a sewing machine operator in Boston. "But there is no solution to short weeks or hours in the context of one plant," she added. "We need to raise broader demands, like a shorter work week with no cut in pay, that begin to point to a collective way to challenge the capitalist disorder working people face, and unite our class."

While resistance to the bosses' offensive is not widespread in garment and textile now, there are important struggles that socialist workers in UNITE need to continue to be a part of, Potash said—and not only in their industry but beyond. "The meatpackers strike against Tyson Foods in Jefferson, Wisconsin, is one such struggle," she said.

One ongoing fight that socialists have a chance to relate to is the union-organizing drive at CINTAS, the largest uniform rental provider and industrial launderer in the U.S. and Canada, Potash said.

Socialist workers walked the picket line during the Libro Shirt Company strike in Lykens, Pennsylvania. The 89 workers ended their struggle in defense of health benefits recently, after the company shut down production and emptied the building of machinery. Janet Post, a UNITE member in the area, described a union picnic to celebrate what they had accomplished. These workers don't see this as a defeat, Post said. "They are proud they fought."

A socialist in Miami who works at a factory that produces bulletproof vests said that as Washington prepared to launch its assault on Iraq, one boss stated, "This is our war." This is an employer who rarely pays time and a half for overtime, this worker explained. As the war drive picked up, production of vests also increased. Workers started talking about going to the office and telling the boss he has to pay for the extra hours. After observing what was going on, the boss gave in. "It helps that there is a union organizing drive in a sister plant," the socialist noted.

A central part of their work in the next two months, these socialist garment and textile workers decided, is the effort to win new subscribers to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* in this industry, and win wider backing among UNITE and other workers for the anti-deportation fight of Róger Calero.

Election rights victory

Continued from Page 10

not diminished by the abatement of governmental harassment."

The party's request had also cited legal precedents, beginning with the original decision to grant the exemption in 1979. That ruling established that since the SWP is a minor party, which receives small total amounts of contributions and low vote totals in electoral races, "the compelling interests of the government in disclosure of the names of its contributors is outweighed by the party's and its supporters' First Amendment rights."

FEC vice-chair Bradley Smith, a Republican, spoke in favor of extending the exemption. At the same time, he mocked as "odd" the argument made by the courts and in the draft FEC opinion, that the government's compelling interest in disclosure was not important for parties or candidates with little chance of being elected, but very important with regard to those supporters of parties capable of winning an election.

"Why does the government have an interest in keeping a data base on the political affiliation of citizens at all," he asked, "when in other areas, the political views of individuals are protected?" Smith said that some lower courts have ruled that mi-

Russia in 1917: workers divide tsar's troops

Printed below are excerpts from *The History of the Russian Revolution* by Leon Trotsky, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for April. Trotsky was a leader of the October 1917 Russian Revolution and the Soviet Red Army. In February 1917 Russian workers, peasants, soldiers, and sailors overthrew Tsar Nicholas II and the Romanov dynasty. The new government, headed by the Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries, upheld the continued

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

rule of the bourgeoisie and its participation in the imperialist war. In the next eight months the Bolshevik Party won the leadership of the Russian toilers. Through the October revolution, working people established a workers and farmers government, brought an end to Russia's involvement in the war, abolished capitalism, and joined the worldwide struggle for socialism.

The excerpts are taken from the unabridged edition, the chapter "Five Days," which describes the decisive events that led to the overthrow of the tsar in February 1917. Printed by permission of Pathfinder Press.

BY LEON TROTSKY

It was taken for granted that in case of a demonstration the soldiers would be brought out into the streets against the workers. What would that lead to? This was war time; the authorities were in no mood



Workers and peasants march in Russia, 1917. Soldiers joined the revolutionary struggle.

for joking. On the other hand, a "reserve" soldier in war time is nothing like an old soldier of the regular army. Is he really so formidable? In revolutionary circles they had discussed this much, but rather abstractly. For no one, positively no one—we can assert this categorically upon the basis of all the data—then thought that February 23 was to mark the beginning of a decisive drive against absolutism. The talk was of a demonstration which had indefinite, but in any case limited, perspectives....

About one-half of the industrial workers of Petrograd are on strike on the 24th of February. The workers come to the factories in the morning; instead of going to work they hold meetings; then begin processions toward the center. New districts and new groups of the population are drawn into the movement. The slogan "Bread!" is crowded out or obscured by louder slogans: "Down with autocracy!" "Down with the war!" Continuous demonstrations on the Nevsky¹—first compact masses of workmen singing revolutionary songs, later a motley crowd of city folk interspersed with the blue caps of students. "The promenading crowd was sympathetically disposed toward us, and soldiers in some of the war-hospitals greeted us by waving whatever was at hand." How many clearly realized what was being ushered in by this sympathetic waving from sick soldiers to

demonstrating workers? But the Cossacks constantly, though without ferocity, kept charging the crowd. Their horses were covered with foam. The mass of demonstrators would part to let them through, and close up again. There was no fear in the crowd....

Different stance towards police, army

Along with shouts of "Down with the police!" was heard oftener and oftener a "Hurrah!" addressed to the Cossacks. That was significant. Toward the police the crowd showed ferocious hatred. They routed the mounted police with whistles, stones, and pieces of ice. In a totally different way the workers approached the soldiers. Around the barracks, sentinels, patrols and lines of soldiers, stood groups of working men and women exchanging friendly words with the army men.

This was a new stage, due to the growth of the strike and the personal meeting of the worker with the army. Such a stage is inevitable in every revolution. But it always seems new, and does in fact occur differently every time: those who have read and written about it do not recognize the thing when they see it.

In the State Duma that day they were telling how an enormous mass of people had flooded Znamensky Square and all Nevsky Prospect and the adjoining streets, and that a totally unprecedented phenomenon was observed: the Cossacks and the regiments

with bands were being greeted by revolutionary and not patriotic crowds with shouts of "Hurrah!" To the question, "What does it all mean?" the first person accosted in the crowd answered the deputy: "A policeman struck a woman with a knout; the Cossacks stepped in and drove away the police." Whether it happened in this way or another, will never be verified. But the crowd believed that it was so, that this was possible. The belief had not fallen out of the sky; it arose from previous experience, and was therefore to become an earnest of victory.

The workers at the Erikson, one of the foremost mills in the Vyborg district, after a morning meeting came out on the Sampsonievsky Prospect, a whole mass, 2,500 of them, and in a narrow place ran into the Cossacks. Cutting their way with the breasts of their horses, the officers first charged through the crowd. Behind them, filling the whole width of the Prospect, galloped the Cossacks. Decisive moment! But the horsemen, cautiously, in a long ribbon, rode through the corridor just made by the officers. "Some of them smiled," Kayurov recalls, "and one of them gave the workers a good wink." This wink was not without meaning. The workers were emboldened with a friendly, not hostile, kind of assurance, and slightly infected the Cossacks with it. The one who winked found imitators. In spite of renewed efforts from the officers, the Cossacks, without openly breaking discipline, failed to force the crowd to disperse, but flowed through it in streams. This was repeated three or four times and brought the two sides even closer together. Individual Cossacks began to reply to the workers' questions and even to enter into momentary conversations with them. Of discipline there remained but a thin transparent shell that threatened to break through any second. The officers hastened to separate their patrol from the workers, and, abandoning the idea of dispersing them, lined the Cossacks out across the street as a barrier to prevent the demonstrators from getting to the center. But even this did not help: standing stock-still in perfect discipline, the Cossacks did not hinder the workers from "diving" under their horses. The revolution does not choose its paths: it made its first steps toward victory under the belly of a Cossack's horse.

¹Nevsky Prospect, the main avenue of the city.

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Read it and rebel—The Pentagon is opening a psychiatric prison ward at its Guantánamo Bay naval base in Cuba. Some 650 prisoners

Free choice—“Democratic hopefuls rally behind Bush—Presidential contenders declare support for the war effort, some despite pointed criticism earlier”—*Los Angeles Times* headline.

structured House cafeterias to yank the “French” out of fries and toast, redubbing them “freedom” items. (In a conflict of imperialist interest, the French government voted no on U.S. aggression against Iraq.)

We were born during the first world war and it was a decade later that we learned that with the war against Germany, sauerkraut became “liberty cabbage.” Mom explained there were many stupidities in the war, and assured we still had our frankfurters and knockwurst with kraut.

‘Our Father who is on Wall Street’—Wiping their rumps with the legal doctrine of separation of church and state, the House of Representatives voted 348 to 40 to call on the president to set aside a national day of prayer and fasting—assertedly for the GIs in Iraq and protection against domestic

“terrorism.”

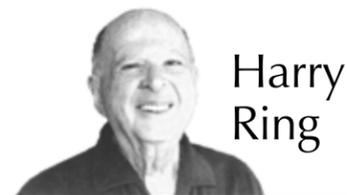
Don’t they know there’s a war on?—Apparently wrestling with public ire, the UK’s national health service has said it’s unlikely that it will meet its promise of a 2004 goal to keep emergency and accident victims waiting no more than four hours for care.

Couldn’t happen today, right?—For a number of months in the depression of the 1930s, the Los Angeles cops enforced a “bum’s blockade,” patrolling state borders to bar those deemed to have “no visible means of support.” The *Los Angeles Times* saluted the move as a way “to keep out imported criminals...radicals and trouble makers.” The program was ruled illegal after folks with visible means of support were excluded. For instance, a celebrity

Hollywood director.

Which one’s the dog?—*USA Today* has it that the border patrol cops will have two specially trained dogs “to aid immigrants in distress.” They’re trained to search for trapped or injured paperless people. The brief report doesn’t indicate if it’s two dogs per cop or two for the corps. We do have inside info that immigrants hunted down by the dogs will be given free rides to a hotel down the block from a union-organized job center.

Capitalism—justwonderful—According to the *New York Times*, a third of India’s population goes to bed hungry, half the children are malnourished, and starvation is again spreading. Meanwhile, it’s reported that the government is sitting on a “surplus” of 50 million tons of grain.



Harry Ring

from 43 countries are held there as terrorist “suspects,” locked in wire cages (a dorm for some is now being built). No charges have been filed against the “detainees” and they have zero legal rights. A total of 20 unsuccessful suicide attempts have been made by 16 inmates. The prison area is part of a U.S. base in Cuba held for a century by the weight of arms.

Sure, take U.S. Imperialism 101—At Irvine Valley College in Southern California, a directive was issued to the faculty telling them that it would be unprofessional for them to permit discussion of the war against Iraq “if it cannot be demonstrated that such discussions are directly related to the approved course material.” According to the *Los Angeles Times*, the memo sparked anger among students, teachers, and parents.

Right to be stupid—Congressman Robert Ney, chair of the House Administration Committee, in-

Calero tour wins new support in Birmingham

Continued from front page

at antiwar protests held here in recent weeks, and have gathered many dozens of signatures on petitions supporting his anti-deportation fight.

That evening he spoke about his case and the growing attacks on immigrant workers at a meeting held at the Southside Baptist Church. The event was sponsored by supporters of the Róger Calero De-

fense Committee and the Greater Birmingham Ministries Economic Justice Work Group.

Calero, 34, is also a staff writer for the *Militant*. A native of Nicaragua, he has lived in the United States since 1985 and has been a permanent resident for 13 years. On December 3 of last year he was stopped by Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) agents upon his return home from reporting trips to Cuba and Mexico.

The immigration cops seized Calero at Houston Intercontinental Airport. They told him he was denied entry into the United States, and carted him off to an immigration jail. He was released from jail 10 days later as the result of a public protest campaign, but he continues to face exclusion from the United States.

Immigration officials began deportation proceedings against Calero based on a 1988 plea-bargain conviction, when he was a high school student in Los Angeles, for selling an ounce of marijuana to an undercover cop. The INS waived this conviction when it approved his application for residency in 1990, and again when it renewed Calero’s status a decade later.

An international campaign to pressure authorities to drop deportation proceedings against Calero has won support from unionists, farmers, students, immigrant rights activists, and others. For example, Bill Pearson, president of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 789 at Dakota Premium Foods in South St. Paul, Minnesota, spoke out on behalf of Calero on a two-day tour of Iowa and Nebraska March 19–20.

Faced with vigorous, ongoing protests against its deportation efforts, the Bureau

of Customs and Immigration Enforcement (the recently re-organized INS) did not contest Calero’s motion to move his hearing from Houston to Newark, New Jersey, where he lives. The immigration cops also moved the date of his deportation hearing from March 25 to September 10.

Calero continues his work writing for *Perspectiva Mundial* and the *Militant*. The Róger Calero Defense Committee is planning more speaking engagements for him on his national tour. It is also appealing to supporters around the world to contribute funds towards meeting the goal of \$50,000 for legal and other expenses. About \$31,000 has been raised to date. For more information on how you can help, see box below.

For more information or to send a contribution:
Róger Calero Defense Committee, c/o PRDF, Box 761, Church St. Station, New York, NY 10007; phone/fax, (212)563-0585. On the web: www.calerodefense.org

Send messages demanding exclusion moves against Calero be dropped to: Demetrios Georgakopolous, Director, Bureau of Customs and Immigration Enforcement. Fax messages to: (973) 645-3074; or mail to: 970 Broad St., Newark, NJ 07102. Copies should be sent to the Róger Calero Defense Committee.



Militant/Cheryl Goertz

Róger Calero joins March 20 Birmingham picket to protest U.S. war against Iraq.

N.Y. union pickets ‘rat’ boss

BY PAUL PEDERSON

NEW YORK—Armed with leaflets and signs, six members of the Laborers union and a giant rodent faced off April 1 against a nonunion construction firm at a building site in Greenwich Village.

“We’re fighting against inequality,” said Fernando, one of the pickets who was holding a sign protesting the firm, Flintlock construction, “because when you work without a union, they treat you like an animal.”

Flintlock is commissioned to build a posh condo and health club on the corner of Washington and 12th Street. Members of Laborers Local 79 have set up this informational picket, distributing leaflets and talking to workers and passersby outside the site, from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. each day since March 24.

The union flyer exposes several safety violations that the nonunion firm has been found guilty of.

“They are just bean counters,” one of the unionists said referring to the construction bosses. “To them injuries and deaths on the job are just money questions.” As he spoke, a truck driver passing by the picket in a delivery truck laid on his air horn in a show of support.

The pickets are all on the out-of-work list for the union.

“There’re 1,800 union members currently on the out-of-work list,” said Paul Ryan, a seven-year union member, “that’s 20 percent of the union and about double the number that were out of work this time last year.”

The Laborers union was the first to begin using the giant inflatable rodents to draw attention to “rats,” or nonunion employers, in the mid-1990s, as part of countering the bosses’ antilabor offensive in the construction trades. They have used informational pickets like this to reinforce recent efforts to organize workers in demolition and asbestos removal.

The rat has since become a popular symbol in the labor movement in New York and elsewhere, appearing at picket lines and



Militant/Paul Pederson

Laborers picket ‘rat’ employer in New York April 1.

union rallies all around the city. A total of five giant rats are on full-time staff for the Laborers, three of which are currently on the job in different areas of the city.

When a *Militant* reporter remarked that he hadn’t seen the rat in a while, Ryan said, “Oh, there’s still plenty of rats out there. I hope someday there won’t be any need for the rat.”

Utah weekly interviews Calero

The following is a translation of an article that appeared in the March 10–20 issue of *La Prensa*, a Spanish-language paper published in Utah, titled ‘Nicaraguan journalist faces deportation, Róger Calero demands to stay in the country.’

BY INGRID QUIROZ

Salt Lake City—Róger Calero, associate director of the socialist magazine *Perspectiva Mundial*, was in Salt Lake City to call to the attention of students at the University of Utah and members of the community as a whole, his fight against his probable deportation stemming from his arrest in December 2002 in Houston, when he was returning from reporting assignments in Cuba and Mexico.

Calero gave an interview with *La Prensa*, pointing out that his case is not unique, that there are thousands of workers affected by the immigration system. Calero, who has been a U.S. resident for 17 years and is of Nicaraguan origin, is demanding that the Immigration and Naturalization Service, now known as the Department of National Security, restore his rights as a resident.

As part of the national campaign, demanding: Stop to the deportation of Róger Calero, his goal is to visit 21 cities before

his hearing, and Calero confirmed that the purpose of his visit to Salt Lake was also to support those defending workers’ living conditions, as in the case of the copper miners at Kennecott who went out on strike at the time of his visit.

His tour has now reached 17 cities and he expects to visit the four remaining cities before March 25, when he has a hearing with the immigration authorities in Newark, New Jersey, where he lives.

According to Calero, the reason given by the INS for his arrest is based on a conviction for sale of marijuana which occurred 14 years ago when he was a high school student, a charge waived by the INS when it granted his permanent residency in 1990.

Calero attributes his arrest to the intimidation that the immigration service is carrying out broadly with arbitrary arrests since the fateful morning of September 11, and gave as an example the arbitrary arrest of workers from Orem on February 20.

In spite of having lived in the United States for nearly two decades, Calero admitted a bit pensively, that he did not become a citizen out of “pure procrastination,” a fact which he “does not regret,” and rejects the idea that immigrants could be denied the constitutional right to adjust their legal status in this country.

No to the occupation of Iraq!

Continued from front page

United States and beyond—have waged strikes or other defensive struggles to resist the bosses' offensive to make the toilers pay for a deepening capitalist depression. The actions by these workers and farmers, who refuse to subordinate their struggles to "national unity" and "homeland defense," are the beginning of resistance to imperialist war by the working class—the only class capable of stopping the war makers. Join us in campaigning to win new readers to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, and to the program of revolutionary socialism explained in the Marxist magazine *New International* and Pathfinder books. Join in collectively studying the lessons of the workers' movement of the last 150 years and patiently discussing them with fellow working people and youth. This kind of proletarian political work is at the heart of a working-class campaign against imperialism and its wars.

Washington's rapid military success in Iraq is a decisive victory for advocates of the so-called Rumsfeld Doctrine. A new U.S. military approach is being established, and everyone in the officer corps of the U.S. military will have to choose now—either go along or get out of the way. It features the use of smaller, more agile armies, relying heavily on weapons technology and Special Forces, to enable the U.S. rulers to wage more than one war at once, which is part of their strategic plans.

No empire, from Rome to today, has relied only on massive draft armies for policing its frontiers. They have used special operations units (and not the variety made up of volunteer thugs, of which the French Legion was the foremost example) to do the job effectively.

The U.S. armed forces have occupied most of Iraq with a relatively small number of casualties and are winning support among many Iraqis in the process. The White House is also scoring propaganda victories, even despite failing to substantiate its charges that Baghdad possessed "weapons of mass destruction." Washington is even gaining public acceptance for its latest threats to strike Syria, ruled by a repressive regime similar to the one now crumbling in Baghdad. It has so far been a cakewalk for the U.S. rulers.

The current assault is not a rectification of errors from the 1991 Arab-Persian Gulf War. That was a Kuwait war. Washington succeeded quickly in expelling the Iraqi army from its expansionist invasion of Kuwait but stopped short of marching into Baghdad because of strong objections from its imperialist coalition allies. The Gulf War exacerbated the conflicts between the imperialist powers and made it impossible for Washington to put together such a coalition ever again. Today's war is an Iraq war, aimed at conquering the country and its resources. That is why it is not surprising that the imperial invaders did meet some opposition on the ground.

Resistance to the U.S.-British trampling of Iraq's sovereignty, however, has been minimal and is not likely to change in coming months. That is not because the Iraqi toilers are incapable of fighting. They have long been disarmed politically, relegated to the sidelines, and forced to act out of fear by a regime that has run a police-party state for 40 years. For that reason, the unfolding imperialist occupation of Iraq is not a major defeat for the working class. That defeat came a long time ago. It was registered in the bloody counterrevolution that brought Saddam Hussein to power, and the consolidation of his

dictatorial regime in the 1960s and subsequent decades—with the aid of Washington, Paris, and Moscow.

It's also important to recognize that the imperialist assault on Iraq has little or no connection with the Palestinian struggle. It has had no palpable impact on recent events in the West Bank or Gaza. A U.S. occupation of Iraq will not dampen the Palestinian people's tenacious fight for a homeland, either.

As Washington consolidates its hold on Baghdad, it will be able to convert sales of Iraqi oil to U.S. dollars rather than euros. The protectorate the U.S. rulers are putting together will also enable them to eventually turn the control over Iraq's nationalized oil wealth to the "seven sisters," helping to monopolize domination of this natural resource for U.S. capitalists. All this will be a boost for U.S. imperialism, albeit temporary, vis-à-vis its rivals—especially in France, Germany and Belgium.

Not recognizing the above facts will set up for unnecessary disappointment those fighting against the war-mongering course of the imperialist rulers—whether they have a U.S., British, or French accent. A proletarian perspective and a long-term view are necessary to confront the turbulent times ahead.

Washington's military victory cannot reverse the downward slide of the curve of capitalist development. Rather, it can accelerate the capitalist depression that has set in around the world. Conflicts are already sharpening between the imperialist powers now vying for a piece of the spoils from Washington's conquest of Iraq. It's true that trade wars can lead to shooting wars, but military conflicts can accelerate trade conflicts as well, and that will be one consequence of the assault on Iraq.

As the U.S. rulers try to take on country after country along their "axis of evil"—with Syria apparently added to Iran, Iraq and north Korea—they will generate more conflict and resistance and make the world more unstable. Their glorying over their conquest of semicolonial Iraq temporarily hides the fact that they are not invincible, and that they are using their military might out of economic and political weakness, not strength.

Just compare what Washington has accomplished in Iraq to what it faces in Cuba. Despite an unrelenting economic embargo, provocations, and other attacks and threats against revolutionary Cuba, U.S. imperialism has for four decades refrained from invading the island, just 90 miles south of the Florida Keys. What stayed the hand of liberal President John F. Kennedy when he was preparing an invasion of Cuba during the October 1962 "missile crisis"—and what has held back all subsequent administrations—was the estimate of his generals that they expected 18,000 U.S. soldiers to die in the first 10 days of such an assault. The reason? The fact that Cuban workers and farmers, having made a socialist revolution, continue to hold power and have a communist leadership that cannot be cowed or bought off.

As Cuba shows, the need for proletarian leadership with a nose for power is the decisive question in every other country. Building revolutionary parties to organize and educate the working class and its allies to follow their line of march toward taking power out of the hands of the imperialist war makers will become more and more the question of the day for millions. That is humanity's future. Working people will get our chance before the competing barons of finance capital can lead us to a third world war. Join the fight for this socialist future.

Canadian troops out of Mideast!

The 'Militant' is providing editorial space this week for the publication of excerpts from a statement released April 4 by Yannick Duguay and Sylvie Charbin, Communist League candidates in the Montreal ridings of Viau and Laurier-Dorion, respectively, in the April 14 Quebec provincial elections; and Patricia O'Beirne, Communist League candidate for mayor of Toronto in the November 10 municipal election.

All opponents of the U.S.-led war on Iraq should demand the immediate withdrawal of all Canadian military personnel and ships from Afghanistan, Iraq, and the rest of the Mideast as part of the fight for the withdrawal of U.S. and all other imperialist forces from Iraq.

The March 17 pronouncements by Canada's Liberal government are a fake and a fraud (see page 2 article). Ottawa's actions speak louder than words. They show that Canada's capitalist rulers not only support the onslaught against the Iraqi people led by Washington, but are part and parcel of the military effort to conquer Iraq.

There are currently over 2,000 Canadian armed forces in Afghanistan, the Arab-Persian Gulf, and elsewhere in the Middle East, supposedly restricted to participating in the "war against terrorism." These forces include three navy frigates and military officers participating in the British assault against the city of Basra. Ottawa's military personnel have helped to plan and execute Washington's war strategy. They are involved in aiding the work in the systems that guide the jet fighters and bombs that are used to slaughter the Iraqi people.

There is no mystery to Ottawa's actions. Government ministers have stated their support for the U.S. goal of toppling the Iraqi regime and have expressed their hope for a "swift victory." Ottawa is also calling for an inter-

national tribunal to try Iraqi president Saddam Hussein and other Iraqi officials if they are captured alive....

Workers and farmers in Canada have no interest in supporting either side in the ruling-class debate—the Liberals running Ottawa who posture as "antiwar" or those who advocate a more honest, from the point of view of the rulers, prowar course. Whatever their tactical differences, the rulers are driven by the unfolding capitalist depression towards participation in a series of imperialist wars. They are united in the drive to make workers and farmers abroad and here at home pay for the crisis of their profit system.

This is why the Canadian government has put into place a series of so-called "antiterrorist" laws that directly attack workers rights.... These laws will more and more be used against other workers. Air Canada workers currently resisting demands by their bosses for draconian cuts in wages and benefits, as the company files for bankruptcy protection, could become such a target, for example. By resisting the bosses' demands for concessions, Air Canada workers are showing that they will not subordinate their class interests for the good of the company and its stockholders....

Workers, farmers, and young people need to oppose the imperialist war in Iraq and Ottawa's contribution to it. It is along this road that a mass revolutionary movement can be built with the power to replace the regime of the war makers in Ottawa with a workers and farmers government that can organize working people across Canada to overthrow capitalism and join in the worldwide struggle for socialism.

All Canadian forces out of Afghanistan, Iraq, and the rest of the Middle East now!

U.S. occupation and Hussein regime

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

In a letter in this issue, Jonathan Borchardt expresses disagreement with the *Militant's* stance on the U.S.-led war on Iraq. He argues that while the government established by Washington in Iraq will be imperialist-dominated, it "will still be a step forward for the Iraqi people." He writes, "The Iraqis will use our standards of democracy against the U.S. rulers." Washington's record demonstrates the opposite, however.

The biggest enemy facing the Iraqi people, as well as workers and farmers in the United States and elsewhere, is imperialism. That is the necessary starting point for working people fighting oppression.

Washington, London, Paris, and other "democratic" imperialist powers today are the main source of exploitation, national oppression, and other forms of reaction in the world. They are the biggest threat to workers' rights and to democratic rights wrested by working people.

As Borchardt indicates, the U.S. rulers' aims in Iraq have to do with their calculated economic interests.

This puts the imperialists in direct conflict with the

REPLY TO A READER

interests of workers and farmers everywhere. That is why Washington and its rivals mask their real aims, posing as a force for "democracy." To win acceptance for their assault on Iraq, they point to the brutality of the capitalist government there and claim their invasion and "regime change" will open the door to democracy in Iraq.

The phrase "our standards of democracy" is an abstraction that blurs an important class question. That is, working people and the employer class have completely different standards of democracy. For example, bosses commonly regard unionists who go on strike as a threat to their "democratic" order. They have no compunction about declaring such action illegal or using cops and thugs to break workers' heads if they think they can get away with it. Workers, on the other hand, view the right to strike as a basic weapon to protect their living standards, job conditions, and dignity.

Likewise, on an international scale, the existence of "democratic" imperialist powers is based on the ruthless plunder of the semicolonial world—from the virtual slave conditions facing Haitian sugar plantation workers in the U.S.-dominated Dominican Republic to the brutal actions of French imperialism in much of Africa. In the Mideast, British imperialism drew the borders of Iraq and, under the "civilized" regime of Winston Churchill, subjected the Iraqi people to poison gas attacks. Those are *their* standards of democracy.

Nor is bourgeois democracy an inherent quality of imperialist countries. The rulers will turn to fascist methods when their rule is threatened—as they have done in the past—unless working people succeed in taking power.

The U.S.-led takeover of Iraq is an assault on the democratic rights of the people of that country, beginning with the fundamental right to national sovereignty, a weapon that working people can use to fight both the imperialist oppressors and their domestic exploiters.

The last thing the U.S. rulers want is for Iraqi working people to stand up and act in their own interests. In 1991, after the U.S. armed forces attacked Iraq in the Gulf War, the Kurdish peoples in northern Iraq and Shiites in the south—urged on by Washington—rose up against Hussein, only to have their rebellions drowned in blood as Washington refused their call for help.

For years the U.S. rulers had cultivated ties with the Hussein regime when its interests coincided with theirs. They backed Baghdad's 1980-88 war on Iran after the popular revolution that overthrew the U.S.-backed shah.

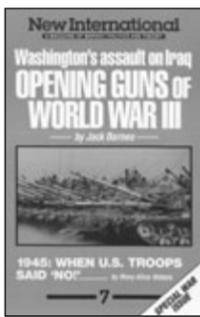
Class-conscious workers support oppressed nations unconditionally against imperialist attack, regardless of their political regime. In 1937, for instance, Russian revolutionary leader Leon Trotsky backed China—then under the boot of Chiang Kai-shek's capitalist dictatorship—in its war against the assault by Japanese imperialism. China's victory in that war put workers and peasants there in a stronger position to win national sovereignty, oust Chiang, and overthrow capitalism.

Likewise, a military victory by Baghdad over the imperialist invaders would have strengthened the hand of working people around the world, including the struggles of the Iraqi people against the regime.

Some might argue that conditions in Iraq were so repressive under the Hussein regime that it was impossible for working people there to fight for their rights and that, however self-interested, Washington's intervention is a lesser evil. But that is not true. There is no stand-in for the workers and peasants themselves. Imperialism cannot advance their interests against Iraq's capitalist government, any more than the regime could defend them against the imperialist assault. Only the workers and farmers of Iraq can win their own freedom.

Because of the decades of terror by the Baathist party-police state, the 12-year devastation by imperialist bombing and economic sanctions, and now the U.S. conquest, it will take time for working people in Iraq to recover from these blows and move forward. What will be decisive is the aid they will receive from the struggles of our class throughout the Mideast and around the world.

Books for the working-class campaign against imperialism and war



Opening Guns of World War III

Washington's Assault on Iraq
in *New International* no. 7

By Jack Barnes

The feature article in this issue of *New International* explains that the devastation of Iraq in the Gulf War did not lead to the dawn of a new world order. The war held a mirror to the declining capitalist world order and accelerated its contradictions. It sounded the opening guns of sharpening conflicts and class

battles that will decide whether the horrors of World War III are inflicted on humanity or a road is opened by working people to a socialist future of international human solidarity. Also available in Spanish, French, and Swedish. **\$12.00**

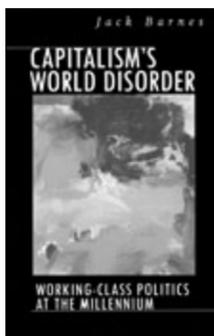
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Capitalism's World Disorder Working-Class Politics at the Millennium

By Jack Barnes

Today's spreading economic and social crisis and acts of imperialist aggression are not the product of something gone wrong, Barnes explains, but the lawful workings of capitalism. Yet the future can be changed by the united struggle and selfless action of workers and farmers conscious of their power to transform the world. Also available in French and Spanish. **\$23.95**

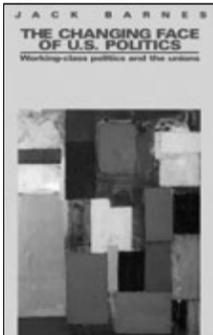
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The Changing Face of U.S. Politics Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions

By Jack Barnes

This is a handbook for young people who, in growing numbers, are repelled by the racism, women's inequality, and other intolerable social relations reproduced every day by the normal operation of capitalism on a world scale. Also available in French and Spanish. **\$23.00**



U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War

in *New International* no. 11

By Jack Barnes

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LETTERS

Whose troops?

The rulers of the United States, as in every other capitalist country around the globe, take us workers and farmers and youth, put us in their uniforms, and make us fight for their interests, as we see unfolding in Iraq today. Although we're all probably too familiar with the day-to-day disrespect of the capitalists towards working people, their real treatment of former soldiers, "veterans," seems especially scandalous in contrast to the constant patriotic exhortations to "support our troops" that we endure as the rulers seek to justify their wars.

That's why an article that appeared in the February 2003 issue of *Smithsonian* magazine entitled "Marching on History" will be of interest to readers of the *Militant*. The article recounts the struggle of the so-called "Bonus Army," veterans of World War I who came from throughout the country to Washington in 1932, during the depths of the Great Depression, to demand compensation promised by the government in 1924 (already six years after the war) and still unpaid as the economic and social crisis of the 1930s dragged on. (The government offered to pay by 1945, but this only earned the name of the "Tombstone Bonus" in the minds of the veterans, who recognized many of them would be dead by then.)

The article exposes how the famous "heroes" of World War II,

including Generals MacArthur, Eisenhower, and Patton, actually made names for themselves by leading a military assault in July 1932 against some 20,000 veterans and their families who had set up camp in the capital. Tanks, mounted cavalry with sabers drawn, and infantrymen with loaded rifles and fixed bayonets were used to drive the demonstrators off the streets. Tear gas grenades set the ramshackle shelters of the veterans ablaze.

The episode speaks volumes about who the real enemy of working people is. The article is also available on the web at www.smithsonianmag.com.

Ray Parsons
Gainesville, Florida

"Anti-France" campaign

I am a French exchange student, currently living in Minneapolis-St. Paul, and I would like to commend you for your nuanced and insightful treatment of the "anti-French" campaign, as well as the diplomatic disputes between the French and American governments, a "falling out among thieves."

In your current issue, a letter-writer points out that the "Simpsons" TV show—a show that has a facade of progressivism—has promoted the "anti-French" hysteria. There was an earlier episode of the "Simpsons" in which Bart Simpson finds himself at the home of two French peasants. These peasants are de-

picted as greedy, wine-guzzling degenerates. The propaganda that presents all French as effete "surrender-monkeys" is bad enough, blurring class distinctions, but it was truly reactionary to deride the peasants (the backbone, along with the industrial workers, of the anti-Vichy/Nazi resistance) in this manner. Such "comedy" is an obstacle to internationalism.

Jacques Mioffe
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Disagree on Iraq war

I do not agree with [the *Militant's*] stance on the war with Iraq—military dictatorship vs. imperialist bourgeois-dominated, but will still be a step forward for the Iraqi people.

Don't trust Bush for a second. I believe the real reason is the Euro vs. the dollar for oil sales. U.S. occupation will provide freedom to achieve freedom. Workers will be able to make more progress under U.S. domination than Saddam. The Iraqis will use our standards of democracy against the U.S. rulers.

Jonathan Borchardt
Mesquite, Texas

On affirmative action

When does the Bush administration not represent the interests of Corporate America? I believe this question will be answered clearly on April 1, when the Bush administration argues before the Supreme Court that the University of Michigan's affirmative action

programs should be struck down.

Defending the university's programs will be at least 65 members of the Fortune 500, among them General Motors, Shell Oil, Coca-Cola, and Hewlett-Packard. These companies, countless educators, and citizens like me recognize the benefits of a diverse learning environment and understand that affirmative action programs achieve diversity fairly and effectively without—contrary to right-wing claims—quotas, set-asides or racial preferences.

I think that equal opportunity for all is not merely an ideal but a goal that must be pursued through affirmative action and consistent enforcement of our civil rights laws. President Bush appears to believe that it's just a phrase, one that can be dispensed with whenever his right-wing base comes calling.

Marianne Bongolan
Staten Island, New York

Scientific analysis of war

The *Militant's* clear scientific class analysis of the U.S. rulers' drive to war has been truly excellent. The stark contrast between the *Militant's* coverage and other sources came into sharp relief in my workplace discussions around the underlying causes of the war against Iraq. A number of co-workers gave the liberal answer to the question—its Bush, his father, etc. Another bought into the conspiracy theory outlined in *The Final Call* article by Robert

Muhammed—Bush being a member of The Skull and Bones Society. While another brought in Patrick Buchanan's article from the *American Conservative* outlining the "hijacking" of U.S. foreign policy by Israel. Buchanan points to policy makers of Jewish descent in the Bush administration, stressing "we need an American foreign policy." *The Militant* helps to clear away this muck—keep up the good work.

Robert Robertson
Bloomfield, New Jersey

The *Militant* receives many requests from readers behind bars. The Prisoners Fund makes it possible to send them reduced-rate subscriptions. A prisoner can buy a six-month subscription for \$6 and a one-year subscription for \$12.

The Spanish-language monthly magazine *Perspectiva Mundial* offers a six-month subscription for \$3 and a one-year subscription for \$6. Please send a check or money order, earmarked "Prisoners Fund," to the *Militant*, 152 W. 36th St., #401, New York, NY 10018.

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.

Argentine export boom benefits few

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

Argentina's sharp rise in agricultural exports has brought a boom for a layer of its capitalist class, while hunger and unemployment remains the reality for workers and peasants throughout the country. The government in Buenos Aires, the capital, is highlighting the few bright spots for profit-making to create the image of an economy "gradually mending," and to convince the imperialist bankers to make credit available to Argentine capitalists.

Argentina's trade surplus last year tripled to \$15 billion, with about half of its total hard-currency earnings coming from sales of agricultural products, an agribusiness official told the *New York Times* March 25.

Washington and the other imperialist powers that control the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, hope to restart the siphoning off of wealth produced by Argentine working people into the coffers of their banks. This flow came to an abrupt halt at the end of 2001 when Buenos Aires declared its default on its

\$100 billion foreign debt, and stopped making any payments.

The government of President Eduardo Duhalde is aiming to use exports as a lever to bring the country out of its economic freefall, and gain time in its negotiations over the debt with the IMF and World Bank.

The source of the spike in export-related income is the drastic decline in the value of the Argentine peso since January 2002, when Buenos Aires ended its 10-year policy of pegging the peso to the dollar. This precipitated a 70 percent devaluation of the currency, slashing the buying power of workers' wages and the savings of retirees, shopkeepers, and others. The peso is now worth about 34 U.S. cents.

The Gross Domestic Product shrank by 12 percent last year, and the understated unemployment rate has soared to nearly 25 percent. Official statistics indicate that working people face the double burden of record-high unemployment rates, and a 75 percent increase in the cost of the basic basket of food for a family.

In late 2001 the struggles of unemployed workers, known as *piqueteros*, and other workers and farmers in earlier years, catapulted into a social explosion in response to the drastic cuts in social programs carried out by then president Fernando de la Rúa. Through general strikes, road blockades, and mass marches, working people forced de la Rúa from office. Congress appointed Duhalde as president in January 2002.

The plunge in the value of the peso has been a blessing for agricultural exporters. It wiped out their debts by making their products much cheaper overseas, and effectively tripling the domestic value of their export sales.

These capitalists are throwing their resources behind a stepup in production on the land. Soybeans, Argentina's major cash crop, now occupy 64 million acres of farmland. With projections of record harvests, Argentinian and Brazilian capitalists together, are on track to harvest more soybeans than their rivals in the United States.

"It was a one-off," said Alejandro Elsztein, chief executive of Cresud, an Argentine agricultural company, of the impact of the devaluation of the peso. "It's generating an amazing cash flow. Agribusiness is, without doubt, the engine that is driving" the government's efforts to stabilize the economy.

The Duhalde administration is trying to build on this momentum by adopting a more aggressive stand on breaking down barriers to Argentina's exports.

Buenos Aires is allying itself with Washington in its efforts to break down a European Union (EU) ban on the import of genetically-modified food (GMO), *Dow Jones* news reports. U.S. and Argentine trade officials stated March 13 that they share a common position against EU agricultural policy, and are considering taking legal action to the World Trade Organization (WTO), charging their rival in the EU with protectionism.

"We haven't made a decision yet (on a WTO case)," Argentina's vice minister for foreign affairs, Martin Redrado, told reporters at a joint press conference with a U.S. trade representative. "We have a strategic interest" in GMOs, said Redrado, noting that 95 percent of Argentine soy bean production and 25 percent of its cotton are GMOs.

The sharp increase in food production in Argentina has not brought relief to the workers and farmers suffering widespread hunger and malnutrition. According to an article in the March 2 *New York Times*, Tucumán in northern Argentina, a "garden of the republic," as this city is known, is now famous for its "stunted, emaciated children." With GDP growth plunging to levels similar to those in the United States during the 1930s Great Depression, two-thirds of the population of the province now live in conditions defined by the government as "extreme poverty."

The boom in production for the export of food also masks the very limited progress the government has made in achieving its goal of using exports to strengthen the economy. Foreign sales for all of 2002 were actually 5 percent below their level of the previous year. *Dow Jones* news reports that "only a dramatic fall in imports"—the result of the collapse in purchasing power for millions of workers, farmers, and others—"helped the country run strong trade surpluses."

The government announced March 28 that it was lifting the freeze on bank savings accounts it had imposed at the end of 2001. The decree, however, does not include compensation for banks, whose holdings were also affected by the devaluation of the peso. Paying off the banks would cost another \$30 billion.

Roberto Lavagna, the minister of the economy, said those with savings accounts would receive 80 percent of the \$5.5 billion owed in cash and government bonds. A business analyst in Chile, while optimistic about the Argentine plan, noted, "Maybe these bonds will actually be worth something in five years."

New Zealand paperworkers strike

BY TERRY COGGAN

TOKOROA, New Zealand—Two hundred and seventy production workers at Carter Holt Harvey's Kinleith pulp and paper mill, one of the biggest industrial sites in New Zealand, began an indefinite strike here March 7. On March 26, the workers—members of the Engineering, Printing, and Manufacturing Union—threw up a round-the-clock picket beside the railway line at the entrance to the mill, to prevent the company from moving container loads of liner board off the site.

As part of negotiations for a contract to replace the one that expired two years ago, the bosses want to scrap seniority provisions that currently protect workers from being arbitrarily moved to jobs that might have worse pay and conditions. "It will depend on which way you smile where they put you," said Dennis Patikura, a production worker with 35 years experience on the job.

To avoid paying overtime, the company wants to introduce "salarized" production contracts, rather than paying hourly wage rates, and establish a basic 12-hour day on a four-days-on, four-days-off shift pattern. The union says the "salary" being offered is about \$10,000 below what the company pays to workers at its Kawerau plant. "They also want the right to call us in on our days off, which we reject," said Pete Mathis.

A specialized team of firefighters currently deals with fires and chemical spills at the plant. The company proposes to replace this unit by assigning other workers to respond to emergencies on top of doing their own jobs. According to Paul Ireland, a firefighter on the picket line, this will seriously compromise safety standards.

Carter Holt Harvey, the second-biggest listed company on the New Zealand stock exchange, is half-owned by the giant U.S.-based company International Paper.

Forestry and forestry products is an industry in which New Zealand capitalists are aiming to be competitive on world markets. Carter Holt Harvey chief executive Christopher Liddell told the August 19, 2002 *New Zealand Herald*: "We have the trees here, we have the markets relatively speaking in this part of the world. If we can't make the forest products industry successful, what the hell can we make successfully?"

For years, the employers have been hammering away at the theme that New Zealand's forestry industry must lower costs if it is to compete with new mills in countries like Russia, China, Indonesia and Chile. What this means in practice was made clear by Kinleith's chief executive Brice Landman in an interview in the Dec. 14, 2002, *New Zealand Herald*: "We can't control the electricity price. We can't control the wood price. The only thing left was



Militant/Terry Coggan

Workers picket Kinleith pulp and paper mill in Tokoroa, New Zealand, March 29.

the labor price."

In the past 20 years the Kinleith mill has gone through major restructuring. The company has laid off nearly 650 workers in the last decade. The bosses have been able to make inroads into workers' conditions and union organization. In 1989 the mill employed 1,100 workers and manufactured 400,000 metric tons of pulp and paper annually. In 2002, it produced 532,000 metric tons with a workforce of 545.

These attacks have generated labor resistance. The last major strike at Kinleith in 1992 lasted 11 weeks. One of the workers on the picket line March 29 wore a cap with the words "Frontline 1992."

In January, the company laid off 266 maintenance and 36 production workers. This followed unsuccessful attempts by the

union to challenge the layoffs in court. ABB, a private contractor, now handles maintenance and has hired only 173 workers at lower wages for the job.

The Kinleith strikers are reaching out to fellow unionists for support. Union delegates from Kinleith have visited workers at Carter Holt Harvey's Kawerau pulp mill. Food is being distributed to the strikers from a union welfare fund, which has received contributions from other union sites. On March 27, a bus load of 30 strikers traveled to Auckland and staged a lively picket outside the company's head office. New Zealand Council of Trade Unions secretary Paul Goulter, who was at the picket line, said an appeal had gone out to the council's other 33 affiliated unions.

Felicity Coggan contributed to this article.

Samoans fight for citizenship rights

BY JANET ROTH

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—Thousands of Samoans rallied in this country and in Samoa March 27, to demand the repeal of a 1982 law denying them the automatic right to New Zealand citizenship.

In Wellington, 2,000 protested at Parliament, where they presented a 100,000-signature petition. About 3,000 demonstrated outside the New Zealand High Commission in Apia, the capital of Samoa. A smaller protest took place in Christchurch, New Zealand.

Samoa, formerly known as Western Samoa, was seized by the New Zealand rulers from German control in 1914 and re-

mained a colony until gaining independence in 1962. The eastern islands of the Samoa group are a U.S. colony.

In 1982, Falemai Lesa, a Samoan woman who faced deportation from New Zealand for "overstaying" her entry permit, took her case to the Privy Council in London, New Zealand's highest court of appeal.

The Council ruled that she was a New Zealand citizen by virtue of legislation in force when Samoa was a colony of New Zealand. This legislation, the Council said, applied to all Samoans born between 1924 and 1948, and their heirs. In effect, the ruling would have removed harsh immigra-

tion restrictions faced by Samoans, allowing them open entry to New Zealand.

Responding rapidly, within two months, the National Party government of the day, with support of the then opposition Labour Party, passed the 1982 Citizenship (Western Samoa) Act, which overturned the Privy Council ruling. It is this law protesters demanded be repealed on March 27, to allow Samoans entry to and citizenship rights in New Zealand.

The population of independent Samoa is 182,000. The 1996 census counted around 101,800 Samoans living in New Zealand, just over half of whom were born here.